



2007

## Too Many Bad Cooks Spoiling the Broth? Effectiveness of NGOs in Addressing Child Labour in El Salvador

Ivica Petříková  
Colby College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/honorstheses>



Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Colby College theses are protected by copyright. They may be viewed or downloaded from this site for the purposes of research and scholarship. Reproduction or distribution for commercial purposes is prohibited without written permission of the author.

---

### Recommended Citation

Petríková, Ivica, "Too Many Bad Cooks Spoiling the Broth? Effectiveness of NGOs in Addressing Child Labour in El Salvador" (2007). *Honors Theses*. Paper 281.  
<https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/honorstheses/281>

This Honors Thesis (Open Access) is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Research at Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Colby.

# **Too Many Bad Cooks Spoiling the Broth?**

**(The Effectiveness of NGOs in Addressing Child Labor in El Salvador)**

Ivica Petříková  
Colby College  
International Studies  
Senior Honors Thesis  
May 14, 2007

## **Acknowledgments**

This project would not have been possible without Professor Ariel Armony, my thesis advisor, who supplied me not only with advice on how to proceed from one chapter to another, but also with a great amount of enthusiastic and insightful suggestions and ideas. My immense gratitude goes also to Professor Paul Josephson, my second reader, who encouraged me to write and continue with the essay precisely at the most difficult times, when I was pondering the possibility of giving up. I am very grateful to Mr. David Hunt, who enabled me with his grant to undertake a three-week long field research in El Salvador, as well as to Professors Patrice Franko and Andreas Waldkirch, who were always eager to attend my thesis presentations. Last but not least, thank you to my friends Tsveti Natcheva and Dhruv Chadha who proofread parts of my essay and served as my best moral support.

# Table of Contents

Introduction	4
1. Chapter One: Trends in NGOs' Approach to Child Labor	6
1.1. Child Labor Is the Reality – The “Adaptive” Argument	8
1.2. Child Labor Is a Problem of Poverty – The “Developmental” Argument	11
1.3. Child Labor Is Principally Wrong –The “Abolitionist” Argument	16
1.4. The Choice of NGOs	23
2. Chapter Two: Exposing the Myths about NGOs	25
2.1. NGO Responsiveness–According to the Employed Definition of Human Rights	30
2.2. The Relationships between NGOs and Other Institutions	35
2.3. The Manner of Acquiring Funding	37
2.4. Chapter Summary	39
3. Chapter Three: Case Study of NGOs Working in El Salvador	41
3.1. Background Information about Child Labor in El Salvador	43
3.2. Division of NGOs by approach	50
3.3. The First, “Adaptive” Approach – Fe y Alegría	52
3.4. The Second “Developmental” Approach – World Vision	65
3.5. The Third “Abolitionist” Approach – CARE	78
4. Chapter Four: Analysis of the Collected Data	90
4.1. Analytical Summary of the Individual NGO Work and Effectiveness	91
4.2. The Overall (In)Effectiveness of NGO Work and the Underlying Explanation	99
4.3. Does the Official Overall Ineffectiveness Constitute a Problem?	104
4.4. Policy Considerations	110
Conclusion	118
Works Cited	120

# Introduction

The world has always had its differences. Four thousand years ago, while people in Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa in ancient India inhabited three-storey brick houses and enjoyed the luxuries of canalization, tribes in Europe or North America lived in caves or portable dwellings and the 'nature' served as their bathroom. When in the tenth century AD Arabic doctors carried out transplants on a regular basis, European physicians still regarded leaches and prayer as the two most useful treatments. Originally, these existing disparities occupied the minds of a very small percentage of people, thanks to the fact that the more and less "advanced" parts of the world were in little or no contact.

This reality gradually changed. The world "grew smaller" through the invention of faster modes of transportation and communication, as well as through the increased rate of international trade. Numerous economists, such as inventors and advocates of the "law of one price," reasoned that this heightened interaction was bound to level the existing differences among various parts of the world. Ann Harrison in "Globalization and Poverty" supports this argument, contending that in theory globalized world trade should improve the quality of life in poor countries, thanks to their comparative advantage of less costly human capital. Yet today, despite all prevalent theories, the differences between countries persist, if not grow.

The reaction of the first world to the persevering plight of a large part of the third world varies. In response to the sometimes glaring disparities, many international organizations and multinational corporations have recently adopted a pro-development rhetoric with relation to the problem of global poverty. However, the rhetoric rarely translates into action. As David Bacon discusses, leaders of corporations and organizations now tend to conclude their speeches by expressing a desire to reduce the suffering of the third world. However, when it comes to agreeing on specific concessions that could indeed improve the world-wide economic situation, first world countries are reluctant to act. A good example of this type of behavior is the current negotiation of the WTO, the "development round of Doha," in which the United States along with the European Union pressure countries of the developing South to open up their markets, while at the same time refusing to remove or even decrease their own agricultural subsidies.

The first world civil society observes the behavior of international organizations and western-based multinational corporations as ineffectual. Taking the matter in its own hands, especially in the past couple of decades, this civil society has created a countless number of development-oriented non-governmental organizations. These are supposed to compensate for the lack of action by international organizations. Development NGOs are believed to be more locally responsive as well as free of business or political considerations in choosing their strategies, and thus generally more efficient than IOs. However, if they really were how they are alleged to be, the problems of the third world would already be ameliorated by a significant amount, if not completely eradicated. Do development-NGOs indeed possess the characteristics that they claim to possess? What is their real affect on human rights? And how effective are they in their work?

