

COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE: CHILD LABOR

ACTIVITY CARD

Throughout history, children have helped supplement their family's income by working alongside their parents and siblings in farms, mills and small shops. This drew little notice or concern until industrialization dramatically changed the working conditions for children. Concerns have also risen due to changes in the way the childhood years are perceived by many nations, and the rising importance placed on education as an instrument to economic independence and prosperity. However, child labor still exists. There are important contributing factors such as persisting social attitudes that do not consider child labor a serious problem, lack of education, inadequate enforcement of anti-child labor laws, and most of all, poverty. Perhaps the most distressing aspect of child labor is that it perpetuates the cycle of poverty.

- 1. Directions:** As a group, discuss the questions below so that you become knowledgeable about your country's position on child labor. Use your *World Problems Scenario* as a resource. In addition, investigate the websites from the Scenario (at the beginning of the Country Profiles section, and the Child Labor section under Human Rights), and the ICONS research library – linked to *Delegate Central* at www.cwhp.info/delegates.html. **In your investigations, you should come to learn whether or not your country has signed / ratified important United Nations conventions such as *ILO 182, Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*, etc., and why.**
2. What is the present situation for the country you represent regarding the economic issue of child labor? What kinds of laws and policies has your country used to deal with its child labor issue? What is your country's present position on the issue of child labor? What is the relationship between these child labor issues and education?
3. Compare and contrast the realities of child labor in developing and developed countries. What factors account for the differences and similarities that you find between these two types of nations? How does the international community respond to these differences and similarities? Should the international community develop common standards for using child labor?
4. Is it ever justifiable for a country to permit child labor to take place? If so, under what circumstances? If not, how should the issue of child labor be addressed so as to end the practice? Whether or not child labor is a major or minor problem in your country, what actions would your nation need to take to end the practice at home and/or worldwide? In your answer, you should focus on the role of **education**.
5. Identify key child labor problems and challenges that do or do not exist in your country. Prioritize the existing problems and challenges in terms of seriousness and urgency regarding the need for attention.
6. Define the goals your country has in dealing with the key child labor problems and challenges that you have prioritized. Prioritize your goals for dealing with your country's child labor issues and how they may help or hurt your country economically.
7. What are possible national and international methods for achieving these goals? What strategies or plans can you suggest? There should be more emphasis on international plans that can be negotiated with other countries, or national plans that other countries might be persuaded to replicate in their own nations.

Task: Design a visual that has four distinct sections: 1) A brief summary of key points on the child labor situation in your country and the policy approaches that have been used; 2) A prioritized list of the key child labor problems and challenges for your country; 3) A prioritized list of the goals your country has for dealing with its child labor issues; and 4) The national and international plans and strategies you have for achieving your goals for dealing with child labor issues in your country and worldwide, especially as they relate to education. Present your visual to the class with the kind of depth and breadth of explanation that will thoroughly teach your fellow delegates about the issue of child labor.

How can the problems of the modern world be resolved?

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TASK EVALUATION CRITERIA

- **Visual includes four distinct sections and makes use of color, symbols, maps, timelines, charts, graphs, or other visual techniques that help to convey information.**
- **Visual includes a summary of key points on the current child labor situation in your country and summarizes the policy approaches your country has used in dealing with child labor issues.**
- **Visual includes a prioritized list of the key child labor problems and challenges your country faces.**
- **Visual includes a prioritized list of the goals your country has for dealing with its own child labor issues.**
- **Visual includes the national and international plans your group has for achieving your country's child labor goals and child labor issues worldwide, especially as they relate to education.**
- **Presentation teaches the class about the issue of child labor in your country and its relationship to education.**