

CSHL NEWSLETTER

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Child Labor in Cambodia in the Last Decade

Children all around the world have been given the rights and protected fully from their guardians, government, and other organizations. Their main purpose is to protect and enforce the rights of every child around the world. Some countries may progress fast and some are slow due to the economy, natural disaster, or war in those countries.

According to the FAO, child labor is a significant violation of human rights: "It robs boys and girls of their childhood, as well as their potential and dignity, and harms their physical and mental development".[1] Even though not all child labor is deemed child labor, much of it is not age-appropriate, according to the agency, and many vulnerable families, particularly in rural regions, have little option. In Cambodia, the progress of child rights is still in the worst forms.[2] According to the ILO, surveys from 2012-2019 found that Children around 45% at the ages of 5-14 were forced to work to support the needs of their families.[3] Some Children work in a safe environment as beggars, drifters, and more around 300,000 children.[4] However, some children that from the lowest homes face extremely perilous tasks. These kids are frequently exposed to the sex and drug trades. Others are forced to work in hazardous conditions in salters, factories, or the burgeoning construction industry.[5]

Cambodia has ratified, adopted, and enforced the convention on child labor such as the Worst Form of Child Labor Convention in (2006) and Minimum Age Convention in (1999) which is specifics on the age of working shall not be less than 15 years old.[6] Following the Worst Form of Child Labor Convention, Cambodia had made an announcement by the Ministry of Labor and Vocational with Prakas on eliminating the worst forms of child labor.[7] Additionally, Cambodia also adopted the Labor law in 1997 which included the protection of the child by minimum age in the field of labor is 15 years old.[8] However, the age of working shall be 18 years old if the work could be hazardous to the health and the safety.[9] The director of the FAO Mr. Qu Dongy states out on 2nd November 2021 that he wants to stamp out child labor by the end of 2025 because of the serious violation of human rights and the future of the children, this also includes Cambodia.[10]

[1] Ghullam Abbas Farzami, "Act now to stamp out child labor by 2025: FAO chief", 02 November 2021, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/11/1104632>, accessed (29 November 2021).

[2] The United States department of justice, "Cambodia 2019 findings on the worst forms of child labor", <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1328041/download>, accessed (29 November 2021).

[3] Humanium, "Children of Cambodia", <https://www.humanium.org/en/cambodia/>, accessed (29 November 2021).

[4] The United States department of justice, "Cambodia 2019 findings on the worst forms of child labor", <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1328041/download>, accessed (29 November 2021).

[5] Ibid.

[6] International Labour Organization, Normlex, Ratifications by country, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11200:0::NO::P11200_COUNTRY_ID:103055, accessed (04 December 2021).

[7] U.S. Department of Labor, Child Labor, and forces Labor Reports Cambodia, (Minimal Advancement), <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/cambodia>, accessed (04 December 2021).

[8] Labor Law of Cambodia, Article 177(1).

[9] Labor Law of Cambodia, Article 177(2).

[10] Ghullam Abbas Farzami, "Act now to stamp out child labor by 2025: FAO chief", 02 November 2021, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/11/1104632>, accessed (29 November 2021).

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