



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Background Paper

Committee: Human Rights

Topic B: Child Labor in Developing Countries

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Child labor is a big problem in many developing countries. Millions of children, some as young as 5 or 6, are forced to work instead of attending school. They work long hours in dangerous conditions, often for very little money. This hurts their health, education, and future. Many families are poor and need their children's income to survive, but child labor traps them in poverty. Child labor is a serious problem that affects many nations. It is a type of exploitation that deprives children of their basic right to an education. Children are not physically prepared to handle work demands, whether in office or agricultural settings, because they are still growing and cannot handle the same responsibilities as adults.

Furthermore, children's mental health is susceptible to emotional distress and impaired cognitive development as a result of an excessive workload and stress, which may result in poor decision-making and dangerous circumstances. When children should be concentrating on their education and development, it is unacceptable to assign them adult responsibilities. Adults are better able to handle stress and workload because of their increased emotional maturity and resilience. Children's rights must thus be upheld, and they must be given a good education free from abuse and exploitation. Many professions present serious health problems to children, endangering their welfare. Children who work in agricultural environments, for example, are at risk for serious health problems like early skin aging and damage that could result in skin cancer. Even though this might be regarded as a rather minor consequence, more severe situations can be fatal. Depending on the workplace, the extent of the health effects varies, but one thing is certain: children always sustain severe harm.

Since European powers exploited children in plantations, mines, and factories during the colonial era, child labor has a complicated and pervasive history in developing nations. A legacy of exploitation was established during the colonial era when children were enlisted against their will to labor in dangerous conditions. Children's roles changed from family-based apprenticeships to dangerous factory work, frequently for long hours and little pay, as industrialization took hold in the 19th and 20th centuries. Despite the independence of many developing nations after World War II, child labor continued because of ingrained poverty, illiteracy, and cultural norms. International organizations started addressing child labor in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1973, the International Labor Organization (ILO) adopted Convention 138, which established a minimum age for employment. Global pledges to shield children from exploitation were further cemented in 1989 with the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Despite these initiatives, child labor persisted in developing nations due to economic pressures, conflict, and globalization. The ILO's 1999 Convention 182, which addressed the most severe types of child labor, was one example of the increased awareness and action that occurred in the 1990s. An estimated 152 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 are still involved in child labor today, with 72 million of them working in dangerous jobs.

Because it damages children's lives and futures, child labor in developing nations requires immediate attention. Millions of children are deprived of their fundamental rights to protection, health care, and education every day. Child labor stunts their growth, keeps them in poverty, and exposes them to emotional and physical risks. Children cannot escape the cycle of poverty without education, which restricts their options and upholds inequality. Economic growth is also hampered by child labor because illiterate workers are unable to advance their nations. Child labor also contributes to the continuation of human trafficking, abuse, and exploitation. It is imperative that governments, organizations, and individuals take action to combat child labor. We must guarantee that families have access to good education, social security, and economic opportunities. Together, we can protect children from exploitation, enable them to realize their full potential, and create a more promising future for both the children and their communities.

Child labor is a complicated problem that continues to exist in developing nations for a number of reasons. Children are forced to labor in dangerous conditions because impoverished families depend on their income to survive. Children who lack access to education and vocational training have few options. Because laws and governments frequently fail to enforce

protections, exploitative practices persist. The issue is exacerbated by the worldwide demand for inexpensive labor and consumer goods. Children work in a variety of jobs, including domestic work, manufacturing, mining, and agriculture, frequently for little pay and long hours. Vulnerable children are preyed upon by recruiters and traffickers, who lure them into forced labor. Families in financial need may send their kids to work in distant cities or sell them into slavery. Poverty, inequality, and exploitation are all sustained by this cycle.

There have been notable advancements in the fight against child labor in developing nations. Communities, organizations, and governments have come together to bring about change. Policies and laws have been passed to improve access to education, outlaw child labor, and offer social protection. Countries have received assistance from the International Labor Organization (ILO) in creating national plans to end child labor. Millions of children have benefited from UNICEF and Save the Children's support of education and career training initiatives. Groups like Plan International and World Vision have collaborated with local communities to offer healthcare and alternate sources of income. Fair labor practices have been implemented by businesses, and consumers can now select products that come from ethical sources. Additionally, governments have set up hotlines and services for child protection. Furthermore, by 2025, international programs like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) seek to end child labor. This has led to the removal of 95 million children from child labor since 2000 and a 12% drop in child labor rates between 2012 and 2016.

Governments, groups, and individuals must cooperate to stop child labor in developing nations. Governments have the power to improve access to high-quality education, bolster legal protections, and give families financial opportunities. Healthcare, community initiatives, and vocational training can all be supported by organizations. Companies can source products ethically and implement fair labor practices. People can volunteer, donate, or spread the word. Communities can advocate for children's rights, assist families in need, and report instances of child labor.

The main focus of the debate is for delegates to make opinions, consistent proposals and, above all, to end with a solution that supports all countries on the issue of child labor in developing countries. It is also expected that delegates can solve the problems in a diplomatic and correct way, since that is what the debate is for, to be able to hear everyone's voice and to be

able to know what each country needs and how we can help each other to reach a quick and safe solution.

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