



SOCHUM



Table of Contents:

Table of Contents:.....	3
Director's Letter.....	4
Topic Overview.....	5
Timeline.....	7
Historical Analysis.....	9
Current Situation.....	11
Case Study: India/Brazil/Nepal.....	13
Past Involvement.....	15
Possible Solutions.....	16
Bloc Positions.....	18
Discussion Questions.....	20
Further Resources.....	21
Bibliography.....	21

Director's Letter

Dear Delegates,

My name is Mason Mattu, and it is my distinct honour of serving as the Director of the Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM) at the first in-person iteration of British Columbia Model United Nations. I also have the privilege of working with my Assistant Director Amanda Chu, and Chair Hossein Ghobadi.

I know this is going to sound cliché, but the following is indeed true. Over my Model United Nations journey, I have raised many placards and debated with many delegates, but the most important thing I have derived from Model United Nations is to treat conferences as a learning experience. MUN is one of those unique extracurriculars where you can be a key person in solving an international crisis, or even save Hogwarts from destruction in a fictional crisis committee. Although my Model United Nations journey is ending this year, I know that the skills which I have learned will remain with me throughout my post-secondary career and into whatever I may choose to do in the future. I hope that this year at BCMUN, you can and will gain the same experiences as I.

The topic chosen for this iteration of SOCHUM at BCMUN is an essential issue which deserves attention by delegates and all over the world. Child labour and labour rights are still a real issue in less-economically developed nations, but still serve as a major problem in more-economically developed nations as well. Your role throughout this BCMUN conference will be pivotal in suggesting innovative and collaborative solutions to the issue of child labour throughout the first and second world. I recommend that you do your thorough research and come prepared to the conference with a binder-full of ideas and strategies to help mitigate child labour.

Whether this is your first or last Model United Nations Conference, or whether you are a professional gavel-hunter or a well-researched beginner, we invite you with open arms to this iteration of British Columbia Model United Nations. Be curious, respectful, and serious throughout this committee to yield the best results. I look forward to a weekend of fruitful debate at British Columbia Model United Nations 2023.

Warmest regards,

Mason Mattu

Director of SOCHUM | BCMUN 2023

Committee Description

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) is the third committee of the United Nations General Assembly currently at its seventy-eighth session.¹ Issues presented to SOCHUM include any issue pertaining to the humanitarian situation of persons all over the world. Potential topics which may be delegated to the third committee may include subjects such as feminism, labour rights, and the rights of minorities and Indigenous populations.

Solutions which are presented to SOCHUM by delegates must follow the scope to which this committee is able to accomplish under the United Nations Charter. When proposing solutions, delegates are reminded that SOCHUM is unable to have command of military force, nor are countries which agree to resolutions required or binded to complete the standards assigned.² Delegates are encouraged to provide recommendations and standards which nations are encouraged to set when creating resolution papers.

Topic Overview

Child labour is an important issue which impacts minors in not only LEDCs (less-economically developed countries) and MEDCs (more-economically developed countries). Child labour can be defined as a unpaid or paid labour which degrades the rights of a child by providing unsafe working conditions. The United Nations has been clear in the past by saying that children deserve the right to a free and happy childhood, without the impacts of forced labour or unequal treatment. Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 calls for the eradication of all types of forced labour by 2030; this is a bold goal by the United Nations which may or may not be achieved depending on the efforts of member nations to work towards the framework put in place.³ Currently around the world, it is estimated that there is a total of 160 million victims of child labour, with concentration in different sectors; this includes debt bondage, sexual exploitation, slavery, agriculture work, and industrial work.⁴ 71% of child labour victims are within the agriculture sector, 17 percent in sex work and tourism, and 12 percent in industry.⁵ Although records show that child labour numbers have decreased since 2000, it is not yet extinguished from economies, especially in LEDCs.⁶

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/>

² <https://www.allamericanmun.com/what-is-sochum/#:~:text=Powers%20Of%20SOCHUM,international%20standards%20and%20recommend%20actions>.

³ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_450718.pdf

⁴ <https://www.worldvision.ca/stories/child-protection/child-labour-facts-and-how-to-help#:~:text=It%27s%20estimated%20that%20there%20are,between%20ages%205%20and%2011>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

Many nations recognise the issue of child labour in their respective countries, but one of the challenges which exist is transitioning the economies of LEDCs to become less reliant on child labour practises. According to the International Labour Organisation, framework for ending child labour by 2025, it is essential for critical investments into free and accessible education, an equal access to healthcare, and the uplifting of the rights of children across the underdeveloped world to be made in order to help curb the impacts and causations of child labour around the world. Alongside this, an unknown fact is that countries in the developed world also still employ the usage of child labour.⁷ After the COVID-19 pandemic, studies have shown that there are tens of millions of children in the supply chains within nations across the European Union and the United States. This lesser-known fact is alarming and is something which ought to be addressed during debate.

