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I. Letter from the Secretary-General

Highly Esteemed Delegates,

First of all, I would like to thank all of you for your enthusiasm and interest in our conference. My name is Yaren Keçili and I would like to express my gratitude to be able to welcome you to the seventh annual session of Troy Model United Nations Conference 2024 as your Secretary-General. This year, as always, we feel great joy to present to you our hard work. Both the academic and operations teams have been working very hard to serve you to the best of their abilities and give you an unforgettable experience.

I would like to admit that this committee has a soft spot in my heart as I have been working on UN Women in the previous couple of years. This year we have decided to call attention to the matters of Domestic Violence and Child Labour. Our world has been facing challenges on this matter for centuries and even though it feels shameful to still have issues regarding this topic, it is also our responsibility to ensure that next generations will not have to focus on such matters. Therefore, I genuinely hope to see fruitful debates being discussed during this committee. I also want to thank Mert Arda Özdemir who is going to serve as your Under-Secretary-General in UN Women. He and his board members need all the praise for their work.

Once again I would like to welcome you all to both the conference and the committee. Buckle up and get ready because we have prepared an incredible ride for you. Let's have three days full of fun, diplomacy, and memories not to be forgotten.

Yours Sincerely,

Yaren Keçili

Secretary-General of TroyMUN

II. Letter From The Under-Secretary-General

Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of my chair board, I would like to welcome you all to the committee of UN Women in TroyMUN 2024. My name is Mert Arda Özdemir and it is my utmost pleasure and honor to serve as your main chair in the committee and one of the Under-Secretary-Generals in this year's organization.

As the Chair Board, we believe that delegates with a passion for politics, equality, and international relations will undoubtedly make every effort to have a fruitful committee. This year's agenda item focuses on Domestic Violence and Child Labour. We hope to raise awareness on the matter and give our delegates a broader view of the problem. This study guide aims to give background and general information about the committee and the agenda but it is expected for the participants to do further research and expand their knowledge on the issues at hand.

I would like to thank Ms. Çağlayan Nazlıca and Ms. Arzu Kotan for making this conference possible and for all their efforts. They have been working together for years in the creation of several previous conferences and it is always a pleasure to work with them.

I would like to welcome you all to TroyMUN'24 once again. I hope to meet you all soon.

Sincerely,

Mert Arda Özdemir

Under-Secretary-General responsible for UN Women

III. Introduction to the Committee: UN Women

UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.



The birth of the commission on the status of women was when United Nations commitments to the advancement of women began with the signing of the United Nations Charter in San Francisco in 1945. In its preamble, it reaffirms “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small”.

During the inaugural meetings of the United Nations General Assembly in London in February 1946, Eleanor Roosevelt, a United States delegate, read an open letter addressed to “the women of the world”. A few days later, the Subcommission on the Status of Women was established under the Commission on Human Rights.

Throughout its over 70 years of existence and its 62 sessions, the Commission on the Status of Women has consistently advocated for the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and enjoyment of their human rights, in an effort to realize the substantive equality of all women and girls, everywhere. [1]

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system’s work in advancing gender equality, and in all deliberations and agreements linked to the 2030 Agenda.[2]

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were eight international development goals for the year 2015 created following the Millennium Summit, following the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Sustainable Development Goal 5 concerns gender equality and is fifth of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations in 2015. Gender equality by 2030 requires urgent action to eliminate the many root causes of discrimination that still curtail women's rights in private and public spheres.

UN Women acts to empower women and girls across all its programmes and advocacy. With stepped up action on gender equality, every part of the world can make progress towards sustainable development by 2030, leaving no one behind.



Working for the empowerment and rights of women and girls globally, UN Women's main roles are:

- To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
- To help Member States implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
- To lead and coordinate the UN system's work on gender equality, as well as promote accountability, including through regular monitoring of system-wide progress.[3]

Headquartered at the United Nations in New York, UN Women promotes women's empowerment, rights and gender equality globally, as well as within and among individual countries through a network of regional, country and liaison offices. UN Women continues their work in several regions listed as : Africa, Americas and The Caribbean, Arab States and North Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia.[4]

I. Introduction to the Agenda Item: Domestic Violence and Child Labour

A. Domestic Violence

1. Historical Context

Domestic violence has been visible throughout history. In early Roman society, a woman was deemed the property of the husband and was therefore subject to his control. According to early Roman law, a man could beat, divorce, or murder his wife for offenses committed by her, which besmirched his honor or threatened his property rights. These were considered private matters and were not publicly scrutinized.

