

WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOR

2020

The annual **World Day Against Child Labor** aims to focus attention on the global extent of child labor and the action needed to eliminate it. Governments, employers and worker organizations, along with millions of people around the world come together to highlight the plight of child laborers, and to identify ways of changing labor practices and family incomes. Currently, the *International Labor Organization* (ILO) estimates there are 152 million children in child labor and 72 million of them are in hazardous work.

World Day Against Child Labor 2020 will focus on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on child labor. This health pandemic and the resulting economic and labor market shock are having a huge impact on people's lives and livelihoods. The COVID-19 crisis brought many supply chains into the news, when demands for toilet paper and other household items captured the headlines. These stories highlighted what disruptions mean to consumers, companies, and workers, particularly the world's largest labor force—informal workers, their exploitation that includes child labor, forced and bonded labor drives intergenerational poverty.



How do we define “child Labor?”

The term “**child labor**” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical, social, and moral development. It also **interferes with their schooling** by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, or obliging them to leave school prematurely. The worst forms of child labor involve children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses, and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age.

Click: [What is Child Labor?](#)

Child Labor and Corporate Investing

Faith based investors have been engaged for several years concerning children working in the cocoa plantations, and in mines supplying various car parts for manufacturers in North America. Others are working for our chocolate bars and the majority are between the ages of 12 and 16, but children as young as 5 have been identified as working in cocoa farms. Cocoa farmers need to be paid a living wage and cocoa must be priced in a way that supports livelihoods and respect for human rights. The industry as a whole has not yet met ambitious goals to completely eradicate child labor in cocoa. However, after some years of dialogues with several faith-based organizations, **Hershey** is taking steps and attempting to make progress, with respect to responsible sourcing and management of human rights risks.

Government enforcement of child labor laws isn't enough to prevent parents from bringing their children to work. Within the **automobile** industry, child labor is used in the supply chains of many manufacturers of cars: *cobalt* in batteries, *mica* in paint, *rubber* in tires, and *leather* in seat covering. These children are usually working with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or simply with their hands in contaminated water, or transporting heavy loads. They spend many hours each day in an unhealthy environment which may expose them to hazardous substances, processes, or temperatures damaging to their health.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcJ8me22NVs>

SSND Response

“Discern as a [province] which urgent and critical global concerns we are called to address and we dare to respond boldly in unsuspected ways.” These are the words we read in *Love Gives Everything*. They have led us to partner with *Beyond Borders* in addressing critical concerns in Haiti tackling the circumstances connected with child slavery. Our program freed 36 children from slavery, provided schooling for them and training in human rights. One hundred fifty teachers have been trained and are now child rights advocates.



All children from our poorer countries “have the same dreams and desires as other young people in this world: to be considered and respected, to have opportunities for study, work, and a future of hope. The task of the Church is to accompany them and help them to face every situation that destroys their identity or damages their self-esteem.”

(The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology # 30)