Many human rights groups and NGOs have argued that intergovernmental organisations are not doing enough to protect the childhoods of children. Alongside this, different blocs have varying views on this topic based on their geographic location and level of development. Some argue that child labour propels the economic growth of a country, while either nations strongly condemn the practice.

Many have attempted to solve child labour in the past, but it is a multi-faceted issue which needs a nexus approach to solve. Delegates will need to work alongside nations of various different economic levels of development to find meaningful solutions and goals which can be worked towards in a reasonable time frame.

Timeline

Late 1700s to Early 1800s – In the United Kingdom, the Industrial Revolution reached its peak. Factories were built across England, and children became the subject of factory machine operation due to their small fingers and precision which was required for some factories. Factory jobs could employ children for up to eighteen hours a week, five to six days a week.⁸

1810 – More than 2 million school-aged children were working in factories in the United Kingdom, making less than one dollar a night.⁹

July of 1899 – Over three-hundred newsboys employed by the Evening Journal and Evening World newspaper marched on the streets of New York in order to protest an increase in the price

⁷

<https://www.trtworld.com/perspectives/developed-countries-biggest-users-of-child-labour-in-supply-chains-1286615>

⁹

⁸ <https://www.bl.uk/georgian-britain/articles/the-industrial-revolution>

⁹ Ibid.

of newspapers, which were brought on by the Spanish-American War. They protested for the old prices to stay the same so they could maintain their wage which was under a dollar.¹⁰

June 25th, 1938 – In order to stop the spread of child labour across the United States of America, the United States Congress passed the Fair Labour Standards Act of 1938 and was signed into effect by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This enshrined the fact that Americans had the right to a minimum wage, and that children under the age of fourteen were not allowed to be employed in the United States, with restrictions on children over the age of sixteen on hours and employment types.¹¹

1941 – Many children in the United States of America join the workforce during World War II, defying legislation put in place to mandate school attendance for all children in America.¹²

1945 – SOCHUM is established in response to the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights.¹³

1993 – The United Nations passes a resolution called the Programme of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour, a significant framework for addressing child labour.¹⁴

2000 – The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour is ratified by member nations of the United Nations.¹⁵

2007: Fashion company GAP was under fire for selling clothing items which were made by child labourers. This would mark one of the first public reactions to the fast fashion industry and the issue of child labour.¹⁶ To this day, the issue of fast fashion and the impacts on child labour are prevalent, as more demand for clothing may result in the increase in demand for labourers.

2008 – A Bloomberg report uncovers the fact that copper and cobalt mines in the African Congo were digging for ore by hand and not being granted fair wages or working conditions. It was revealed that ninety percent of that region's minerals were sold to the People's Republic of China.¹⁷

¹⁰ <https://cityhallpark1899.com/newspaper-articles/brooklyn-eagle/july-20-1899/>

¹¹ http://finduslaw.com/fair_labor_standards_act_flsa_29_u_s_code_chapter_8#2

¹² <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/child-labour>

¹³ <https://imuna.org/nhsmun/nyc/committees/sochum-social-humanitarian-cultural-committee/#:~:text=Committee%20Overview&text=SOCHUM%20was%20founded%20in%201945,Universal%20Declaration%20on%20Human%20Rights>

¹⁴ <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f25618.html>

¹⁵ https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/human_rights-droits_homme/child_labour-travail_enfants.aspx?lang=eng

¹⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2007/oct/28/ethicalbusiness.india>

¹⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20150112063831/http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aW8xVLQ4Xhr8>

September, 2014 – The Fair Labour Organisation, in a report commissioned by Nestlé, uncovers that child labourers were being employed by cocoa farms in the Ivory Coast; these farms were part of Nestlé's supply chain. This displayed the fact that many corporations did not know that unsustainable practises such as child labour were being used in the production of their products.¹⁸

January 1st, 2016 – On January 1st, 2016, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are signed; this framework includes a clause on fair labour treatment and irradiating child labour on a global scale.¹⁹

2020 – COVID-19 hits nations all over the world. This pandemic caused shutdowns of many businesses and supply chains, forcing children to be involved in the process of manufacturing.

2021– 2021 is declared as the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour by the United Nations.²⁰

Historical Analysis

Throughout history, child labour has been a significant and prevailing issue, subjecting children worldwide to hazardous treatment, environments, and exploitation. In many cases, child labour is in positive correlation with poverty. Child labour reached its climax during the Industrial Revolution, in which unethical working conditions were the pragmatic norm. In fact, every country that was industrializing in the 20th century resorted to child labour in some form. As a result, working children were deprived of educational opportunities, initiating a cyclical repetition of poverty.²¹ Many policies, regulations and laws had been implemented to restrict child labour; however the effects of these unethical practices extend to the present-day and vary by country.

