



Supporting Question 4

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Source A: Child labor and the banana industry

Ten years after launching a worldwide campaign against child labour, the International Labour Office (ILO) today issued a landmark global study showing that despite "significant progress" in efforts to abolish child labour, an alarming number of children are trapped in its worst forms.

"Despite the increasing commitment by governments and their partners to tackle child labour worldwide, it remains a problem on a massive scale," said Juan Somavia, Director-General of the ILO. "While there has been significant progress towards the effective abolition of child labour, the international community still faces a major uphill struggle against this stubbornly pervasive form of work that takes a tragic toll on millions of children around the world."

"A Future Without Child Labour," the ILO's most comprehensive study on the subject, notes that there has been a worldwide response to calls for abolishing child labour, especially in its worst forms, through direct action at the local, national and international levels.

The report found that 246 million children - one in every six children aged 5 to 17 - are involved in child labour. Among its startling new findings, the report also says that one in every eight children in the world - some 179 million children aged 5-17 - is still exposed to the worst forms of child labour which endanger the child's physical, mental or moral well-being.

The report also says that of these children:

- About 111 million in hazardous work who are under 15 and should be "immediately withdrawn from this work".
- An additional 59 million youths aged 15-17 should receive urgent and immediate protection from hazards at work, or also be withdrawn from such work.
- Some 8.4 million children are caught in "unconditional" worst forms of child labour including slavery, trafficking, debt bondage and other forms of forced labour, forced recruitment for armed conflict, prostitution, pornography and other illicit activities.

Child labour continues to be a global phenomenon - no country or region is immune, the report says. A wide range of crises - including natural disasters, sharp economic downturns, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and armed conflicts - increasingly draws the young into debilitating child labour, including illegal and clandestine forms such as prostitution, drug trafficking, pornography and other illicit activities.

Source 1: International Labor Organization, description of child labor, "ILO Global Report on Child Labor Cites 'Alarming' Extent of Its Worst Forms" (excerpt), May 2002.

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http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/press-releases/WCMS_007784/lang--en/index.htm



In August 2003, the *International Labour Organization* published a report that estimated that 25,000 children, predominantly boys, were working in the banana industry....

Around 50% of them received a monthly salary between \$100 to \$200 while 40% received no salary at all. In terms of health, “40% of the children interviewed mentioned that accidents were frequent and 30% acknowledged that they had been infected by herbicides.” In terms of education, less than half of them had completed basic education and seven percent of the working girls were illiterate.



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Source B: Human Rights Watch, description of labor abuse on banana plantations, “Ecuador: Widespread Labor Abuse on Banana Plantations” (excerpts), Human Rights Watch, 2002

NOTE: The text below is a set of excerpts from an article published by Human Rights Watch. The testimonies included in this source are from child workers. The names were changed to protect the workers.

The use of harmful child labor is widespread in Ecuador’s banana sector....Their average workday lasted twelve hours, and fewer than 40 percent of the children were still in school by the time they turned fourteen.

In the course of their work, they were exposed to toxic pesticides, used sharp knives and machetes, hauled heavy loads of bananas, drank unsanitary water....Roughly 90 percent of the children told Human Rights Watch that they continued working while toxic fungicides were sprayed from airplanes flying overhead. For their efforts, the children earned an average of \$3.50 per day, approximately 60 percent of the legal minimum wage for banana workers.

Chiquita, Del Monte, Dole, Favorita, and Noboa have all, at some time, been supplied by plantations on which children labored....

Fabiola Cardozo, 12-year-old worker:

“I got a fever....I told my boss that I felt sick....He told me to go home....[The second time,] I became covered with red things. They itched. I had a cough. My bones hurt. I told my boss. He sent me home.”

Cristbal Alvarez, 11-year-old worker:

“That poison--sometimes it makes one sick. Of course, I keep working. I don’t cover myself. Once I got sick. I vomited [and] had a headache....after the fumigation. I was eleven years old....I told my bosses. They gave me two days to recover.”

Enrique Gallana, 14-year-old worker:

“When the planes pass, we cover ourselves with our shirts....We just continue working....We can smell the pesticides.”

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<http://www.hrw.org/news/2002/04/24/ecuador-widespread-labor-abuse-banana-plantations>