DOCUMENT ONE

CHILD LABOUR – THE ISSUES

"We are the world's children.
We are the victims of exploitation and abuse.
We are street children.
We are the children of war.
We are the victims and orphans of HIV/AIDS.
We are denied good quality education and health care.
We are victims of political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental discrimination.
We are children whose voices are not being heard: it is time we are taken into account.
We want a world fit for children, because a world fit for us is a world fit for everyone."

Statement from the Children's Forum to the United Nations, May 2002

In May 2002, two teenagers from Bolivia and Monaco delivered this message to a special meeting of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly about children. Gabriela Azurduy Arrieta and Audrey Cheynut summarised the views of a special Children's Forum, which coincided with the General Assembly session. They gave a clear message that young people think that the UN and governments have not done enough to end the exploitation and abuse of children.

In the opening decade of the 21st century, reports about children being exploited to make money for others are even more horrifying than the accounts that circulated during much of the last century. For example, children are – literally – enslaved to make carpets that decorate homes in Europe and North America. They are whipped because their employer thinks child servants should collect buckets of water more quickly. They are held captive so that older men can have sex with them. They are even recruited as cannon fodder for political purposes.

The sheer numbers are both startling and sobering – literally tens of millions of children around the world today work long hours before they have even reached the age of 10, let alone 18.

Child labour came under the international spotlight in the 1990s. For the first time since the industrialised world's campaigns on the issue a century earlier, diplomats and economists started discussing why vast numbers of children were working rather than being educated, and what should be done about it. This time, the focus was on developing countries.

This new attention to an old issue was largely due to worries raised by people in industrialised countries such as the United Kingdom. Trade unionists, politicians and campaigners for social justice voiced concern that jobs were disappearing rapidly as businesses switched production from the industrialised world to developing countries where labour costs were much lower. Simultaneously, organisations in developing countries sounded the alarm when they saw children working longer and longer hours – not only producing goods for export, but also providing a cheap and malleable workforce for the local economy. Their worry was echoed by activists in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, who realised that the transition that started in 1989 was provoking an economic crisis which hit children particularly hard.

As more attention was given to the work children were performing, so the statistics about the numbers involved became more startling. The estimates of children between 5 and 14 in full-time employment had risen from 100 million at the beginning of the 1990s to 120 million by 1996. Six years later, when the information available had been scrutinised more carefully, the total was estimated at 211 million, along with a further 141 million young people aged 15 to 17 who were

also in employment. At the beginning of the new millennium, 1 in 12 children in the world was reckoned to be involved in work which put their health at risk or caused them serious harm.
The late 1990s saw a series of initiatives – by governments and international organisations such as UNICEF, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank – to consider the policies needed to address child labour globally, and the priorities for action.
Two separate international conferences in 1997, in Amsterdam and Oslo, agreed to a proposal that stopping types of child labour that caused particular harm to children should be a priority – referred to initially as "intolerable" and later as the "worst forms" of child labour. Both endorsed UNICEF's priority of ensuring that children, particularly more girls, attended school and went on attending classes for longer.
In 1999, a new international convention was adopted at the annual International Labour Conference, the "Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention" (also referred to as ILO Convention 182). This identified four categories of child labour, which governments, trade unions and employers' organisations all agreed it was urgent to stop. The Convention was rapidly ratified and came into force the following year.
By June 2004, 150 countries had ratified it.

From 1999 onwards, UNICEF gave special priority to education, to ensure that children attended school rather than starting work too young. UNICEF has also been advocating for the quality of education to be good enough to keep children in school once they have enrolled.
In 2000, the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, focused on education policies. It was an opportunity to reflect on how badly girls were missing out at school in comparison to boys, and on what action was needed to make "education for all" a reality. In the same year the UN adopted a new convention to stop children (and adults) being trafficked – taken away from their homes, often to other countries, to be involved in commercial sexual exploitation or other forms of economic exploitation in arduous and unacceptable conditions. UNICEF has paid special attention to the predicament of children who have been trafficked (most of whom are girls), particularly girls who work in private homes, not traditionally seen as places of work.

In May 2002, the United Nations reviewed the situation of children in general, summarising its agenda for the 21st century in "A World Fit for Children". This emphasises the need for quality education for all children, and commits the world's governments to a set of actions to protect children against abuse, exploitation and violence. Richer nations, such as the United Kingdom, committed themselves to providing assistance to other countries for social and economic development, poverty eradication programmes and universal education, as well as specific support to address child labour and its root causes.

http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publications/ecechild2_a4.pdf

DOCUMENT TWO

EDUCATING MANILA'S RUBBISH DUMP CHILDREN

A thousand children who scratch a living by digging and sorting rubbish will attend the newly built Openwork foundation school, constructed out of recycled shipping containers.

Children attend the Openwork foundation school in Manila, founded by a development charity: the Philippine Community Fund. Photograph: Nana Buxani

The Smokey Mountain rubbish dump has provided a home to Jamie Amante since she was born 13 years ago.

Each morning she wakes to the horrendous stench from the site: "I feel awful waking up to the smell-rotting food, smoke, polluted air, charcoal, all mixed together." When she steps outside her family's shanty house, her feet sink into black mud, and flies swarm around the methane gas that bubbles from below.