Pre-industrialized economies

The origins of child labour has been a latent aspect prior to industrialized economies. Given the culturally lacking sense of childhood during the pre-industrial age, children at the age of 13 partook in the same activities as adults when they were considered capable.²² Many skills and knowledge were also transferred by apprenticeship from experienced adults. The social norms

¹⁸<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/sep/02/child-labour-on-nestle-farm-s-chocolate-giants-problems-continue>

¹⁹<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda-retired/#:~:text=On%201%20January%202016%2C%20the,Summit%20%E2%80%94%20officially%20came%20into%20force.>

²⁰<https://endchildlabour2021.org/#:~:text=2021%20IS%20THE%20INTERNATIONAL%20YEAR%20FOR%20THE%20ELIMINATION%20OF%20CHILD%20LABOUR>

²¹ <https://www.history.com/topics/industrial-revolution/child-labor>

²² Diamond, J., The World Before Yesterday

were characterized as short-life expectancy, low productivity, and minimal value for education; hence families found child labour necessary for living needs.

Industrial Revolution

The zenith of child labour dates back to the 18th century during the Industrial Revolution and Victorian Era, when the need of factory workers precipitously increased.²³ The Industrial Revolution began in England, and spread across Belgium, France, the Western parts of Prussia and the United States in the 19th century.²⁴ Children more willingly accepted lower pay and were smaller in size to perform tasks in tight spaces.²⁵ Additionally, they were unlikely to strike against poor work conditions, allowing employers to maximize profits.²⁶ Working children were prominent in a multitude of sectors, including textile industry, agriculture, canneries, newsboys, messengers, shoe shiners and peddlers.²⁷ The abhorrent conditions subjected children to industrial accidents and infectious diseases. The average age of children started in early 19th century Britain was ten years old; however, there were variances across different regions. In industrial areas, the average age was around eight-and-a-half years old, but there has also been evidence of children as young as four years old at work.²⁸ The continuation of these policies proceeded until the late early 20th century when the government finally implemented education requirements for child labour to decline.

Child Labour in Asia

Of the 250 million children aged 5-14 years who are illegally employed worldwide, 61 percent are in Asia.²⁹

In India, the employment of children was mentioned as far back as Kautilya's Arthshastra of 3th century B.C. Child slaves of less than eight years of age were subject to working in noble houses.³⁰ Children often worked as apprentices under artisans and craftsmen. Children of agrarian families worked according to their capabilities as a productive member of the family. As adults were hired at low wages, other family members including children were obligated to participate in extra work in order to ensure household needs. This form of labour remains prevalent in the system of bonded labour, where the worker is obligated to provide labour to repay a loan.³¹ Based on the ILO, there are approximately 12.9 million Indian children participating in work between 7 and 17 years old.³² In addition, around 10.1 million children

²³ <https://www.history.com/topics/industrial-revolution/child-labor>

²⁴ <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3990135?seq=3>

²⁵ <https://www.history.com/topics/industrial-revolution/child-labor>

²⁶ <https://www.history.com/topics/industrial-revolution/child-labor>

²⁷ <https://www.museumoftolerance.com/assets/documents/children-who-labor-handout-2.pdf>

²⁸ <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/child-labour>

²⁹ The challenges of change: Causes and consequences of child labor in China.

³⁰ Singh, Satendra Kumar. "Original Research Article - Journalijdr.Com."

³¹ "Keynote Address on Bonded Labour - National Human Rights Commission Of ..."

³² <https://www.soschildrensvillages.ca/news/child-labour-in-india-588>

between the ages of 5 and 14 years old work and 20% of 15-17 year olds engage in hazardous labour.³³ As child labour victims increase in age, they increase involvement in work, making them even less likely to regularly attend school.

Child labour in China was also prevalent throughout history. A large contributing factor was when the Chinese government welcomed the global economy in the 1970s. As a result, the accelerated economic growth for profit and production demands exacerbated labour violations.³⁴ To remain competitive, the demand for a large and productive labour force resulted in illegal employment of children.³⁵ With a national dropout rate average of 2.2%, many Chinese provinces have begun to see an increase to 9% due to the increased child labour.³⁶

Decline in Child Labour

Given the fervent development of the technology in more economically developed countries, the demand for unskilled labour of children was replaced to a high extent.³⁷ Technology was often built in convenience of adults and in opposition to children, rendering child labour unproductive. Legal prohibitions also propagated the decline in children's work. In the United States, the occupation rate of 13-year-olds drastically decreased between the 1880 and 1930 in states that enacted a minimum working age of 14.³⁸ The introduction of compulsory education was also in positive correlation with decline in working children participation.³⁹ However, many less economically developed countries that rely on primary (agriculture) or secondary (manufacturing) sectors lacked the support to make the transitions, thereby continuing the practise of child labour. Poverty and large families is also serve as the main culprit for child labour in less economically developed countries.

