

Child Labour

‘Child labour exists because we allow it to exist’

Ms. Shanta Sinha, Chair of Children’s Rights Commission, India.

By Development Education Unit, Concern Worldwide

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Cover pic:
BANGLADESH Narayanganj, Nr. Dhaka.
A child labourer carrying bundles of garments in a textiles factory.
Most of the workers in this factory are children.
Photo: G.M.B. Akash/Panos Pictures

Inside cover pic:
YEMEN Hays
Nagat, aged 9, works in the fields in Al Fash village.
Photo: Abbie Trayler-Smith/Panos Pictures

Child labour is any work done by a child that may be harmful to their physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



Foreword

Despite the world's promises to care for every child, the scourge of child labour still leaves countless children deprived of their most basic rights. In order to guarantee that these rights are secure, the international community must make the protection of children the first priority in countries where child labour is present. Businesses must redouble their efforts to ensure that no child labour is used in the production of any good, and above all people, wherever they may live, must make it clear that the abuse of children as child labourers has no place in this world.

This book is written for anyone interested in learning about child labour and how to take action against it.

'Stop Child Labour – School is the Best Place to Work'



An international campaign which seeks to eliminate child labour through the provision of full-time education.

The campaign has two core objectives:

1. To challenge and bring an end to, all forms of child labour and to challenge those who would argue for its retention
2. To support the global campaign for education which seeks to provide Education For All (EFA)

The Reality

There are

218 million

child labourers in the world

14% of all children between 5 and 17 years are child labourers

1 in 7 children around the world is a child labourer

63% of children in Mali aged 5-14 years are child labourers.

38% of children in Cambodia and **47%** in Burkina Faso are working

22% of child labourers work in the service industry – retail, restaurants & hotels, transport, finance, business, community and social services

9% of child labourers work in industry – mining, quarrying, manufacturing, construction and public utilities

Latin America and the Caribbean are making the greatest progress in tackling child labour while the highest incidence of child labour can be found in sub-Saharan Africa

Every year **22,000** children die in work related accidents

69% of child labourers work in agriculture – hunting, forestry, fishing and agriculture

The proportion of girls working is not decreasing and girls are more likely to be child labourers than boys

Progress has been made: the number of child labourers fell globally by 11% from 2002 to 2006 and the number of children in hazardous work decreased by 26% - *'child work is declining, and the more harmful the work and the more vulnerable the children involved, the faster the decline'* (ILO 2006)