The Catholic Church's endorsement of "The Rules of Marriage" in the 15th century exhorted the husband to stand as judge of his wife. He was to beat her with a stick upon her commission of an offense. According to the "Rules," beating showed concern for the wife's soul. The common law in England gave a man the right to beat his wife in the interest of maintaining family discipline. The phrase "rule of thumb" referred to the English common law, which allowed a husband to beat his wife as long as he used a stick that was no bigger than his thumb.

In early America, English law greatly affected the decisions of the colonial courts. The Puritans openly banned family violence. The laws,

however, lacked strict enforcement. It was not until the 1870's that the first states banned a man's right to beat his family. The laws were moderately enforced until the feminist movement of the 1960's started bringing the problems of domestic abuse to the attention of the media.[5]



2. What is “Domestic Violence”?

Domestic abuse, also called "domestic violence" or "intimate partner violence", can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. Domestic abuse can be mental, physical, economic or sexual in nature. Incidents are rarely isolated, and usually escalate in frequency and severity. Domestic abuse may culminate in serious physical injury or death. Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith or class.[6]

3. Types of Domestic Violence and Reasons Why It Occurs

Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. Here are the types of domestic abuse that are committed:

1. Emotional abuse: includes undermining a person's sense of self-worth through constant criticism; belittling one's abilities; name-calling or other verbal abuse; damaging a partner's relationship with the children; or not letting a partner see friends and family.

2. Psychological abuse: involves causing fear by intimidation; threatening physical harm to self, partner or children; destruction of pets and property; “mind games”; or forcing isolation from friends, family, school and/or work.

3. Financial or economic abuse: involves making or attempting to make a person financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding access to money, and/or forbidding attendance at school or employment.



4. Sexual abuse: involves forcing a partner to take part in a sex act when the partner does not consent.

5. Physical abuse: involves hurting or trying to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, burning, grabbing, pinching, shoving, slapping, hair-pulling, biting, denying medical care or forcing alcohol and/or drug use, or using other physical force.[7]



Abusers use domestic violence to gain power and control over their targets. Domestic violence is a choice on the part of the abuser, but certain underlying factors might sometimes contribute to a person's propensity for abuse, including:

1. Anger management issues
2. Jealousy
3. Low self-esteem
4. Feeling inferior
5. Cultural beliefs they have the right to control their partner
6. Personality disorder or psychological disorder
7. Learned behavior from growing up in a family where domestic violence was accepted
8. Alcohol and drugs, as an impaired individual may be less likely to control violent impulses
9. Stress caused by insufficient income [8]

4. Statistics on Women Who Face Domestic Violence

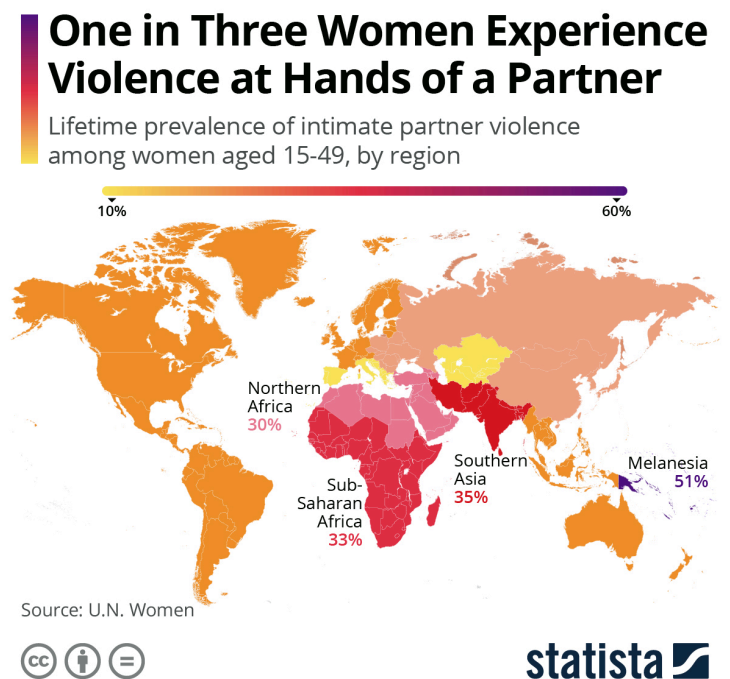
In 2015, the United Kingdom's Home Office widened the definition of domestic violence to include coercive control. Worldwide, the victims of domestic violence are overwhelmingly women, and women tend to experience more severe forms of violence. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates one in three of all women are subject to domestic violence at some point in their life. [9]

