



IN THIS ISSUE:

- ▶ Introduction from Susan K.E. Saxon-Harrod
- ▶ World Day Against Child Labour – focusing on the elimination of child labor
- ▶ Gender Gaps In Education
- ▶ Project Mala: Grantee Profile
- ▶ Donor Tips

Gender Gaps In Education

As outlined in our lead story, nations and agencies are making slow but discernable progress towards universal education and the abolition of child labor. However, as these initiatives gain momentum, will both boys and girls be equally protected?

The overwhelming majority of children not in school are girls, around 62 million worldwide, creating a significant gender gap in education. The reasons for this are many and may be cultural, religious or practical.

▶ READ MORE

World Day Against Child Labour – focusing on the elimination of child labor

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), approximately 165 million children are employed as child laborers worldwide. The majority work in agriculture; others toil as domestic servants or child soldiers. The 'lucky' ones receive at least some minimal compensation for their work; however, too many labor as slaves or bonded workers.

Child labor is generally defined as work done by children under 15 years of age which negatively affects physical and mental development.

▶ READ MORE

Project Mala: Grantee Profile

A recent report entitled *Child Labor and India* and published on the Embassy of India website in Washington DC, suggests that "In India, eleven million children under the age 14 work as child laborers, mainly in agriculture."

For nearly twenty years, Project Mala has been combating this national problem through education.

▶ READ MORE

Dear Colleagues and Friends,



Welcome to the summer issue of CAF America News. June 12 was World Day Against Child Labour and to mark the event we explore some of the key issues. We also take a look at some of the organizations working to eliminate or reduce child labor.

According to International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates, more than 165 million children in the world today are involved in child labor...

▶ READ MORE

Donor Tips

The majority of child workers labor in the developing world and consumers in more affluent countries can unwittingly promote the practice by buying goods produced by children. Here are a few tips on how you as a donor and consumer can help fight child labor:

1. Give to organizations working to end child labor. To find nonprofits that promote child welfare...

▶ READ MORE



Introduction from Susan K.E. Saxon-Harrold



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to the summer issue of *CAF America News*. June 12 was World Day Against Child Labour and to mark the event we explore some of the key issues. We also take a look at some of the organizations working to eliminate or reduce child labor.

According to International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates, more than 165 million children in the world today are involved in child labor, doing work that is damaging to their mental, physical and emotional development. Shockingly, around three-quarters of these are engaged in some of the worst forms of child labor, including hazardous work, armed conflict, sexual exploitation, trafficking and slavery.

To make matters worse, child labor persists even where it has been declared illegal. Moreover it seems to be perpetuated by ignorance, indifference or, worse still, acceptance. For these reasons, the effective abolition of child labor has to be one of the most pressing challenges of our time. And if you would like to help, please [forward](#) this issue of *CAF America News* onto friends and colleagues that you think might be interested in learning about these issues.

For donors in the United States, interested in supporting overseas or international nonprofits working in this field, our [Donor Tips](#) section in this issue will be extremely helpful.

Finally, on a less serious note, CAF America has now sent out its 2007/08 Grantee Reports. As usual, your responses are critical and we need them speedily so that we can maintain your eligibility to receive future CAF America grants. I urge you to complete and return your report as quickly as possible.

Best wishes,

Dr. Susan K.E. Saxon-Harrold
Chief Executive Officer

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ [Introduction from Susan K.E. Saxon-Harrold](#)
- ▶ [World Day Against Child Labour – focusing on the elimination of child labor](#)
- ▶ [Gender Gaps In Education](#)
- ▶ [Project Mala: Grantee Profile](#)
- ▶ [Donor Tips](#)

World Day Against Child Labour – focusing on the elimination of child labor

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), approximately 165 million children are employed as child laborers worldwide. The majority work in agriculture; others toil as domestic servants or child soldiers. The 'lucky' ones receive at least some minimal compensation for their work; however, too many labor as slaves or bonded workers.

Child labor is generally defined as work done by children under 15 years of age which negatively affects physical and mental development. It is largely condemned worldwide; most notably by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history and was ratified by all member nations with the exception of the United States and Somalia. Despite this, child labor persists, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where one in three children work, and in South Asia, home to over 40 million child laborers. ⁽¹⁾

The prevalence of child labor is linked to poverty, the cost of schooling, and cultural factors. For poor families, sending a child to school entails paying fees they can ill afford and at the same time losing the child's earning potential. Destitute parents often have no choice but to put their child to work.