Current Situation

At the beginning of 2020, roughly 160 million children were subjected to child labour, signifying 1/10 children worldwide.⁴⁰ This accounts for 63 million girls and 97 million boys.⁴¹ The International Labour Convention estimates around 22,000 children killed each year due to unethical work practices.⁴² Approximately half of these children are subjected to hazardous work that harms their health and development.⁴³ These trafficked children also face violence abuse and

³³ <https://www.soschildrensvillages.ca/news/child-labour-in-india-588>

³⁴ Morley, Andrea. "The challenges of change: Causes and consequences of child labor in China

³⁵ <https://doi.org/10.1080/23323256.2006.11499938>

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3990135>

³⁸ <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3990135>

³⁹ <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3990135>

⁴⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-labour>

⁴¹ <https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-labour>

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ <https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-labour>

other exploitative measures. However, child labour impacts all countries. More than half of children experiencing exploitative work treatments are located in middle-income countries.

⁴⁴Although more economically developed countries, such as Canada, the United States, Australia, Japan, European countries, and New Zealand also face issues of working children,⁴⁵ child labour is currently concentrated in less economically developed countries, especially places with insecurity or presence of armed forces. Moreover, child labour is prevalent in rural areas than urban areas. In contrast to the 37.7 million urban children, there are 122.7 million rural children exposed to child labour.⁴⁶ The two driving factors of child labour remain similar to the past: poverty. 70% of child exploitative work occurs in the agriculture sector.⁴⁷ Other jobs include factories, domestic service, and forced labour.

The COVID-19 pandemic has rewinded much of the progress made in recent years. Due to rising poverty caused by the pandemic, there was an estimated addition of 8.9 million children forced to work at the end of 2022.⁴⁸ In Nepal, the conditions of child labour have been exacerbated by COVID-19. The earthquakes of 2015 increased the need for bricks, attracting low-income families to work in brick kilns.⁴⁹ Although child labour is illegal in Nepal, children are nonetheless involved in hazardous work. Approximately 28,000 children are subject to perilous work conditions in Nepal brick kilns.⁵⁰ Due to the pandemic, income substantially decreased due to the shutdown of brick kilns, access to education and development, and general child vulnerabilities.⁵¹

With an estimated 72.1 million African children experiencing child labour and 31.5 million working in dangerous conditions, Africa is currently the leader in child labour.⁵² Child labour rights have increased dramatically over 2012 to 2016, more than any other country in the world.⁵³ Despite the implemented government policies to combat child labour, these efforts have been simultaneously hindered by other economic and demographic forces affecting Africa's situation of fragility and crisis. An estimated 85% of all labour and 61.4 million children are labouring in the agriculture sector.⁵⁴ The remaining 11 per cent of child labourers, which is 8.1 million, are in the services sector and a remaining 4%, 2.7 million children, are in industry.⁵⁵ The majority of children are unpaid as they are not employed with a third entity, but working for family farms and enterprises.⁵⁶ The global pandemic also inadvertently halted child labour laws

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ http://www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/2001/101B09_12_engl.pdf

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ <https://www.worldvision.org/child-protection-news-stories/child-labor-facts>

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14733285.2021.1891406>

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² <https://www.ilo.org/africa/areas-of-work/child-labour/lang--en/index.htm>

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

and implementations. Some adverse effects that progressed child labour include decrease of income for basic necessities shortage of labour for the construction sector, and the government's primary focus on COVID-19 protocols. Due to these aspects, child labour appears to be a cheap and convenient source of labour during these special times. In Uganda, there are specific laws that declared child labour alleged, yet leaders in charge of enforcement were inaccessible, deeming implementation challenging.⁵⁷

Children experiencing labour exploitation in South Asia countries, such as Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan risks facing increased child labour due to COVID-19.⁵⁸ Many families lack savings for difficult financial intervals without government support, children are prone to share the economic burden. Child labour in South Asia is prominent with an estimated 16.7 million children between the ages 5-17 engaged in child labour.⁵⁹ Many South Asian countries rely on remittances, yet the pandemic has decreased remittances, thereby reducing family spendings and increasing unemployment. An estimated 400 million informal workers will not return to their normal performance levels for a long time, urging children to be exposed in the labour market.⁶⁰ The lack of government support has also increased child labour among low income families. For instance, the impacts of disrupted global supply chains and lockdowns were underscored by Burns for Bangladesh. In March 2020, over one million workers were laid off or suspended. In urban regions of India it was initially 8.21%, yet due to COVID-19, it was raised to 30.9% in March 2020.⁶¹

The closure of schools also subject many children to illiteracy,suscepting them to enter a cyclical repetition of poverty. Due to the shutdown of refugee schools, many children in Syria, Rohingya, Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo lack educational opportunities, worsening child labour and poverty in the future.⁶² As families are unable to afford education fees and other costs, they employ their children in the labour market to decrease their economic burden.⁶³

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ <https://doi.org/10.58661/ijssse.v3i2.130>

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

Case Study: India

In India, the main efforts taken against child labor are government initiatives by implementing child labour laws and other interventions such as education.⁶⁴ Most of the government's solution attempts at child labour laws and implementations were based on British models, deeming enforcement challenging as the Western societal structure is evidently different.⁶⁵ Some major issues include the Indian government's inability to stimulate public advocacy for child labour to arouse popular support for overcoming the problem.