In some countries, domestic violence may be seen as justified or legally permitted, particularly in cases of actual or suspected infidelity on the part of the woman. The social acceptability of domestic violence also differs by country. While in most developed countries domestic violence is considered unacceptable by most people, in many regions of the world the views are different: according to a UNICEF survey, the

percentage of women aged 15–49 who think that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstance is, 90% in Afghanistan and Jordan, 87% in Mali, 86% in Guinea and Timor-Leste, 81% in Laos, 80% in Central African Republic. Refusing to submit to a husband's wishes is a common reason given for justification of violence in developing countries: for instance 62.4% of women in Tajikistan justify wife beating if the wife goes out without telling the husband; 68% if she argues with him; 47.9% if she refuses to have sex with him.

Other statistics show that;

- Pregnant women experience the highest rate of domestic violence compared to other demographics. Annually, about 325,000 pregnant women face domestic abuse in their homes.
- 53% of female violence survivors still involved with the perpetrator experienced self-blame which also causes mental health problems.



- 45 million children witness family violence during their childhood.
- On a typical day, domestic violence hotlines receive more than 20,000 phone calls nationwide. Ironically, domestic violence is among the most underreported crimes worldwide for both men and women.
- Intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crimes. [10]

5. Organizations Established for Domestic Violence

1. National Coalition Against Domestic Violence: A Voice For Survivors

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence works with members of Congress to improve legislation dealing with domestic violence.

Responding to the problem of domestic violence

offenders who fight with victims for custody of their

children, NCADV advocates for legislation that keeps the best interest of the children in mind. In

1994, NCADV was part of a team to pass the Violence Against Women Act to provide funding for

investigation into domestic violence and prosecution of offenders. The National Coalition Against

Domestic Violence has also helped with the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act,

International Violence Against Women Act, and Legislative Action Day.



2. LifeWire: Accessible, Inclusive and Survivor-Focused Advocacy

LifeWire helps adults, children, and the elderly in survivor-driven advocacy and initiatives. They run a 24-hour helpline that provides support and resources for the families, survivors, and the community.

LifeWire also provides Mental Health Therapy to manage the effects

of trauma. Legal Advocacy and housing services for survivors and their children. In 2020, LifeWire

helped more than 3,200 survivors in achieving recovery and empowerment. 282 families found



stable and safer housing, and over 400 survivors were provided with legal aid and therapy. Over 2,000 students were reached to educate them about dating violence and building healthy connections.

3. Safe Horizon: Moving Victims of Violence from Crisis to Confidence

Safe Horizon supports victims of domestic violence, stalking, human trafficking, sexual assault, and child abuse. They provide various resources, including an Anti-Trafficking Program, domestic violence shelter, and community programs to help crime victims heal, rebuild their lives, and get justice. They also provide confidential one-on-one support and counseling for victims of crime through their hotlines. Safe Horizon supports over 250,000 victims of crime and abuse every year. They partner with governmental agencies to advocate for policies on local, state, and national levels for those affected by abuse and violence. In addition, after over a decade of advocacy, they influenced the New York State Legislature to pass the Child Victims Act, giving adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse a chance to seek justice. [11]



6. Case Studies

Psychological abuse - Marianna's story

“I got married at the age of 18 and believed our lives would be perfect. When my ex-partner got his way, he was wonderful. When he didn’t he would blame me whether it was my fault or not. If I got upset or challenged him, he would say I was weak and didn’t know what I was doing. He would say I was stupid. I would arrive at a pre-booked appointment at the hairdressers and find it was canceled. I thought I was losing my memory or my sanity. He used to try to exclude me when we attended gatherings, whispering to tell me to



leave because I wasn't welcome. If I got upset he would make it look like I had mental health issues and I was being oversensitive. With the support of my counselor and family law solicitor, I have now got a Non-Molestation Order and Occupation Order against my ex-partner and I have started divorce proceedings.”

Physical abuse - Jenny's story

“When I met Ted everything seemed perfect. I got pregnant soon after and was so excited to be expecting our first child, I thought he would be too. When I told Ted the happy news, everything changed. He held me down and shouted at me and when I struggled to get loose, he hit me. One day he returned home from work and told me that if I didn't terminate the pregnancy he would kill me and the child. I decided to run to my friend's house. But Ted found my packed suitcase and pushed me down the stairs. When I was in hospital, I decided to tell my story to the nurse. I felt powerless, lost and scared but the nurse helped me plan to leave. She got me details for a domestic abuse charity and, with their help, a refuge space. I was able to access a solicitor via legal aid and get a non-molestation order. Ted can no longer come near me.”