Children in conflict-affected areas are especially vulnerable. Half of the world's uneducated children, nearly 40 million children, live in "conflict-affected fragile states." ⁽²⁾ In these countries, uneducated children are easy prey for sexual trafficking and child slavery.

Most agencies and countries combating the problem agree that, worldwide, education offers the best hope to escape poverty. And it follows that providing adequate resources and access to quality education for children and parents alike offers the best way to break the perpetuating cycle of poverty that engenders child labor. Educated parents with real options for employment are more likely to choose education over child labor for their offspring.

Hoping to eradicate child labor, many international organizations are prioritizing education programs. In its report *Millennium Development Goals* the United Nations set a target that, by 2015, all children should have a complete primary education and gender gaps will be eliminated. With only seven years to go, this goal may be overly ambitious; however, the goal does provide a model for combating the main impetus for child labor — lack of education.

The ILO has adopted a similar goal, hoping to

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ Introduction from Susan K.E. Saxon-Harrold
- ▶ World Day Against Child Labour – focusing on the elimination of child labor
- ▶ Gender Gaps In Education
- ▶ Project Mala: Grantee Profile
- ▶ Donor Tips



Girl child soldier. Democratic Republic of Congo.
Picture courtesy of ILO.

eliminate the worst forms of child labor by 2016. In its report, *The End of Child Labor: Within Reach*, the ILO suggests that the eventual elimination of child labor is feasible. It points to growing global concern and increased international cooperation as key drivers of the fact that the number of child workers worldwide decreased by 11 percent between 2002 and 2006. It particularly emphasizes the great progress made throughout Latin America and the Caribbean during this period. The report does acknowledge, however, that much work remains to combat the problem in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The World Day Against Child Labour 2008, on June 12, also highlighted education as “the right response to child labor” and stressed the need to ensure all children have access to education until the minimum age of employment. Organized by the ILO, the day provides an opportunity for individuals and organizations worldwide to develop and launch initiatives that will raise awareness.

To learn more about the day itself, the issues it raises and discover what you can do to help please click [here](#).

References

- (1) Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse, UNICEF
- (2) Last in Line, last in School – Save the Children



Children working in brickyards near Islamabad. Many families and children work here, often in bonded labor. Picture courtesy of ILO.



Gender Gaps In Education

As outlined in our lead story, nations and agencies are making slow but discernable progress towards universal education and the abolition of child labor. However, as these initiatives gain momentum, will both boys and girls be equally protected?

The overwhelming majority of children not in school are girls, around 62 million worldwide, creating a significant gender gap in education. The reasons for this are many and may be cultural, religious or practical. For example, an obstacle to educating a young girl can be as simple as the distance between home and school. In countries like Pakistan, where schools are strictly segregated, girls may face harassment, sometimes sexual in nature, on their way to and from school. A factor that typically convinces families to keep them at home. ⁽¹⁾ School costs pose an additional challenge for poor families who often choose to educate their sons rather than their daughters. Denied an education, daughters are forced to help with household chores, care for younger siblings, or begin working outside the home.

Additional factors influencing the gap include gender bias among teachers, which can often compromise the education of those girls fortunate enough to get one, and teen pregnancies that force girls to drop out of school. A 2007 study of the status of girls worldwide by Plan International, *Because I am a girl*, suggests that girls “occupy second-class status in every society.”

Thankfully, most studies over the past decade have indicated that the gender gap in education is steadily narrowing. Huge disparities worldwide still remain though. In Latin America only two countries in the region have lesser education standards for girls. This contrasts starkly with, for example, sub-Saharan Africa ⁽²⁾, where 26 countries have a marked gender gap in favor of boys. Parts of Asia also exhibit significant gaps and UNICEF believes that the largest gaps may exist in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Is it important to close the gap?

