

Sri Lanka Model United Nations



United Nations Childrens Emergency Fund

Study Guide

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UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY FUND

The United Nations International Children's Fund, or widely known as UNICEF was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1946, through resolution 57(1).1 , in the aftermath of World War II as an Emergency Fund. The initial objective of this body was to aid in the provision of relief, building shelter, providing food and security for children and reduce the rising child mortality of children living in war torn nations.

With time and global development, the mandate of the UNICEF has expanded to not only aid a living in countries devastated by war, but as well as to encompass the fulfilment of children's rights all over the world. IN 1953, the General Assembly resolved to change it from an Emergency Fund to a permanent Specialized Agency under the sections 57 and 63 of the Charter of the United Nations. The mandate of UNICEF was shifted from providing temporary relief to ensuring long-term sustainable development goals and its mission was expanded worldwide.

The UNICEF is based on the main principle of promoting the vital interests and rights of children, since children are considered as the most vulnerable in the society and hence need a collective protection. This is also highlighted in the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989 which is currently the most ratified convention in the world.

Every child has a voice that needs to be heard and considered in all decision-making processes that effect the global community. In order to achieve this, children must be safe guarded from exploitation, violence, abuse, sickness, and hunger. UNICEF plays a large role in protecting the rights of children and has many achievements to its name. An example of one such achievement is the eradication of the disease Polio through worldwide childhood vaccination efforts for the 6 most common childhood diseases

AGENDA

Conference Topic: Addressing the issues of Child Prostitution and Trafficking

Practice Debate Topic: Considering childhood health and improvement in nutrition, in the current world.

CONFERENCE TOPIC: ADDRESSING THE ISSUES OF CHILD PROSTITUTION AND TRAFFICKING

BACKGROUND

A child is defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights on the Child, Article 1 as "every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier". Mr Vitit Muntarbhorn, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (1991-1994), at the 48th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, 1992:

"'Child Prostitution' refers to the sexual exploitation of a child for remuneration in cash or in kind, usually but not always organized by an intermediary (parent, family member, procurer, teacher, etc.)".

Child prostitution involves offering the sexual services of a child or inducing a child to perform sexual acts for any form of compensation, financial or otherwise. Child prostitution differs from child sexual abuse, such as incest or molestation, because it is also commercial exploitation. In Europe, child prostitution flourished until the late 1800s; with minors accounting for 50% of individuals involved in prostitution in Paris.

Child Sex Tourism (CST) is also a prevalent issue. This concerns the sexual exploitation of children, both male and female, by a person who travels from their home region in order to have sexual contact with children. These child sex tourists can be domestic or international travellers. CST involves the exchange of cash, clothes, food or some other form of compensation to the child or to a third party for sexual contact. CST occurs in a range of venues, from brothels in red-light districts to beaches or five-star hotels and in urban, rural settings. It can even occur over an extended period of time, for example, where there is a long 'grooming' process, during which a child sex offender befriends a vulnerable child and obtains his or her trust before exploiting the child sexually. In other cases, the child sex tourist purchases a sexual service directly from a third party responsible for the exploitation of the child.

CASE STUDY

There are many contributing factors towards child prostitution. Social, cultural and economic factors such as gender bias, discrimination, poor standards of education and poverty are some of them. As an example, in some communities, prostitution is widely accepted and/or laws against child prostitution are poorly enforced. In other communities, some clients believe that children are less likely to pass on STDs. Children of sex workers too, are at a high risk of being forced into prostitution. Children who have been abused or are homeless are also at a high risk of being trafficked and exploited, particularly into sex tourism.

Causes for child prostitution may differ between regions. If one takes Nigeria as an example, most children fleeing from abusive situations are trafficked into prostitution. Whereas in Nepal. Poverty is the main factor. In the US, child prostitution is often linked with a past of childhood sexual abuse. Poverty and the profitability of prostitution are the main factors that contribute this industry. Quite often, prostituted children are often responsible for providing financial support to their families. This issue must be addressed when looking into removing children from this trade as it may result in other children being pushed in to sex work.

There is a high societal cost of child prostitution of trafficking. The two main aspects being adverse health effects and the loss of an education. Children who are exploited and trafficked into the sex trade are at a high risk of infectious diseases including HIV and the relevant consequences. The issue of adolescent pregnancies must also be addressed. Most prostituted girls do not have access to contraceptives and many become pregnant. Given their age, they are at a very high risk of pregnancy related complications, including a much higher rate of maternal mortality. Pregnancy-related deaths resulting from obstructed labour, infections, haemorrhage, abortion, and anaemia, are the leading cause of death for these young girls all over the world. The number of young girls seeking abortions also rises marginally due to this, and many undergo unsafe, "back-alley" abortions which often lead to serious health complications such as haemorrhaging and even death.