The Employment of Child Act (1938) was the first legislation committed to child labour, yet by the late 1970s, the government realized it failed to be enforced.⁶⁶ The government soon realised legislation without appropriate supporting measures would fail to combat the issue. Subsequently, the 1986 Child Labour Act and National Policy on Child Labour were plans of action implemented to assist the socio-economic components impacting child labour.⁶⁷ Education was one of the main factors, yet the lack of public action in India toward child labour reform steps governmental action difficult to augment the matter to a high level of interest and priority. While education can be yielded as a weapon against child labour, many oppose the idea of compulsory education as poor families rely on their child's labour as an income.⁶⁸ There stands the belief that poverty must be first alleviated before the implementation of mandatory education.⁶⁹

Past Involvement

The issue of child labour remains a concern in today's world, considering that millions of children worldwide are subjected to work conditions that exploit their human rights. Recognizing the urgency of addressing this problem, the UN has taken substantial action in the past to combat child labour.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was the first legally binding document to provide human rights to children worldwide, recognizing children as persons under 18 with vulnerability and dependence. The CRC was designed to acknowledge children's rights and sought to unravel the complexity of child labour and is the most internationally ratified human rights treaty to date. The CRC is a founding framework for many bodies under the purview of the

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

United Nations, including the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

The International Labour Organization (ILO)

The International Labour Organization is another body of the United Nations aimed to eradicate all exploitative labour globally. The Organization's primary purpose is to promote social stability and prevent breaches of human rights. The standards set by the ILO are to avoid the exploitation of children; to tackle the issue of child labour. In 2002, the members of the ILO appointed June 12th as the World Day Against Child Labour to raise awareness about the issue and educate the youth on exploitations that may occur in the workplace. The World Day Against Child Labour has been a reminder for the nations within the ILO to constituents in fulfilling their commitments. This day has been a stepping stone in emphasizing the importance of actions against child labour in all UN bodies and NGOs.

The Child Labour Monitoring Within ILO (CLM)

The Child Labour Monitoring (CLM) system created within the ILO is a program that monitors workplaces with legally employed youth to prevent exploitation and breaches of human rights. The CLM is a significant temporary blockade and monitor of Child Labour. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund was the body to introduce restrictions and indicators used by the CLM to identify child labour and set hours of work and unpaid household services for different age ranges for both more and less economically developed. These hours were set using the 2008 Resolution Concerning the Measurement of Working Time as a founding pillar initially adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS).

The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

The International Programme on Eliminating Child Labour (IPEC) is another successful UN protocol. the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) was created in 1992 with the primary goal of eliminating child labour by strengthening dependent countries and initiating global awareness of this issue. The IPEC's multi-sectoral strategy has been crucial in combatting child labour. IPEC, from 2010 to 2015, led an education campaign in countries with the prominent issue of child labour. Countries included Bolivia, Indonesia, Mali and Uganda. This program was created under ILO and deals specifically with the issues concerning child labour under ILO's control.

Possible Solutions

Though SOCHUM is a generally staffed branch of the UN, it does not have the power to make binding resolutions.⁷⁰ This will prevent the committee from reaching solutions which include forcing member nations to pay a certain sum of money, using the UN's military forces (Blue

⁷⁰ https://unrcca.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/6-unrcca_handout_unsc_resolutions_eng_2020_1_2.pdf

Helmet Peacekeepers), or anything that includes building large infrastructure on the behest of the UN.⁷¹ All SOCHUM resolutions should be cooperative with affected nations at hand.

Placing Emphasis on Formative and Primary Education

Children can enter the workforce incredibly early when examining the worst cases of child labour. They can start working on agricultural and industrial output as early as 5 years of age, where they face significant risk of injury and death.⁷² In all of these countries, however, education is a critically underrated institution. Education in its most basic purpose allows for parents to lessen the burden of care for several hours, granting a greater ability to meet the production standards of their households and, in totality, the entire country.⁷³ Education also allows for a greater cultural value in protecting children from extreme labour and exploitation, as it provides a location for young minds to harness their skills without fear of retribution.⁷⁴ Encouraging systems that do such things help foster children not only into successful labourers in the future, but also create politically engaged people who grow to have the platform to defend their rights.⁷⁵ What may be difficult for the SOCHUM is the enforcement of education in countries altogether. A more practical approach would be a country-by-country analysis of the shortcomings in the education system, and providing advisory as well as financial assistance to the worst offenders.

Financial Aid to Urbanizing Areas

Developing countries are urbanizing at a rapid rate, surpassing the rate in which existing developed countries have during the Industrial Revolution.⁷⁶ The significance of this is that living standards often translate poorly from rural to urban areas. For example, in West Africa, more than half of all children in cities do not go to school.⁷⁷ Instead, they live in large “shantytowns” where disease and illegal business practices run rampant.⁷⁸ Police often do not take the proper measures to remove those living in these shantytowns, nor do governments have an incentive to invest in these areas, thus the wound festers. Children who make the transition from rural living to urban living are almost bound to be involved in the workforce as a means to feed themselves and their families.⁷⁹ By providing aid to NGOs or to local town governments, more opportunities can arise where better accommodations can be granted to people moving from the countryside to the cities.