Sexual abuse - Husna's story

“I experienced years of sexual abuse during my long-term relationship with my ex-partner. After I gave birth, I told him I didn't feel comfortable having sex as I was in a lot of pain. But he forced me to sleep with him on a daily basis when he arrived home from work, drunk and demanding. I became to feel worthless. To make matters worse he attended all my medical appointments so that I would not have a chance to disclose anything. At family gatherings, he acted the part of a devoted husband and father. I eventually fled with the help of the police and a domestic abuse charity. I spent 3 months in a refuge before moving to a rented house. The police prosecuted, my ex pleaded guilty to rape and was sent to prison. I was not aware that domestic abuse included sexual abuse. I am now a qualified dentist and I volunteer to support other survivors who have been affected by domestic abuse.”

Financial abuse - Halima's story

“At the start, I was so happy with Kala - he appeared very genuine and caring. Really charming. But then, our relationship began to change - he started to tell me that because of my dyspraxia I shouldn't be in charge of finances. We met at uni, I was a full time student but worked too, where I could. He didn't - and because he was an international student he said he couldn't work or access any grants or benefits. But he would frequently take money from me. And made me feel guilty if I refused to buy him stuff - he even asked for designer gifts. I trusted him, and he used this to get access to all my bank cards and details. It even turned out later he'd taken out a loan in my name. I started getting really suspicious when letters arrived about repayments that I could not afford. Finally I confided in some mates: Ari and Nadia, who suggested ending the toxic relationship with Kala and reporting the bank fraud to the police. With their help and support, I was able to finish with Kala, get financial support, rebuild my confidence and my life.”

Emotional abuse - Jane's story

“My partner was very insecure about my past relationships and became jealous of anyone he thought might be ‘a threat’. At the beginning, it seemed almost charming – like he wanted to be number in my world... but over time it became more and more frightening. Whenever I went out, Max would want to know why, where I'd be and exactly who'd be there. If I came home



later than I said, he'd accuse me of having an affair. He would shout, swear and square up to me – it started happening multiple times a week. Next day he was always sorry and “felt so bad - he'd never do it again”. Over time he stopped me from talking with friends freely. I started to believe that Max's behavior was my fault, like he said. My self-esteem was wrecked and I spent most days crying. In the end it was my GP who helped me take the first step. She also wrote a letter for me, I was able to get legal aid and advice and was able to stand up to Max's abuse and escape him.” [12]

B. Child Labour

1. Historical Context

Throughout history, children have contributed to the economic upkeep of their families through farm labor and handicrafts. However, the growth of manufacturing and farm mechanization during the Industrial Revolution in Europe and the United



States in the 18th and 19th centuries led to many children working under dangerous conditions in factories and farms. In the Victorian era, child labour notoriously became fatal and hazardous with children as young as four years working in industrial factories. They were expected to crawl through tunnels that were too narrow for adults in coal mines, endangering their lives. The working hours were long ranging between 52 to 80 hours while their wages were very low, 10-20% of an adult male's pay. Several children also worked as prostitutes.[13]

2. What is “Child Labour”?

Child labour refers to children who are under the age determined by law or custom and are employed. Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour. Some activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life. This includes activities such as assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays.

The term “child labour” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that:

- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or
- interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. [14]

3. Main Reasons That Increase Child Labour Rates

1. Poverty and Unemployment

Poverty is a determining factor of child labour. Poor families send their children to work (or ask them to work in the family business) because they don't have enough income and nor do they have access to decent work. [15]

2. Inadequate Education Opportunities

Lack of quality education limits the chances of the child worker to escape from the cycle of poverty. Educational gaps impact on child laborers as they move into adulthood as low levels of literacy and vocational qualifications deprive them of decent work opportunities, not allowing them to get out from poverty.