Many exploited girls may be physically beaten and emotionally abused into submission. Indeed, many girls who have been pulled out of such situations were often diagnosed with PTSD and severe anxiety or depression. Some girls are beaten to induce miscarriage, and many have reported being physically assaulted and raped while being exploited as a sex worker, such assault even resulting in the death of some children. Issues such as malnutrition, substance abuse and early childbirth are also cause for major concern.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

1. What measures can be taken by member nations to protect children from sexual exploitation through prostitution and trafficking?

2. What are the other concerns of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and what measures can be taken?
3. How can the needs of victims of child sex abuse be attended to, considering factors like family background?
4. How can child pornography be dealt with?
5. What is the role of Information Technology in sexual exploitation and trafficking of children?
6. How can governments of member nations counter the harmful effects of Information Technology with respect to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children?

FURTHER READING

<https://asiasociety.org/trafficking-children-prostitution-and-unicef-response>

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/idaho/articles/2018-06-09/exposing-human-trafficking-darkness>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-43469043>

PRACTICE DEBATE TOPIC: CONSIDERING CHILDHOOD HEALTH AND IMPROVEMENT IN NUTRITION, IN THE CURRENT WORLD.

BACKGROUND

Good nutrition is the key element of a child's survival, health and development. A well-nourished child is better able to grow and learn, to be resilient in the face of illness, be a contributing member of their community and also be better able to face crisis.

But for many children worldwide, malnutrition is a major adversary. Malnutrition can be simply defined as poor nutrition. Two forms of malnutrition are undernutrition and micronutrient deficiency, the first meaning that a person does not get adequate food and is too thin for their height; and the second meaning that the person does not get enough vitamins or minerals in their diet. The stark reality is that more than 3 million children worldwide die due to the lack of adequate nutrition. For millions more children, chronic malnutrition results in many health complications. One of the worst being stunting, an irreversible condition which stunts the physical and cognitive growth of the child. Many children also suffer from weakened immune systems, also a cause for the high mortality rate.

The period of a mother's pregnancy, till the time that child is two years of age, can be considered a critical period. UNICEF has taken many actions to support this period, including support for breastfeeding, supplementary food for infants over 6 months of age and nutrient supplements for both mother and child to address any other deficiencies. The proper nutrition in the earliest years of a child's life has an enormous impact on their life, their families and in the long run, their communities as well. In 2015, over 156 million children had stunted growth with close to 45% living in conflict zones.

In 2016, nearly 800 million people remain severely undernourished and 159 million children under 5 years of age are stunted. Approximately another 50 million children under 5 years of age are wasted, and another 2 billion people have micronutrient deficiencies. Though some forms of malnutrition are prominent in certain regions than the others, it is an issue which has a very severe global impact.

CASE STUDY

The United Nations (UN) first recognized the importance of addressing malnutrition through the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition in 1974. This was adopted at the World Food Conference convened under General Assembly resolution 3180. UN made eliminating hunger and malnutrition a prime objective with this declaration. This declaration encourages member states to work toward eradicating malnutrition at the national level, and also urges them to assist other member states in any form possible

To take a closer look at a regional case study; Sub-Saharan Africa is home to some of the nutrition deficit people in the world (UNDP report), where various factors such as limited resources, HIV, and poor access to health services contribute to the increased level of malnutrition. Chronic malnutrition is a major problem in the region, where 43% of children in the region are “stunted” because of it and have shown little improvement. The UN and Food Agricultural Organization estimates that in 2014-6, roughly 233 million people in sub-Saharan Africa are hungry/undernourished.

A lack of proper maternal knowledge is also a huge contributing factor as mothers are unaware of the nutritional needs that children have, and this severely compromises the health of their children. While there have been efforts made by UN bodies through educational campaigns and provision of ready-to-use therapeutic foods, there is a lot more that can be done.

Steps such as increased dialogue and cooperation between member states, and the development of existing programs may help to effectively address this issue. Malnutrition directly impacts the health of future generations, and is crucial for the well-being of our global community.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

1. What are strategies that can be used to address the various types of malnutrition, especially the double burden of undernutrition and micronutrient deficiency?
2. What are the different sources of malnutrition that need to be tackled?
3. Are there other existing UNICEF or UN programs that can be expanded on to better address the problem?
4. How can UNICEF assist Member States in better identifying malnutrition and taking steps to prevent it?
5. How can Member States better coordinate and share information with one another regarding the issue of malnutrition?
6. What other UN bodies, external parties and organizations can contribute to finding solutions for malnutrition?
7. How can maternal education be improved and contribute to the solution for malnutrition?

FURTHER READING

<https://www.unicef.org/gambia/>

[Improving Child Nutrition the achievable imperative for global progress.pdf](#)

https://www.unicef.org/nutrition/files/Unicef_Nutrition_Strategy.pdf

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/EradicationOfHungerAndMalnutrition.aspx>