ECOSOC Emergency Fund

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² <https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/child-labor>

⁷³ <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Action/Education/lang--en/index.htm>

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁶ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/danielrunde/2015/02/24/urbanization-development-opportunity/?sh=d0f10686ca39>

⁷⁷ <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/poverty-inequality-and-africas-education-crisis/>

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹ Ibid

As previously established, countries with weak but existing frameworks against child labour rely on such a source when disaster strikes. Thus, mitigating efforts would be appreciated. The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the branch responsible for humanitarian, social, and economic affairs.⁸⁰ Its membership is more selective than SOCHUM, distributing its roles to 54 nations around the world.⁸¹ Nominally, these countries tend to be the most affected nations in conjunction with the most wealthy benefactors– nations that rely on child slavery as well as nations that spearhead the charge against it.⁸² UN agencies often collaborate with one another to maintain its goals, in this case to maintain human rights by preparing more for emergencies. An ECOSOC Emergency Fund would entail the delegates of SOCHUM voting it necessary to suggest that the UN spend more of its existing resources into mitigatory disaster response. This money, invested upon ECOSOC, could have a specific recommendation into spending it when disasters occur, preventing the likelihood that countries affected by natural disaster or conflict need to rely on child labour.⁸³

Incentivizing Policy Reform

The most direct avenue SOCHUM can undertake is an agreement to push developing countries in reforming their economic policies. A resolution can be adopted to spend more money to go into politician's administrations only on the condition that children's labour rights are observed and enforced. Such an approach would follow a similar pattern to the International Monetary Fund's approach in "democratizing" countries.⁸⁴ Following their example, administrators can only receive loans or subsidies only if they manage to enact some kind of change, such as a law that would protect children from exploitation or reforming the police to shut down illegal labour practices.⁸⁵ This approach would have numerous drawbacks and likely plenty of backlash from the countries most affected by child labour. For one, this solution would imply that corruption is acceptable in the eyes of the UN, as dictatorships would be incentivized by them so long as they maintained a modicum of human rights for children. Secondly, this intervention may disrupt the base economies of developing countries, which still heavily rely on loans and on child labour, not one or the other.⁸⁶ Still, using the path of least resistance will inevitably lead to the most change over the shortest period of time. This may encourage the most wealthy countries to vocalize this method in discussion for a resolution.

Bloc Positions

⁸⁰ <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/members>

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Ibid

⁸³ Ibid

⁸⁴ <https://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2023/The-IMF-and-Good-Governance>

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ Ibid

West and Sub-Saharan Africa

Though the culture between these two regions vary vastly, the socioeconomic situation for the most part is the same: incapable and governments produce financially unviable schemes and short-term benefits to the treasury which ultimately bankrupt the nation, thus forcing the citizens to resort to child labour.⁸⁷ Furthermore, the trend of urbanization in these countries have skyrocketed to seemingly environmentally and economically unsustainable levels, forcing the poor to endure unlivable conditions wrought with disease, pollution, violence, and poor labour standards.⁸⁸ Thus, countries in a potential African “mega-bloc” will inevitable have to grapple with intense internal issues regarding child labour, as well as leading the charge against it in a humanitarian sense.⁸⁹ Admittance into the monolithic structure of an African bloc would be dictated by a propensity against foreign companies exploiting local labour, an inefficient governing system, high corruption, debt, and a vulnerability to natural and social disasters. As the countries on the front lines of child labour, these countries find themselves the most opposed yet most reliant on it. A hypothetical resolution to stringently enforce child slavery laws would remove 26% of African labour altogether.⁹⁰ Thus, it is the African bloc’s key goal to find a sustainable way to back off from child labour, while also thwarting the efforts predatory or removed nations.

North Africa and the Middle East

The primary connection between these regions is a religious one; the dominant religion is Islam.⁹¹ However divided the religion may be among the sects, the economics of the region can be relatively simplified by this connecting fact. The discovery of oil around the Persian Gulf ultimately made several nations in the area extremely wealthy or led to their systemic downfall.⁹² Ultimately this wealth disparity led to the Middle East and North Africa becoming an unstable region prone to regime change, civil wars, and sectarian violence.⁹³ Relations between members of this bloc are bound to be uneasy, seemingly only present because of the preexisting institutions that bring them together (like the Arab League).⁹⁴ Furthermore, countries in this bloc have a historical precedent of idleness with regards to human rights. While previous actions against child labour have been made, this bloc suffers from a similar affliction to the African bloc insofar as around 13.4 million children in the Middle East are labourers.⁹⁵ Countries of the Middle Eastern bloc are bound to have conflicts, be more conservative in their proposed

⁸⁷<https://www.transparency.org/en/news/where-are-africas-billions#:~:text=Sub%2DSaharan%20Africa%2C%20in%20particular,against%20corruption%20as%20their%20priority.>

⁸⁸<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/mobilizing-africas-rapid-urbanization-for-sustainable-climate-change/>

⁸⁹Ibid

⁹⁰<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1247455/percentage-of-children-in-child-labor-in-sub-saharan-africa/#:~:text=Africa%20has%20the%20highest%20incidence,has%20increased%2C%20peaking%20in%202021.>

⁹¹<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2011/01/27/future-of-the-global-muslim-population-regional-middle-east/>

⁹²<https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/war-yemen>

⁹³<https://www.mei.edu/publications/sectarianism-middle-east-and-asia>

⁹⁴Ibid

⁹⁵<https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/arab-states/lang--en/index.htm>

resolutions, and continue fighting their own sides in the conflicts they have involved themselves in.