The short answer must be “yes”. Education is the principal antidote to poverty, gender-based discrimination, and sexual exploitation. The education gender gap has global consequences: “Failure to offer girls the same educational opportunities as boys costs developing countries almost US \$100 billion each year in lost economic growth.” ⁽³⁾

Educated women are better equipped to make decisions to protect their health (e.g., to practice safe sex, thus reducing the risk of an HIV/AIDS infection). There is also a strong correlation between a woman’s higher level of education and her earning potential, her ability to influence decision-making within the family and her participation in politics. Perhaps more importantly,

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ Introduction from Susan K.E. Saxon-Harrold
- ▶ World Day Against Child Labour – focusing on the elimination of child labor
- ▶ Gender Gaps In Education
- ▶ Project Mala: Grantee Profile
- ▶ Donor Tips

educated mothers are more likely to raise educated daughters. It's clearly a multifaceted problem but one which can be addressed given the will and sufficient resources. Donors in the United States can support this cause in a variety of ways and our section on [Donor Tips](#) is a good place to start.

References:

- (1) Sawada, Y., and M. Lokshin. 2001. "Household Schooling Decisions in Rural Pakistan." Development Research Group Working Paper. No. 2541. Washington, D.C.: Development Research Group, the World Bank; and Sathar, Z. A., and C. B. Lloyd. 1994. "Who Gets Primary Schooling in Pakistan: Inequalities among and within Families." *Pakistan Development Review* 33(2): 103-134.
- (2) Paying the price: The economic cost of failing to educate girls (http://www.plan-international.org/pdfs/girls_education_economics.pdf)
- (3) Paying the price: The economic cost of failing to educate girls



Project Mala: Grantee Profile

A recent report entitled *Child Labor and India* and published on the Embassy of India website in Washington DC, suggests that "In India, eleven million children under the age 14 work as child laborers, mainly in agriculture."

For nearly twenty years, [Project Mala](#) has been combating this national problem through education. Though based in the United Kingdom, the charity works exclusively in India to abolish abusive child labor in the nation's carpet weaving industry.

Through its six schools, Project Mala offers primary education to children living in rural areas of the eastern Uttar Pradesh region, the traditional 'carpet belt.' Its programs provide children with lessons on basic life skills such as personal hygiene, sewing, gardening and food preservation. It also provides opportunities for occupational training, recreation and sport. Thanks to gifts from donors worldwide, sponsored children receive two meals a day, school supplies and uniforms, and medical care. Of the nearly 5,000 children who have participated in Project Mala's education programs, 2,699 have gone on to state secondary schools.

In December 2007, donations made it possible for Project Mala to establish a mobile clinic, extend its adult education programs, and construct a new middle school. During the year, Project Mala also strengthened its literacy provision and employed an additional assistant teacher to help slower learners.

Project Mala relies primarily on the generosity of its donors, including the International Labour Organization (ILO), which find imaginative ways to raise money. These have included sponsoring a marathon in Barcelona and an all-night badminton fundraiser at York University. The charity also raises funds through its own enterprise, [Mala Handicrafts](#).

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ [Introduction from Susan K.E. Saxon-Harrold](#)
 - ▶ [World Day Against Child Labour – focusing on the elimination of child labor](#)
 - ▶ [Gender Gaps In Education](#)
 - ▶ [Project Mala: Grantee Profile](#)
 - ▶ [Donor Tips](#)
-



Donor Tips

The majority of child workers labor in the developing world and consumers in more affluent countries can unwittingly promote the practice by buying goods produced by children. Here are a few tips on how you as a donor and consumer can help fight child labor:

1. Give to organizations working to end child labor. To find nonprofits that promote child welfare, [click here](#).
2. Support education for all, girls and boys, children and adults. Access to quality education is essential to ending child labor worldwide. Consider including education causes in your annual giving plan. To find nonprofits that focus on providing better educational opportunities, [click here](#).
3. Be an informed consumer. Read more about how to identify products produced under sanctioned labor standards, such as those marked by [Fairtrade](#). If you have doubts about a product's origin, look up its registered identification number (RN) which is found on the label on the Federal Trade Commission database. Consider supporting the Fairtrade Foundation to help it continue this important work by [clicking here](#).
4. Actively support and participate in campaigns that seek to end child labor. For example, World Day Against Child Labor. For a list of suggested campaign activities and resources, or to donate to the International Labour Organization, [click here](#).

IN THIS ISSUE

- ▶ **Introduction from Susan K.E. Saxon-Harrold**
 - ▶ **World Day Against Child Labour – focusing on the elimination of child labor**
 - ▶ **Gender Gaps In Education**
 - ▶ **Project Mala: Grantee Profile**
 - ▶ **Donor Tips**
-