

United Nations International Children's Emergency

Fund (UNICEF)

Thomas Jefferson Model United Nations Conference

TechMUN XXXII



High School General Assembly

Co-Chairs: Christine Qiao and Dina Kurdi

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology

April 11th-12th, 2025

Dear Delegates,

It is with immense pleasure that we welcome you all to TechMUN XXXII and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. We are both juniors at TJ and are elated to be working with all of you in this upcoming committee. We are excited for a weekend of debate on some of UNICEF's top issues: *Combating Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Minors* and *AI and Technology in Education*. Each of you will be representing a country, and we hope to be able to see those countries reflected through your solutions. In particular, this committee will aim to delve into certain international issues threatening our world's future.

This weekend we are looking for delegates with innovative ideas and detailed solutions to present and hope that every one of you will have a strong presence in committee to ensure debate is constantly flowing. As co-chairs, the dias would like to see eloquent, substance-filled speeches, along with exceptional leadership, teamwork, and diplomacy. While the committee is a place of debate, it is of utmost importance to be considerate and respectful of other delegates. We hope that every one of you step out of your comfort zone this weekend, whether it be through giving speeches without notepads or branching out more in unmods. Most importantly, don't give up at any point in committee — one mess-up is not the end of the world and we as your chairs understand that committee can be nerve-wracking. Ultimately, we know how it feels like to participate in committee for hours on end, so don't be afraid to make mistakes and try new things. Whether this is your first conference or you are a seasoned delegate, we hope to make this TechMUN as fun as possible. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email

uniceftechmun25@gmail.com.

Christine Qiao & Dina Kurdi

Co-Chairs, United Nations International Children's Emergency

Topic A: Combating Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Minors

Introduction:

Human trafficking, or modern-day slavery, is a severe human rights violation affecting millions worldwide. It involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of individuals through force, fraud, or coercion for exploitation. Children are particularly vulnerable, making up a significant portion of trafficking victims globally. Child trafficking occurs in various forms, including forced labor, sexual exploitation, and involvement in criminal activities. Understanding its complexities is crucial for effective prevention and intervention efforts. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported nearly 70,000 identified trafficking victims in 2022, with children accounting for 38%. However, due to challenges in detection and reporting, the actual number is likely much higher. Children make up nearly a third of trafficked victims worldwide, with even higher rates in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Central America, where they comprise 64% and 62% of victims, respectively.

Child trafficking takes many forms, all of which cause severe harm. Forced labor is one of the most common, with children working under hazardous conditions in quarries, mines, factories, plantations, and fishing boats, often without pay. This exploitation deprives them of their childhood, education, and basic rights while exposing them to serious health risks. Sexual exploitation is another devastating form, where children are forced into prostitution, pornography, and other abuses in brothels, bars, homes, and increasingly, online. Many victims endure physical harm, including violence, malnutrition, and hazardous working conditions that result in chronic health problems. The trauma from such abuse can lead to long-term mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and PTSD.

Children are most vulnerable to being exploited in illicit activities such as drug trafficking, theft, and armed conflict, where they may serve as combatants or informants, further exposing them to violence and crime. Several factors contribute to children's vulnerability to trafficking, making it a deeply rooted issue. Poverty is a major driver, as economic hardship forces children and families into desperate situations where they may unknowingly fall into the hands of traffickers. Limited access to education further increases their risk, as children without schooling have fewer opportunities for a stable future. Unstable home environments, including domestic violence and family dysfunction, also heighten their susceptibility. Social marginalization is another major consequence, as the stigma associated with trafficking makes reintegration difficult, leaving survivors isolated and struggling to find opportunities for education or employment. Without proper support systems, many victims remain trapped in cycles of exploitation or face immense challenges in rebuilding their lives. Humanitarian crises such as conflict, natural disasters, and pandemics further weaken social protections, leaving children unprotected and at greater risk of exploitation.

Current Situation:

Reports indicate that economic instability, armed conflicts, and climate-related disasters have intensified vulnerabilities, leaving children more susceptible to traffickers. Additionally, displacement due to migration and humanitarian crises has made it easier for traffickers to exploit unprotected minors, often using deception, coercion, or threats.