North America and Europe

Europe, along with Canada and the United States, boasts some of the highest GDP per capita in the world. While it may be a generalization to assume that all European countries have this interest in mind, these countries tend to be the most internationally involved—economically, socially, and militarily speaking.^{96 97} Thus, this bloc contains the most benefactor countries as well as models for governance.⁹⁸ Countries in this bloc may be more aggressive in terms of chasing down child labour— they will also try to solve other pressing issues of their calibre as well (climate change and piracy). This focus on other topics may detract from the overall discussion, as well as be out of the reach of other SOCHUM countries to achieve. As some of the wealthiest nations on the planet, they often have predatory ulterior motives influencing their decisions, such as multinational corporations (MNCs) covertly relying on child labour.⁹⁹ Thus, whether or not this bloc chooses to audit itself for discrepancies, countries of this bloc are inevitable characterizable as some of the perpetrators of child labour. Thus, the overall thesis of this bloc should be an aggressive undertaking of the task at hand: to root out child labour by any means whether by reckless force or clever backchannel usage.

East Asia

East Asia, having already been urbanized, has somewhat abandoned child labour. Obvious exceptions exist, especially in China where children are still forced into making electronics, fishing, and creating textile products. However, legislation imposed by the ruling bodies have mostly eliminated the classical idea of child labour in the region. South Korea, Japan, and China have all taken steps towards combating the necessity of children in the workforce.^{100 101} This bloc occupies the unique position between that of the Western and African blocs in that they have, in large part, lost the need for child labour as a necessity. However, aspects such as the culture or individual economic situations dictates children can become subservient to the institution of child labour. The East Asian bloc enjoys elements of idleness as they find that a large part of their child labour force is necessary towards their operation.

Latin America

⁹⁶https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_48815.htm?

⁹⁷<https://www.positive.news/society/ranked-the-best-countries-for-social-progress/>

⁹⁸Ibid

⁹⁹ <https://impactpolicies.org/news/207/multinational-corporations-must-address-their-role-in-enabling-child-labour>

¹⁰⁰Ibid

¹⁰¹https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/research_file_attachment/southkorea_CL%5B1%5D.pdf

Latin America is a region that has a varied history with child exploitation.¹⁰² 17.4 million children are classified as child workers, and are most active in the sectors of mining, pyrotechnic manufacturing, and farming.¹⁰³ A general problem most South American nations face is the prevalence of organized crime. These criminal syndicates often take entire towns and their production hostage in affected countries, requiring protection money in exchange for the safety of the villagers.¹⁰⁴ These criminals can also easily evade the authorities by hiding in the remote parts of the country, taking their production with them. Children involved with criminal manufacturing often do not have their interests aligned with humanitarian ideals. The Latin American bloc, in response to these issues, will likely align themselves with the European bloc to combat the growth of crime.

Countries that do not belong to any of the geographic blocs listed deserve their own respective research and collaboration with those with a similar country policy.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the history of labour in your respective countries?
2. Do children receive adequate education at a formative age?
3. How stringent can the policies of your country be to prevent child labour before the general economy begins to take damage?
4. Who is responsible for child labour in your country?
5. What role do multinational companies have on the presence of child labour, if present at all?
6. Can governments, NGOs, the military, or resolutions solve the issue at hand, or is the issue a primarily cultural one?
7. What are the problems that emerging countries have regarding child labour, and how are the developed countries connected to this reasoning?

¹⁰²https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_decl_fs_50_en.pdf

¹⁰³Ibid

¹⁰⁴<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00323292221129756>

Bibliography

n.d. International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour: Home. Accessed September 10,

2023. <https://endchildlabour2021.org/>.

“.” 2022. . - Deskin Law.

http://finduslaw.com/fair_labor_standards_act_flsa_29_u_s_code_chapter_8#2.

“.” 2022. . - Bloomberg News.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aW8xVLQ4Xhr8>.

Angela Daly, Alyson Hillis, Shubhendra Man Shrestha & Babu Kaji Shrestha (2021) Breaking the child labour cycle through education: issues and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children of in-country seasonal migrant workers in the brick kilns of Nepal, *Children's Geographies*, 19:5, 622-628, DOI: [10.1080/14733285.2021.1891406](https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2021.1891406)

Barman, Jean. 2022. “Child Labour.” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/child-labour>.