I aim to provide answers to these questions in this essay via a specific case study of NGOs working with child labor in El Salvador. Child labor is an extremely sensitive and controversial subject, and therefore, as the first chapter shows, there exist various approaches to its solution. The type of approach that an NGO elects is generally related to the type of links and donors that it possesses. I deliberate the different interconnections of the relationships between NGOs and institutions, as well as their implications and flaws in the second chapter. The third chapter concentrates on the actual NGOs present in El Salvador, and describes its child-labor-NGO situation through the lens of the theoretical background contained in chapters one and two. In the final, fourth chapter I analyze the information from chapter three based on the available data and discuss the overall effectiveness of the NGOs previously studied. Lastly, I offer policy recommendations and ponder future use of the potential contained in the “international civil society.”

# **1. Chapter One: The Existing Trends in NGOs' Approaches to Child Labor**

"I used to work in water the whole day. She [the employer] beat me up regularly with a stick for not finishing my work on time. I was woken at four in the morning and then I had to wash the clothes, sweep and mop the floor," cites BBC Shanta, a six-year-old Indian girl right after having been rescued from domestic slavery by a local NGO. Hearing a similarly gruesome story in our age in Western society seems like being transferred several centuries to the past or having an unpleasant dream. Yet child labor in absolute numbers is more prevalent in today's world than ever before. The International Labor Organization has estimated that 350 million (23%) of world's children between the ages of five and seventeen work in developing countries, 120 million of them on a full-time basis<sup>1</sup>. Sixty-one percent of these can be found in Asia, thirty-two percent in Africa and eight percent in Latin America. The largest portion of children works in agriculture. Other popular sectors include domestic labor (servants), trade, services and manufacturing.

The story of each child laborer is different – it varies from a violent experience at a very young age to a practical, educative experience in puberty. Bearing this in mind, it would be erroneous to reject child labor in all its forms as unethical and illegal, especially since the Western world itself eliminated it only at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, accounting for the fact that some types of jobs ruin children's health and hinder their school attendance, which limits their future employment possibilities, as well as for the current Western belief that all children have a natural right to full development without work, in the second half of the twentieth century the international community began to act. Within this context, in 1973 the International Labor Organization adopted Convention number 138, which established the age of 14 years as the earliest age at which any child could obtain work.

Even though more than 100 countries signed the convention, many did not proceed to enforce its rules, often because in cases of extreme poverty, the state allowed children under fourteen to work in order to secure material survival for their families. However, the ILO did not take this reality into account and in 1999 passed a new convention, which restricted the conditions of child employment even further. The Convention number 182 - "The worst forms of child labor convention" – stipulated that while children above fourteen years could work in most jobs, only 18 year olds could gain lawful

---

<sup>1</sup> ILO



employment in certain specified “hazardous” forms of work. Eight years passed since ratifying the new convention, and it is undeniably clear that most countries that violated the previous convention breach the new one as well.

Realizing the ineffectiveness of international organizations in dealing with the problem of child labor, the international nongovernmental sector, a.k.a. the western NGOs have stepped in, trying to solve the problem with their own methods. However, disagreeing on the matter of the main underlying cause of child labor, as well as its most damaging elements, the approaches and policies that they have implemented cover a whole spectrum of possibilities. The following chapter discusses the diverging theories behind the existence of as well as the impact of child labor, and subsequently proceeds to describe the corresponding “recommended approaches.”

### ***1.1. Child Labor Is the Reality – The “Adaptive” Argument***

The first common opinion about child labor asserts that in fact, unless it involves very dangerous or tiring conditions, child labor generally represents neither a serious problem nor a very negative phenomenon. Advocates of this stance can be found among some western academics who passed away long time ago, as well as among certain NGOs and citizens of the developing countries, many of whom are themselves parents of working children.

Approximately two centuries ago, majority of the world’s population was employed in agriculture. Most laborers worked at home and when their work load was abundant, their whole family worked as a unit – children not excluded. However, since the children worked alongside their parents, they normally benefited both from their presence and the assurance that they did not engage in excessively dangerous activities nor overworked. Nevertheless, with the arrival of the industrial revolution to Europe, many families moved to the cities and found employment in newly opened factories. Either for reasons of poverty or for parents’ fear of leaving their children at home alone (especially if not rich enough to send them school), children from the ages of 8-10 years started working in the factories as well. In the absence of labor-regulating laws and labor unions, the working time often lasted twelve to fourteen hours and the working conditions were injurious to health.

The official response of the governments involved a gradual ratification of legislation restricting child labor. Nevertheless, adoption of such laws was not received with a uniform consent. For instance, many English lords and members of the Parliament were opposed to adoption of such laws in Great Britain, arguing that work was essentially beneficial for the children. Even if done purely in own interest, their delivered oratories passionately advocated the right of children to work, and disputed the existence of negative impacts of labor on children's development. One of such advocates, Edward Baines, argued in his book The History of the Cotton Manufacture that "it is not true that the work of piecers and scavengers is continually straining. None of the work in which children and young persons are engaged in mills require constant attention. It is scarcely possible for any employment to be lighter." Lord George Courtauld, another fierce opponent of the anti-child-labor legislation, gradually began to employ in his mill only young girls, claiming that he was training them for adulthood. In this way, his mill served as "a nursery of respectable young women fitted for any of the humble walks of life"<sup>2</sup>.