But now, thanks to the vision and determination of Jane Walker, Jamie's life is being transformed. She was among hundreds of children who gathered last week for the opening of the Philippine Community Fund (PCF')'s Openwork foundation school, on the former rubbish dump in Tondo, Manila. Built out of 74 connected recycled shipping container vans, this four-story building is not just a place to learn. It is, says Walker, a place to help children escape the dire poverty that has trapped generations of their families.

With 29 classrooms, it is large enough to educate 1,000 children from the age of four who live in nearby rubbish dumps and squatter areas.

Rico Senaoan, 11, spent most of his childhood digging and sorting rubbish. As the eldest of five children, he felt a sense of responsibility: "I worked so that my family would not starve. The hardest part was waking up in the morning and my arms and legs would hurt from carrying heavy bags of what we would find."

Walker's drive to rid the rubbish dump community of child labour began during a trip to the Philippines while on sabbatical from her work in the newspaper industry. A taxi happened to drive her by the open Smokey Mountain rubbish dump, and the sight of three-year-old barefoot children picking through rubbish compelled her to take immediate action.

"They were stuck in poverty –they saw no way out. The best thing I could do was to offer these communities a future which would empower them to change the way they lived," she said.

After founding the Philippine Community Fund (PCF), a charity in the UK and the Philippines, Walker raised enough money by 2003 to open her first school. Although it was a tremendous first step and educated an average of 500 children per year, the growing squalor in the surrounding rubbish dump necessitated the search for a new, more permanent structure.

Jane said: "We had no windows, got flooded 52 times a year, there were huge rats everywhere, scorpions, snakes in the playground, stagnant pools of water with dengue mosquitoes."

The new building is designed to maximise light and air flow, and has plenty of open space. "I feel like we live in a five-star hotel now. It's a wonderful feeling that we are providing a safe, clean and conducive environment to teach the children."

The school provides adult literacy, remedial classes, parenting skills, and family planning among its courses to help those considered the "poorest of the poor".

Seventy per cent of funding comes from the UK, through grant-making trusts, foundations, and child sponsorship programmes.

For many of the children, going to school gives them a chance to do something new - to simply be children.

Before becoming a student at PCF a few years ago, 13-year-old Giselle Reyes worked for nine hours each night: "I worked until 3 am and was always tired. When I was working, I wanted to feel what other children were doing, playing in the streets and with friends while I was there collecting garbage." Now with plenty of time to play and to dream, she said she plans to become a teacher.

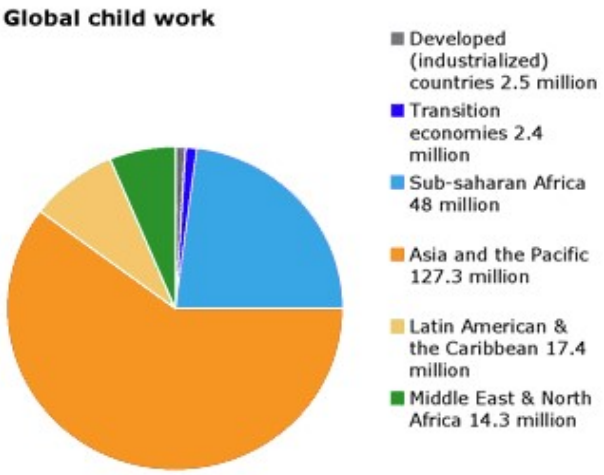
For Jamie Amante, the school provides fresh air and something to look forward to. Proudly wearing her clean, blue uniform, she explained why education was important: "They teach good attitude, to be responsible, respect others. And school helps me and kids reach our dreams."

guardian.co.uk, Monday 6 December 2010 12.41 GMT

DOCUMENT THREE

Geographic distribution

In terms of **the percent of children less than 15 years old** who are working, Sub-Saharan Africa comes first. No other region has such a high child work ratio. Almost 1 child in 3 below age 15 (29 percent) is economically active, or works, in Sub-Saharan Africa. The child work ratios in other major world regions are all below 20 percent. In Asia-Pacific the incidence is 19 percent. In Latin American & the Caribbean and the Middle East & North Africa, the incidence is 16 and 15 percent, respectively. The incidence of child labor is lowest (2 percent) in developed countries.



http://knowchildlabor.org/child_labor/where_do_children_work.php

DOCUMENT FOUR

Marie is a seven-year-old from Haiti. She is a *restavek*— Creole for *rester avec*— the local term for a type of child domestic found all over the world, one who has been handed over by a poor rural family to live with and provide domestic "help" for a usually urban, wealthier family.

She gets up at five in the morning and begins her day by fetching water from a nearby well, balancing the heavy jug on her head as she returns. She prepares breakfast and serves it to the members of the household. Then she walks the family's five-year-old son to school; later, at noon, she brings him home and helps him change clothes. Next, she helps prepare and serve the family's lunch before returning the boy to school. In between meal times she must buy food in the market and run errands, tend the charcoal fire, sweep the yard, wash clothes and dishes, clean the kitchen and -- at least once a day -- wash her female boss's feet. She is given leftovers or cornmeal to eat, has ragged clothes and no shoes and sleeps outdoors or on the floor. She is not allowed to bathe in the water she brings to the household. She is regularly beaten with a leather strap if she is slow to respond to a request or is considered disrespectful. Needless to say, she is not allowed to attend school.

Source: UNICEF.

http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/briefing/labour/labour.pdf