CEPAL, NU. "The COVID-19 pandemic could increase child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean. Technical Note N° 1." (2020).

“Child labour.” 2017. Global Affairs Canada.

https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpementen_t/human_rights-droits_homme/child_labour-travail_enfants.aspx?lang=eng.

Child Labour in Asia and the Pacific (IPEC),

www.ilo.org/ipsec/Regionsandcountries/Asia/lang--en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20working%20children%20in%20Asia%20Pacific%20is%20by,Latin%20America%20and%20the%20Caribbean.

“Child Labour in India.” *SOS Children's Villages Canada*,

www.soschildrensvillages.ca/news/child-labour-in-india-588.

“Child Labour.” *UNICEF*, 3 June 2022, www.unicef.org/protection/child-labour.

Clarke, Joe S. 2015. "Child labour on Nestlé farms: chocolate giant's problems continue." The Guardian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/sep/02/child-labour-on-nestle-farms-chocolate-giants-problems-continue>.

"Developed countries biggest users of child labour in supply chains." n.d. TRT World. Accessed September 10, 2023.

<https://www.trtworld.com/perspectives/developed-countries-biggest-users-of-child-labour-in-supply-chains-12866159>.

Diamond, Jared. *The World until Yesterday*. Penguin, 2013.

Dubay, Alicia. 2023. "Child Labour: Facts and How to Help." World Vision Canada.

<https://www.worldvision.ca/stories/child-protection/child-labour-facts-and-how-to-help>.

Emma Griffin, Emma. "Child Labour." *British Library*, 2014, www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/child-labour.

"Handout Child Labor during the Industrial Revolution - Museum of Tolerance." *Child Labor During the Industrial Revolution*, www.museumoftolerance.com/assets/documents/children-who-labor-handout-2.pdf. Accessed 7 July 2023.

HINE, LEWIS. "Child Labor: Laws & Definition - History." *History.Com*, 2009, www.history.com/topics/industrial-revolution/child-labor.

Humphries, Jane. "Child Labor: Lessons from the Historical Experience of Today's Industrial Economies." *The World Bank Economic Review*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2003, pp. 175–96. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3990135>. Accessed 7 July 2023.

"July 20, 1899: "Newsboys Start A Strike."" n.d. City Hall Park 1899. Accessed September 10, 2023. <https://cityhallpark1899.com/newspaper-articles/brooklyn-eagle/july-20-1899/>.

“Keynote Address on Bonded Labour - National Human Rights Commission Of ...” *KEYNOTE ADDRESS ON BONDED LABOUR*,
nhrc.nic.in/sites/default/files/SPEECH_2012_10_25.pdf. Accessed 7 July 2023.

McDougall, Dan. 2007. “Child sweatshop shame threatens Gap's ethical image | Business.” The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2007/oct/28/ethicalbusiness.india>.

Morley, Andrea. "The challenges of change: Causes and consequences of child labor in China." *Human rights and human welfare: Topical research digest–Human rights in China digest* (2009): 118-129.

Nasir, Hamna, GulRukh Zahid, and Ambreen Fatima. "Effect of COVID-19 Pandemic on Child Labour: A Case Study of Pakistan." *International Journal of Social Science & Entrepreneurship* 3.2 (2023): 35-60.

“Programme of Action for the Elimination of the Exploitation of Child Labour.” n.d. Refworld. Accessed September 10, 2023. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f25618.html>.

Reid, Kathryn. “Child Labor: Facts, Faqs, and How to End It.” *World Vision*, 26 June 2023, www.worldvision.org/child-protection-news-stories/child-labor-facts.

“SDG Alliance 8.7.” n.d. ILO. Accessed September 10, 2023. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_450718.pdf.

Singh , Satendra Kumar. “Original Research Article - Journalijdr.Com.” *CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE*, 2018, www.journalijdr.com/sites/default/files/issue-pdf/11890.pdf.

S.L. Levine (2006) The ‘*picaninny wage*’. An historical overview of the persistence of structural inequality and child labour in South Africa, *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 29:3-4, 122-131, DOI: [10.1080/23323256.2006.11499938](https://doi.org/10.1080/23323256.2006.11499938)

“SOCHUM: Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Committee.” n.d. IMUNA. Accessed September 10, 2023.

<https://imuna.org/nhsmun/nyc/committees/sochum-social-humanitarian-cultural-committee/>.

Suga, Masayoshi. n.d. "United Nations sustainable development agenda." the United Nations.
Accessed September 10, 2023.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda-retired/>.

"UN General Assembly - Third Committee - Social, Humanitarian & Cultural." n.d. the United Nations. Accessed September 10, 2023. <https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/>.

White, Matthew. 2009. "The Industrial Revolution." The British Library.

<https://www.bl.uk/georgian-britain/articles/the-industrial-revolution>.

Zhu, Serena. 2022. "What is SOCHUM? | All-American Model United Nations." All-American Model UN. <https://www.allamericanmun.com/what-is-sochum/>.