Even though the discussed opposition was numerous, by 1876 all English children under thirteen years old were prohibited from working more than ten hours a day. From such a limitation there was still a long way to go to today's international legislation, which prohibits children under 18 to engage in any kind of dangerous employment, but the date marked the beginning of the era, in which the Western society generally deems child labor as something fundamentally wrong and detestable. Nevertheless, despite the pressure exerted by the Western society on the developing world to adopt the same kind of attitude (through international conventions and regulations); the developing world has not embraced this notion completely yet.

The study conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor, the Bureau of International Labor Affairs, avers that in many countries of the global South the underlying reasons for children's employment are not poverty or lack of education facilities, but rather the belief that child labor is noble and beneficial. In Latin America, young boys from an early age are supposedly taught to take on responsibility for their family and find a job, even if only a part-time one after school. Their parents perceive their employment as an excellent opportunity to learn a "trade," which helps to assure them

---

<sup>2</sup> Lavalette

that their boys will be able to support themselves and their dependents in their adult lives. A similar perception purportedly exists in Asia, where children are often encouraged to work so as not to become street urchins or beggars. In addition, a job is expected to teach them moral and ethical attitudes, as well as correct work habits at an early age. In Africa, according to the U. S. Department of Labor “child labor is understood to be a form of education, which initiates the child into a path of communal life and work.” The ILO coordinator for Brazil, Renato Mendes, appears to confirm the existence of such notions in an interview in July 2006. As he declares, he believes that child labor is seen as natural by families that have children and it is not simply a question of poverty. “It is culturally accepted that child labor is good for the child and for the country,” he said, referring to a report released June 22 by the ILO on workers in the 5-18 age bracket on pineapple plantations in the northeastern Brazilian state of Paraíba<sup>3</sup>.

Not everyone in the West would oppose him. Hannah Lapp in her article “A Defense of Child labor” also reasons that hard work benefits children because it enables them to experience joy through discovery and achievement. She speaks from her own experience, having grown up on a farm in Minnesota, where her parents required her and her eleven siblings to work not only because they deemed it beneficial but also because their labor was necessary to ensure family’s sustenance. However, Mrs. Lapp remembers the experience fondly and argues that work should become an indivisible part of children’s upbringing. By milking cows and cooking ever since she could manage to hold a pot, she claims to have learned what “hard work” meant before she turned ten. Nevertheless, she appreciates both the skills and the memories obtained in her young years spent in labor on the farm. She declares her inability to comprehend the attitude of modern Western society, which claims to be so repulsed by child labor. In order to support her point, she compares children’s work to current Western obsession with youth sports. “Looking back, I can compare some of my youthful lust for work with other youngsters’ enthusiasm for sports,” she writes. “The thrill of competing with peers and the glory of adult approval were big factors, just as they are in school games. But my own

---

<sup>3</sup> Maia

experiences have given me a bias in favor of work, where the glory is much less temporary”<sup>4</sup>. The last sentence reiterates her belief that child labor can in fact serve as a very positive educational method.

While with her openly child-labor-encouraging stance Hannah Lapp certainly represents a minority in Western thought, she is not the only Westerner to argue that child labor is not necessarily harmful. Three Western economists - Ray, Boyden and Beegle - argue that some types of child work “help build character by teaching punctuality, discipline and rIOr.”<sup>5</sup> Other types of work provide valuable learning-by-doing. These notions usually apply to jobs such as newspaper delivery, baby-sitting, selling or light farm work, and certainly exclude hazardous or risky occupations. Nevertheless, they do lead some Western child-labor-analysts as well as some Western child-labor NGOs to admit that the phenomenon of child labor “should be tolerated in poor countries,” and hence no specific policies are necessarily needed to eliminate it.

### ***1.2. Child Labor Is a Problem of Poverty – The “Developmental” Argument***

The second major line of thinking about child labor contends that child labor is a product of poverty, and therefore national or international bans do not help to solve it, but rather might exacerbate the issue. Pointing to the data showing a clear correlation between the declining poverty rates and fewer working children, advocates of this stance recommend as a remedy crafting a policy within the overall development strategy of the country. In addition, they argue that the proportion of child workers should decrease only if there is simultaneously a worthwhile activity available to substitute for their labor.

Addressing the role of international law, Ranjan Ray argues against absolute prohibition of child labor. In his essay “Child Labor, Child Schooling, and Their Interaction with Adult Labor” he maintains that if child labor is prohibited by law (which is the case in many countries), the law cannot protect child workers since legally they do not exist. Critics contest this disputation, reasoning that the fact that child labor is outlawed does not mean that it no longer exists; rather, it only insinuates that in case of detection an employer of children will be criminally responsible. However, Ray

---

<sup>4</sup> Lapp 2

<sup>5</sup> Beegle, Boyden and Ray confirm the point

addresses this contention by analyzing the situation of countries in which bans have been passed and arguing that even though the critics' line of argument is true in theory, it is not the case in practice. Countries which officially ban child labor do not necessarily follow up with a thorough enforcement of such a decision. As a result, former child laborers do not stop working but rather move into the informal sectors of the economy and often end up working in conditions even worse than before. Countries that face the reality of having a majority of their children economically productive – such as for example India, Bangladesh, Pakistan - could according to Ray enforce safer and healthier conditions for working children better by carefully monitoring child labor than by simply outlawing it.