Some reasons children cannot get the education they need to get out of this cycle include, high school costs which parents cannot afford, lack of education centers and opportunities, children having to work full time to help their families survive and more. [16]

3. Ingrained Cultural Traditions Surrounding Child Labour

Various cultural norms and traditions around the world tacitly encourage child labour by promoting the importance of work to a child's development. For example, certain cultures believe that working is important for character and skill development, regardless of the effects this might have on a child's realization of their human rights. Children are expected to follow in their parent's footsteps and learn a particular trade in order to support their families. Other traditions encourage children to work to pay off debts borne from social occasions and religious events. These widespread and varied manifestations of bonded labor take advantage of children's vulnerable position within wider societies and cultural expectations. In this way, children are often framed as family supporters, rather than dependents. [17]

5. Global Demand for Cheap Labour and Weak Labour Laws

The demand for cheap labour significantly contributes to the increase in child labour, especially in underdeveloped and developing countries where labour laws may be less strictly or not enforced at all. This may be because of the laws themselves not being enough, or the lack of law enforcement units. Businesses seeking to lower their production costs usually resort to child labour as it is cheaper and more easily exploitable than other options. Child laborers often get paid less than adults because of their vulnerability. Employers may offer lower wages to children knowing they are less likely to make claims upon their low wages and undesirable working conditions. [18]

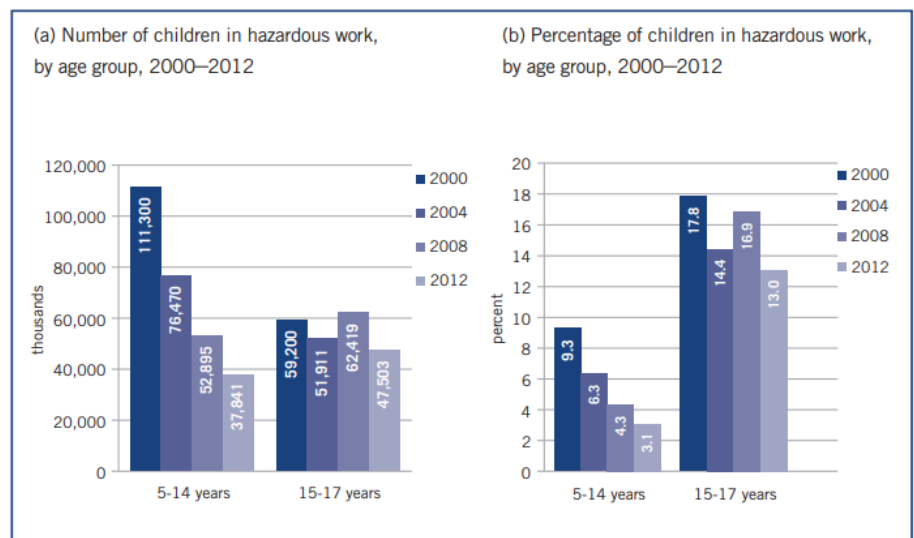
4. Statistics for Children Contributing to Workforce

A total of 160 million children – 63 million girls and 97 million boys – are in child labour globally, accounting for almost one in ten of all children worldwide. Nearly half of all those in child labour – 79 million children in absolute terms – are in hazardous work that directly endangers their health, safety, and moral development. [19]

The incidence of hazardous work among adolescents aged 15 to 17 years is highest in Nicaragua (34 per cent), Cambodia (30 per cent), Honduras (27 per cent) and Lao PDR (26 per cent). The number of adolescents in hazardous

work is greatest in populous India (2.4 million), Pakistan (1.3 million) and Indonesia (1.2 million).

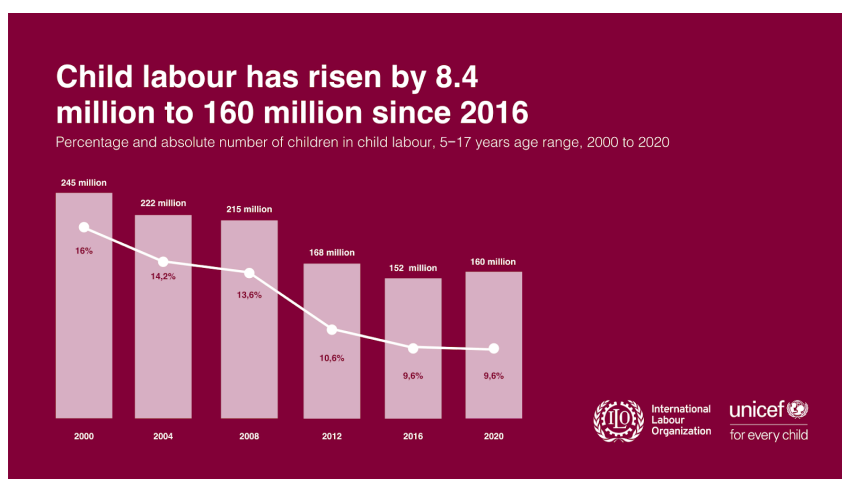
There is substantial variation in terms of the involvement in hazardous work between rural and urban areas in many countries. The countries which have the largest rural/ urban differences, e.g. Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Brazil, Ecuador, Cambodia, VietNam and Lao PDR, where agriculture predominates in the rural areas, consistently have the highest hazardous rates. This



highlights the importance of area- and sector specific targeting of interventions which address hazardous work among adolescents. [20]