Technological advancements have further complicated efforts to combat trafficking, as criminals use encrypted messaging apps and online platforms to recruit and exploit victims while evading detection. Many traffickers now operate under the guise of legitimate businesses, making their crimes more difficult to uncover.

Possible Solutions:

Addressing the human trafficking and sexual exploitation of minors requires a multifaceted approach. Strengthening legal frameworks is essential to deter perpetrators and protect victims. Enhancing support services ensures survivors receive necessary care and assistance. Leveraging technology can aid in identifying and preventing exploitation. Raising public awareness educates communities on recognizing and reporting trafficking. Addressing root causes, such as poverty and lack of education, reduces vulnerabilities that traffickers exploit. Collectively, these strategies contribute to combating the exploitation of minors.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can we balance the advancement of technology with safeguards to prevent its misuse in exploiting minors?
2. What role can communities play in early detection and prevention of child trafficking?
3. How can international collaboration be enhanced to tackle cross-border trafficking effectively?
4. In what ways can we ensure that survivors receive holistic support to prevent re-victimization?

Helpful Links:

- https://www.unodc.org/unodc/frontpage/2024/July/explainer_-understanding-child-traffic-king.html
- <https://www.unicef.org/protection/protecting-children-from-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse>
- <https://www.unicef.org/child-protection>

Topic B: Artificial Intelligence and Technology in Education

Introduction:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other rapidly advancing technologies are transforming education worldwide. AI-driven tools, including adaptive learning platforms, automated grading systems, and personalized learning applications, hold the promise of improving educational quality, accessibility, and efficiency. These technologies have the potential to bridge gaps in education systems by providing tailored learning experiences, supporting students with disabilities, and assisting overburdened teachers. In low-resource settings, AI-powered platforms can help address teacher shortages and enable remote learning.

However, while AI and technology in education offer exciting opportunities, they also raise significant challenges and concerns. A critical issue is unequal access to technology, which exacerbates educational inequalities between wealthy and marginalized communities. According to UNICEF, two-thirds of the world's school-aged children lack internet access at home, limiting their ability to benefit from online learning and AI-driven tools. Furthermore, concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the replacement of human teachers have sparked debates about the ethical use of AI in classrooms. For example, algorithms that personalize learning might unintentionally reinforce biases if they are not properly designed, and AI's role in assessing students' abilities could result in unfair outcomes if not carefully monitored.

As AI and educational technology (EdTech) become increasingly prevalent, addressing these concerns while maximizing their benefits is essential to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.

Current Situation:

The integration of AI and technology in education has rapidly increased, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic pushed schools toward online and hybrid learning. AI is now used for adaptive learning platforms, language translation, identifying at-risk students, and reducing teacher workloads. However, disparities in access persist, as low-income countries, rural areas, and marginalized groups often lack reliable internet and devices. Even in wealthier nations, the digital divide affects many students. AI can also reinforce biases if trained on flawed data and raises privacy concerns due to sensitive student information. Without international guidelines, regulating AI's ethical use remains a challenge, and some fear overreliance on AI may replace essential human aspects of teaching like mentorship and emotional support.

Possible Solutions:

Addressing the challenges and opportunities of AI and technology in education requires a comprehensive approach. Governments should implement clear policies to regulate AI use while ensuring equitable access to technology for all students. Investing in teacher training and digital infrastructure can help bridge educational gaps and maximize AI's benefits. International collaboration is essential to share best practices and prevent the misuse of AI, while public awareness campaigns can promote responsible use of technology in learning environments. Together, these efforts can ensure AI and technology are used ethically and effectively to enhance global education.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can we ensure that AI and technology in education promote equity and inclusion rather than deepen existing divides?
2. What international guidelines or frameworks could regulate the ethical use of AI in classrooms?

3. How can governments and international organizations balance technological innovation with data privacy and security for students?
4. In what ways can we support teachers and educators in adapting to AI-enhanced classrooms without replacing human interaction?
5. How can AI be leveraged to assist children in crisis-affected or low-resource regions?

Helpful Links:

- <https://www.unesco.org/en/digital-education/artificial-intelligence>
- <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4>
- <https://www.unicef.org/education>
- <https://www.unicef.org/digitaleducation/>



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