Nevertheless, even if a country were able to completely outlaw child labor and enforce the ban, the outcome could be contradictory to the original intention. Firstly, if the prohibition of child labor does not reflect a decrease in the overall poverty level, children that are forced to stop working might have to, for the benefit of their family, find either an illegal employment under much worse conditions or face even more dire poverty. Secondly, if children are forcefully fired but adequate substitution is not available, the result might be an increase in the number of street children rather than students. Ravallion and Woodon back up this argument in “Does child labor displace schooling?” where they dispute the assumption that child labor automatically displaces schooling. On the example of a case study in Bangladesh, they empirically prove that while the positive relationship between school subsidies and enrollment is very strong, the relationship between a law against child labor and school attendance is only slightly positive<sup>6</sup>.

Drusilla Brown in “Labor Standards: Where Do They Belong on the International Trade Agenda,” addresses the issue of child labor more from the economic, rather than from the legal side. She asserts that there exists a strong negative correlation between a country's GDP and the percentage of children that are working. Bearing this in mind, international trade, which arguably contributes to an increase in countries' GDP, should act indirectly as a positive force in the reduction of child labor. Moreover, she avers that it should have such an effect also directly, by inspiring countries highly involved in international trade to adopt higher domestic labor standards than those in place before.

---

<sup>6</sup> Ravallion, Woodon

The logic of her argument in the case of developing countries is based on the assumption that low-wage low-skilled intensive countries heavily dependant on exports have an incentive to restrict the supply of their “input,” and thus raise domestic wages, which would in turn raise the price of their exported products and finally also the gross national income. Therefore, she maintains, “developing countries, as a group, have an incentive to *overprotect* labor”<sup>7</sup>.

From her argument it is evident that while Brown views the implementation of higher labor standards resulting from more international trade as a positive thing, she opposes a world-wide implementation of universal labor standards. In a manner similar to Ray, she asserts that while the ILO has throughout its existence attempted to regulate the labor markets across the globe, it has not been very effective, mostly because as an organization, the ILO lacks the power of enforcement. Thus, even when the ILO passes certain conventions regarding child labor and persuades a significant number of its members to ratify it, the actual implementation rates are still very low.

Some political and economic analysts concerned about labor practices in the Third World and aware of the ILO’s inefficiency argue that since international trade and labor practices are “inextricably linked, they should be negotiated by the WTO,” which unlike the ILO is able to enforce sanctions on its member states<sup>8</sup>. It is likely that in such case, the rate of compliance would be significantly higher; nonetheless, the outcomes would tend to have a very negative impact. According to Brown, “trade sanctions in the face of low labor standards are as likely or even more likely to harm workers as they are to improve conditions.”<sup>9</sup> If sanctions were imposed on an economy where a high percentage of children is involved in labor, it would likely harm many of these children. Governments faced with the financial strain of a new “child-labor tax” would probably pass it on firms and businesses in form of taxes. Many firms, consequently facing economic problems, would lay off children. No longer employed, many of these children would “live in households with lower income, less nutrition and otherwise diminished life alternatives,”<sup>10</sup> thus not benefiting from the trade sanctions in any way. Those children that would remain employed would equally suffer because the new tax would be likely applied to their wages, thus also reducing their household’s income. Lastly, as a result of the tax the

---

<sup>7</sup> Drusilla Brown 102

<sup>8</sup> Brown 101

<sup>9</sup> Brown 105

<sup>10</sup> Brown 107

overall country's economy would slow down, national income would fall and hence child labor would indirectly increase<sup>11</sup>.

With a view to the mentioned arguments, most defenders of the “developmental” stance on child labor propose as a solution either community development programs or establishment of school enrollment subsidies, such as food-for-education and money-for-education programs. Both of the programs would contribute to decreasing the overall country's poverty, which lies at the top of to-do list in almost every developing country in the world. However, more importantly, the programs would also play a role in making the country's growth and development more equal. Swinnerton and Rogers support this approach in “The economics of child labor: Comment,” in which they dispute Basu and Van's belief that child labor is caused by “economy-wide poverty.”<sup>12</sup> The economy might often be capable of generating enough wealth for children not to be obliged to work, but the very concentrated holdings of that wealth prevent it. Swinnerton and Rogers reason that a successful remedy to the problem could entail a redistribution policy – for example, a progressive income tax. Money collected in this way would then be used to finance social programs, community development programs or programs such as Progresas and Oportunidad, which have been implemented in Mexico. For attending school, the programs pay students a stipend, which increases with their grade age. The positive impact of the programs in Mexico has been enormous; the school attendance increased by five million in 5 years.<sup>13</sup>

However, more radical “developmental” authors Sylvain Dessy and Stephan Pallage maintain that even food-for-education programs would not be helpful in the context of solving the problem of child labor. Firstly, they claim that “harmful forms of child labor have an economic role: by maintaining wages for child labor high enough, they allow human capital accumulation in poor countries. Unless appropriate mechanisms are designed to mitigate the decline in child labor wages caused by reduced employment options for children, a ban on harmful forms of child labor will likely prove undesirable.”<sup>14</sup> Since a food-for-education program might according to them boost support for a ban on harmful forms of child labor, in current conditions it is not recommended. As the ultimate

---

<sup>11</sup> Brown 110-112

<sup>12</sup> Swinnerton, Rogers,

<sup>13</sup> Swinnerton, Rogers 1383-1385

<sup>14</sup> Dessy, Pallage 68

solution, they advocate a radical restructuring of the power balance in place and redistribution of the national property through nationalization.<sup>15</sup> While they are not alone in the Marxist view of the problem of child labor, they are not often represented by field-working NGOs. The underlying reason is that since NGOs generally do not possess extensive funds (unless they collaborate with a state government or a large international organization), they cannot realistically aspire to alter the power structure of particular state and simultaneously hope to be tolerated by that state. Hence, most of the NGOs that adopt the “developmental attitude” tend to promote redistribution through increasing the equality of schooling and community development.