Hazardous work cannot be acceptable for children because of basic biology. Children are not simply smaller adults, they are physically and mentally different; and regardless of cultural perceptions or social construct, the transition to biological adulthood extends past puberty well into the late teen years. This is the foundation for the argument against hazardous work of children. the rationale for why it is classed as a “worst form of child labour [that] requires immediate and comprehensive action”.

- Children have thinner skin, so toxics are more easily absorbed.
- Children breathe faster and more deeply, so can inhale more airborne pathogens and dusts.
- Children dehydrate more easily due to their larger skin surface and because of their faster breathing.
- Children absorb and retain heavy metals (lead, mercury) in the brain more easily.
- Children’s endocrine system (which plays a key role in growth and development) can be disrupted by chemicals.
- Children’s enzyme systems are still developing so are less able to detoxify hazardous substances.
- Children use more energy when growing and so are at higher risk from metabolized toxins. Children require more sleep for proper development.
- Children’s less-developed thermoregulatory systems make them more sensitive to heat and cold. [21]



5. Organizations Established for Child Labour

Save The Children

This organization is one of the biggest international NGOs advancing and protecting the rights of children in almost 120 countries around the world.

Save the Children works in the most disadvantaged local communities

educating them about the rights of children and helping them understand

that children are meant to be at school and not work. It also works on

building the capacities of duty bearers to deliver appropriate care and protection for children and

advocates for policies and laws that are in line with the standards set out in the UN Convention on

Rights of the Child. [22]



Global March

The global march started in 1998 by the founder nobel peace prize winner Kailash Saityarthi has been at the forefront of the global movement to end child slavery and exploitative child labour since 1980.

They contributed considerably to the reduction of child labour and ensuring education for all, and most

importantly have enabled and empowered thousands of children to stand up, speak out and to

defend their own rights, among others by organasing several Children's world congresses. [23]



ACE (Action Against Child Exploitation)

ACE is a Japanese based NGO for international cooperation with a vision to realize the rights of children and safe society for all children. It takes direct action for the abolition and prevention of

child labor with citizens of Japan. Currently, the ACE works on the abolition of child labor in

Japan, India, and Ghana. The organization operates not only through activities of international

cooperation, but also through cooperation with private corporations and engagement in consumer

education. [24]

6. Case Studies

a) Ghana

Investing in Children's Education in Cocoa-Growing Communities led by International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) Education plays an essential role in tackling child labour, with research indicating that communities



with improved access to quality education experience lower rates of child labour. This is why the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) is committed to ensuring that children in cocoa-growing communities get access to quality education. Hwiremoase Methodist Primary School, located in the Adansi Asokwa district in the Ashanti Region of Ghana is one of the schools to have received school desks from ICI last year. The school was struggling with a lack of desks, and on many occasions students were crowded onto one desk, which was affecting teaching and learning. Mr. Peter Mensah, a teacher in the school explained the situation before the school received the desks: "We used to waste a lot of time with the students taking turns to write, but now everyone can sit and focus." Peter further added that the provision of desks has not only improved writing but also helped increase the number of students who stay in school because they no longer have the excuse of not having a proper place to sit. [25]

b) Cambodia-Child Labour Protection and Participation Program led by World Vision

Over 1.6 million children 5-17 years old are engaged in some form of child labour. The majority of which are believed to have been trafficked, 85 percent of children migrating to Phnom Penh are seeking a job. At least 200 under-aged girls enter the sex industry each year. Street children and children living in institutions are also vulnerable. These issues are compounded by problems with inadequate



social services where there can be just 1 district social worker to 25,000 people. Police enforcement and judicial systems in handling cases that involve children also impact the number of children being exploited. They are increasing the communities' ability to advocate for and monitor the implementation of laws and policies designed to protect children. They are working to reduce gender-based violence and strengthen the mechanisms that allow children to have a voice at both community and national levels. [26]

V. Further Reading

- <https://www.weeps.org/resources>
- <https://www.unwomen.org/en/resources>
- <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/annual-report>
- https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories?f%5B0%5D=story_type%3A1460
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