### ***1.3. Child Labor Is Principally Wrong –The “Abolitionist” Argument***

The line of reasoning that labels child labor as “morally wrong” and indispensable to eradicate is represented by some economists, some international and non-governmental organizations, but most vehemently by Western consumer action groups. In contrast with group number two, which blames poverty for the existence of child labor, group number three often embraces the notion that it is parents who force their children to work, a lot of times even when they are not in financial need. Thus, the necessary remedy which this group recommends greatly revolves around national and international bans on child labor and their enforcement.

Kaushik Basu and Pham Hoang Van in “The Economics of child labor” provide an academic background for the “abolitionist” stance, arguing against the economic view which deems child labor as an inevitable and efficient element of a developing country’s economy<sup>16</sup>. They claim that in fact child labor in a developing economy drives down the overall level of wages, thus creating a self-perpetuating evil cycle. In their economic model, they depict two possible market equilibria in every economy where child labor is present. The first equilibrium point represents the situation in which children are working and their parents receive low wages, while the second one illustrates the time when children have already stopped working, and therefore their parents earn proportionally more income than before. In Basu’s and Van’s view, the increase is enough to compensate for the loss of

---

<sup>15</sup> Dessy, Pallage 68-87

<sup>16</sup> Basu, Van 412-427



income from the children. If this assumption held true, a ban on child labor and its enforcement would work very well, because without having to wait for a country's economy to grow richer, children all over the world could be freed of their labor burden without exposing themselves to any further predicaments.

However, opponents of Basu's and Van's theory point out not only that the described impact of a ban might take a long time to take effect, but also that such a ban might have in the end very different effects from the expected ones. Five years after publishing the above discussed article, Basu himself argued in 2003 in the *Journal of Economic Literature* that "fining firms in violation of the child labor laws might actually increase child labor".<sup>17</sup> Since the fines raised the expected cost of employing children, their wages were lowered and hence in order to maintain the same level of household income either more children had to work, or the same children had to work more hours. In either case, it was the children who ultimately suffered due to the ban's ratification. A concrete famous example of a similar occurrence is the case of passing a high profile ban on child labor in the garment industry in Bangladesh, under the pressure of western free-trade action groups. This ban allegedly ended employment of 10,000 children. However, only an insignificant percentage of these returned to schools. Rather, most of them found new jobs in other industries, often under much worse conditions.<sup>18</sup>

Sonia Bhalotra and Christopher Heady render this argument relatively unsuccessful by arguing that the "vast majority of working children in developing countries are engaged in agricultural labor, not manufacturing," which makes studies concentrated purely on urban child labor less generalize-able<sup>19</sup>. Moreover, in their article "Child farm labor: The Wealth Paradox" the authors demonstrate through analysis of collected data that there exists a remarkably positive relationship between the amount of land that a rural family owns and the likelihood that its children work. They reason that due to the often imperfect labor markets in developing countries, owners or operators of large farms might find it difficult or even risky to depend on the unreliable adult labor and increasingly turn to own children for help. Taking into account this finding as well as the fact that a majority of

---

<sup>17</sup> Edmonds 83

<sup>18</sup> Balko

<sup>19</sup> Bhalotra and Heady 198

child laborers work on family-run farms, Bhalotra and Heady contend that many of the “policies that have recently received attention from economic theorists and journalists interested in child labor have limited relevance to the problem”<sup>20</sup>. In terms of policy suggestions, even though they do regard the level of economic progress irrelevant, they do not argue necessarily in favor of a ban on child labor, since such a ban could hardly affect labor of children that takes place within a private household. Instead, they suggest alternative strategies such as increasing the returns to achieving education and educating women to have fewer children and properly invest in their quality.

Partha Deb and Furio Rosati in “Determinants of Child Labor and School Attendance: The Role of Household Unobservables” go beyond Bhalotra and Heady’s argument and generalize its findings from rural children to all working children. Based on the analysis of aggregate data from Ghana and India, they argue that child labor appears to be resistant to an increase in parents’ income or parents’ education. In fact, they note that “households with high propensities to send their children to school are poorer and have less educated parents compared to households in the other classes”<sup>21</sup>. In an attempt to elucidate this counterintuitive finding, Deb and Rosati maintain that a lot of the poorest families receive some subsidies to be able to afford their children’s school attendance. Moreover, the poor families often do not own any land or business of their own, and thus their children have fewer options to find employment than children of more affluent parents.

Their findings bear three important policy implications. First, they indicate that policies aimed at elimination or reduction of child labor should focus on variables different from the economic ones. Second, they suggest that in light of the insignificant role that income plays in determining the level of child labor policies, international and national bans are highly advisable. However, the innovative value of their argument lies primarily in the third implication, in which Deb and Rosati for the first time introduce the matter of children who neither work nor attend school. According to the utilized data, 8 percent of children in Ghana work, while 14 percent are idle. Similarly, in India 13 percent of children work and 23 percent are idle. While the high percentage of children reported as unoccupied might be to some extent a result of the large informal economies, it still believed to be

---

<sup>20</sup> Bhalotra and Heady 222

<sup>21</sup> Deb and Rosati 19

very high. Deb and Rosati do not offer a solution to the situation of these children, but conclude with the idea that these children “warrant considerably greater attention in theoretical and empirical work...since they are clearly a vulnerable group and may be worse off in a human capital sense than children who work”<sup>22</sup>.

Another distinct economic perspective that falls within the “abolitionist” argument is provided by J.H. Baland and J.A. Robinson in “Is child labor inefficient?” where the incidence of child labor is blamed on the capital-market failure. Baland and Robinson contend that child labor is inefficient when used by parents to transfer income from children to parents, or in other words when employed by parents to transfer income from the future to the present. In their opinion, child labor decreases the future children’s productivity (lack of schooling, health damage...) to such an extent that parents who encourage it to gain more money for the household would benefit more in the future had they educated their children instead. In addition, “when children are needed to provide old age security, allowing parents to put their children to work may induce parents to substitute away from small, educated families to large, less educated families,” which then only perpetuates the problem.<sup>23</sup>

However, the root of the problem lies in the reality that even if parents were aware of the future implications of their decision not to send their children to school, their immediate poverty would force them to do so. Because developing countries often lack functional capital markets, parents are unable to borrow money with the view of returning it in the future via their more-educated and hence more affluent children. In view of this contention, Baland and Robinson support the “abolitionist” policy recommendation of enforcing a ban on child labor, which in combination with a “program that would provide poor families access to capital markets...and hence would contribute to repairing the capital market failure.”<sup>24</sup> However, such a result would require simultaneously a greater availability of schools and an improvement of their quality.

Unlike the varied and nuanced academic “abolitionist” approach, the “abolitionist” stance of NGOs and action groups is often stronger and more single-minded. These organizations support the absolute abolishment of child labor, which they see as morally wrong, and often do not consider the

---

<sup>22</sup> Deb and Rosati 20

<sup>23</sup> Baland, Robinson 666

<sup>24</sup> Baland, Robinson 677-678

future implications of such a ban. However, since they often attract a lot of attention, by some academics they are seen as useful tools of policy enforcement (especially the “abolitionist” action groups). Geeta Chowdhry and Mark Beeman in “Challenging Child Labor: Transnational Activism and India’s Carpet Industry” provide an academic evaluation of the consumer action groups’ activity, describing it as responsible and beneficial, even though on the larger scale relatively insignificant. In their essay, they portray the campaign of German action groups and non-governmental organizations to stop child labor in India’s carpet industry, which exploited young children in great quantities. Through citizen awareness-raising about the conditions of the carpet production, German and international NGOs were able to inspire enough consumers to boycott Indian hand-made carpets to encourage their producers to take action.

Eventually, a label called Rugmark was created, which guarantees that no child labor was used to produce a specific carpet. The participating companies are obliged to provide Rugmark with 0.25% of profit per every carpet sold. This money is used by Rugmark to conduct unexpected visits at member plants and report any observed employed children. Those detected are removed from the workplace and provided an opportunity to attend school as well as a certain stipend to make up for the loss of wages. However, since this program targets only some producers in one industry in a geographically limited area, the authors admit that globally it does not make a huge difference. Nevertheless, they insist that while “Rugmark has not succeeded in banning child labor, nor has it been accepted by all exporters and importers, it has succeeded in diffusing the norms surrounding human rights and child labor in the Mirzapur – Badohi carpet belt in India”<sup>25</sup>. In this way, Chowdhry and Beeman express an explicit adherence to the idea that certain values – such as the right of children to education and freedom from work – are universal, and therefore should ideally become part of enforced international labor standards.

Some non-governmental organizations engaged in research of child labor also adhere to the “abolitionist” idea and encourage activism; however, they do so often in a more subtle manner. For example, the Human Rights Watch in its 2004 report “Turning a Blind Eye: Hazardous Child Work on El Salvador’s Sugarcane Plantations” recommended its readers who were disturbed by the

---

<sup>25</sup> Beeman and Chowdhry 170

situation's account to write a letter to the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Cola-Cola Company, Neville Isdell, to encourage Coca-Cola to stop using Child Labor. While the letter does urge Mr. Isdell to "act now...and protect children in El Salvador from back-breaking hazardous work," it does not insist that such labor be altogether immediately abolished<sup>26</sup>. Explicitly, the letter warns Coca-Cola not to "cancel contracts - and effectively fire working children - without first working with plantations to address these abuses and also ensuring that working children are enrolled in educational and vocational training programs to give them realistic alternatives to hazardous labor."<sup>27</sup>

However, not everyone has accepted the campaign in the spirit in which it was intended. In 2005, Coca-Cola was accused of killing six Union members in Colombia. This scandal, together with the accusation of using child labor in El Salvador, led student activists at approximately 90 American colleges to pressure their administrations to boycott Coca-Cola products. It was the largest student campaign aimed at improvement of labor standards since a campaign against Nike in the 1990s. That one was carried by United Students against sweatshops and insisted on the complete removal of children working in the Nike plants, along with higher wages and greater social benefits for employed adults. The language used by the Union insinuated the underlying belief in certain universal labor standards, child labor being one of them.

The United Students against Sweatshops were joined by other action groups, one of which – the Organic Consumers Association - summarizes the results of the campaign. Labeling the protest action as a success, in the article "Successful Anti-Sweatshop Campaign against Nike in Mexico," her author Ginger Thompson alludes to outcomes achieved in regard to child labor solely in one sentence: "Child laborers have been removed from production lines."<sup>28</sup> Since nothing is mentioned about any further education or social programs being implemented to help the suddenly unemployed children, it is safe to assume that none had been put in place. In addition, one of the adult factory workers mentions in an interview that "conditions had improved but that they did not make enough money to support their children, and so they were forced to rely on their parents."<sup>29</sup> However, the mixed results

---

<sup>26</sup> Turning a Blind Eye

<sup>27</sup> Turning a Blind Eye

<sup>28</sup> Thompson

<sup>29</sup> Thompson

are still proclaimed by the action group as a “success,” which represents well the firmness of the values in the eyes of child-labor “abolitionists.”

The official webpage of the Nike campaign cites Stephen Chapman, a columnist from Libertarian newspaper, who supposedly expressed disagreement with the campaign’s activity. He writes, as they quote, “but why is it unconscionable for a poor country to allow child labor? Pakistan has a per-capita income of \$1,900 per year – meaning that the typical person subsists on barely \$5 per day. Is it a revelation – or a crime – that some parents willingly send their children off to work in a factory to survive? Is it cruel for Nike to give them a chance?” Further, as a solution, Stephen suggests that consumers buy more of the child labor produce, which will according to him increase their wages and help them rise above the poverty level. The authors of the Nike campaign webpage strongly disagree and argue that increasing the demand for the products produced by children would only encourage child labor to proliferate. In addition, it would promote an “increase in birth rates, more slavery, sweatshops, and discourage education – as parents of the children working in factories would want them to work more and earn more”<sup>30</sup>. This quote summarizes well the opinion of the “abolitionist” group, which does not necessarily disregard the role of poverty in the incidence of child labor completely, but considers the role of parental and company’s believes to be the main fault and therefore favors passing and enforcing of bans as the best approach to child labor. While “abolitionist” NGOs that work in third world countries are never as fierce in their approach as consumer activist groups, they do represent essentially the same line of thinking.

#### ***1.4. The Choice of NGOs***

The original intention behind writing my thesis was my desire to investigate and evaluate the impact of Western development aid on human rights in developing countries. Having a specific interest in children and in Central America, I proceeded to narrow down the topic to study the influence of NGO work on child labor in El Salvador/their effectiveness in its elimination. After initial research of the existing literature on child labor, I discovered, as depicted in the first chapter, that there exist three main approaches to the problem and three main recommended solutions. Hence, in

---

<sup>30</sup> TED 2

preparation of my field research I tried to choose a sample of NGOs that would represent all of the three existent approaches.

Due to a limited amount of time and financial resources, I was able to carry out field research only for three weeks and therefore made a choice to study only three NGOs, each of them embodying one of the analyzed strategies. From the fourth edition of the directory of Latin American and Caribbean development organizations, I found out that as of 2006 there were 390 development organizations working in El Salvador. I made online investigations about those that have web-sites and tried to contact those that seemed that they would fit my research. Since many of them were not responding to my e-mails, I contacted them by phone and tried to obtain general information not only about them, but also about other NGOs. Finally, my choice narrowed down to Fe y Alegría, World Vision and CARE.

The fact that I could obtain the initial information only from the internet introduced into the sample from which I was choosing an inherent bias towards organizations wealthy enough to have established not only internet, but also their own website. Thanks to this bias I chose three internationally-run NGOs, since most of the locally-run ones do not have their own websites (Ex: Fundazucar). However, since the size of their donors and the strength of their linkages with the “mother organizations” greatly varies, I was able to find significant differences between the three NGOs.

I chose Fe y Alegría as a representative of the “adaptive” approach, on the basis of evaluation of its policies from the internet and phone conversations. As I found out, even though the mission of the organization is to help Salvadoran children, their actions focused on building of schools and community building, without addressing child labor in any specific manner. World Vision was chosen to represent the “developmental” approach, because it has designed specific policies to eliminate child labor, but does not enforce its absolute elimination. Lastly, CARE seemed perfect to stand for the “abolitionist” approach, because it works with the ILO in projects aimed at immediate and complete removal of children from work places.

The sample that I have used or the method that I have applied can hardly be called random or unbiased. However, in picking the three specific NGOs, I tried to be objective at least in making sure

that none of the organizations was completely unique or special in any way. Thus, each of the NGOs is meant to represent the whole group of thought behind it -other developmental organizations, which use the same approach to address and “solve” child labor. Bearing this in mind, I portray the result as generalize-able for all the NGOs working with child labor in the whole El Salvador. Moreover, by addressing issues relevant to the NGO universe as a whole, I strive to make a point about the “international civil society” and foreign aid as a whole.



## **2. Chapter Two: Exposing the Myths about Non-Governmental Organizations**

The term "nongovernmental organization," or "NGO," is used in a variety of ways all over the world and, depending on the context in which it is used, can refer to many different types of organizations. In the broadest sense, a non-governmental organization is one that is not directly part of the structure of government. Within the United Nations system, the term NGO was first formalized in 1945 with its inclusion in Article 71 of the United Nations Charter. This article provides the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN with the power to "make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence."<sup>31</sup> The relationship between ECOSOC and NGOs was further legitimized in ECOSOC Resolutions 1296 and 1996, which both outline criteria for NGO consultative status with ECOSOC.<sup>32</sup>

NGOs were instrumental in attaining the inclusion of human rights standards in the United Nations Charter in 1945, but they were few in number and influence at that time. Only forty-one NGOs held consultative status with ECOSOC in 1948 and only some of them focused exclusively on development or human rights issues. However, since the 1960s, the number and the influence of NGOs has grown exponentially both nationally and internationally. While approximately 500 NGOs held consultative status with ECOSOC in 1968; this number had increased to over 3119 by 2006.<sup>33</sup> As the World Bank has noted, thanks to this NGO boom the total development aid disbursed by international NGOs increased ten-fold from 1970 to 1985. The World Bank also estimates that the number of international NGOs in developing countries currently lie between 6,000 and 30,000.<sup>34</sup> Anheier places the number of internationally operating NGOs at 40,000.<sup>35</sup> National numbers are even higher: the United States has an estimated 2 million NGOs, (most of them formed in the past 30 years), Russia has 400,000 , India is estimated to have between 1 and 2 million, and in Kenya alone some 240 NGOs come into existence every year. Human rights NGOs have also grown in influence, both nationally and internationally. As Korey explains, NGOs "played a decisive role in transforming the phrase ['human rights'] from just a Charter provision or a Declaration article to a critical element of foreign policy discussions in and out of governmental or intergovernmental circles."<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Global Issues: UN and Partnerships

<sup>32</sup> ECOSOC

<sup>33</sup> Global Issues: UN and Partnerships, Korey

<sup>34</sup> World Bank

<sup>35</sup> Anheier

<sup>36</sup> Korey

Although information about the total number of national and international nongovernmental organizations operating in today's world is not available, it most likely falls between ten and twenty million. The World Bank estimates that these organizations channel over 15 percent of total overseas development aid, approximately \$15-20 billion.<sup>37</sup> Many political analysts argue in favor of this gradual shift away from official donor agencies. They claim that unlike governments and large public agencies, NGOs are more responsive to local needs, unburdened with large bureaucracies, and funded in a way that guarantees them independence both from the market and from political considerations. In addition, they describe NGOs as flexible and open to innovation, and more effective and faster at implementing development efforts.<sup>38</sup> However, other analysts not only criticize NGOs for having a low level of self-sustainability and a small scale of reach, but claim that NGOs also fail in the 'qualities' identified by others as being their strong suits. Thus, while almost everyone consents that the "international civil society" is now more alive than ever and thanks to its large numbers possesses a great potential, there are many qualms about whether that potential is being used effectively and in the correct manner.

The first quality of NGOs under contention is their reputed responsiveness to local needs, which as we shall see is a consequence of the definition of human rights employed by specific NGOs. Throughout the period of the Cold War, NGOs from the Western bloc were the only NGOs spreading the ideal of human rights both at home and in developing countries. They used a human rights definition centered on political and civil rights, which emphasizes the importance of freedom from any kind of abuse (a negative definition of freedom). NGOs in the Communist bloc were not allowed to exist, but the official development agencies of Eastern European states were also involved in promotion of human rights. Their definition of human rights was very different, in that, it was positive and focused solely on social and economic rights (right to employment, housing, education, health care...) rather than civil and political rights, which were largely denied to citizens. Until the fall of the Berlin Wall, Western NGOs considered the USSR and its allies to be the worst violators of human rights and thus associated the positive understanding of human rights, used by the Soviets,

---

<sup>37</sup> World Bank

<sup>38</sup> Fisher, Sanyal

with terror and repression. Nevertheless, “the end of communism in 1989 ushered in a decade of rapid geo-political and economic integration,” marking the end of a sharp East/West divide in human rights policy making and understanding<sup>39</sup>.

Whereas the 1990s represented a period of great growth for some countries, for others they symbolized economic stagnation and a significant increase in economic and social inequality. Some NGOs working in these “worse-off” countries started to doubt if the negative definition of human rights was the correct way to address poor countries’ issues and encourage their development. Even when all the country’s citizens possessed full civil and political rights, if more than half of its population lived below the poverty line, some NGOs did not deem it right to recognize the country’s full respect for human rights. Therefore, certain NGOs started to modify their understanding of human rights and their own work to promote them. In most cases, such modification responded to a change in the local people’s attitude,<sup>40</sup> in which case those NGOs that reacted indeed represented their alleged advantage over governmental institutions, i.e. local responsiveness. However, a great number of NGOs did not respond and thus negated the belief that responsiveness is a quality inherent to all NGOs.

The employed definition of human rights is related to the relationships between NGOs and governments, international organizations, and their “mother” NGOs<sup>41</sup>. The implications of the links that exist between NGOs and other institutions confront the postulation that all NGOs are completely autonomous and thus unburdened with bureaucracies as well as completely free to decide their own strategies. In terms of the existent connections, NGOs that either operate only within one country or are only loosely linked with their “mother” NGOs are often more responsive to the needs of local people and are more likely to promote that definition of human rights, which they deem important. Increasingly, such definitions focus on the social and economic aspects of human rights. In addition, this type of NGO tends to be smaller in size and less bureaucratic. On the other hand, large

---

<sup>39</sup> Hertel 4

<sup>40</sup> The definition of human rights was often altered also in the eyes of the people. For example, it is probable that during some of the Latin American dictatorships during the times of terror people were most interested in obtaining their civil liberties, their freedom from governmental abuse and interference in their lives. However, after transition to democracy, these people might have found themselves living in a poor and very unequal society, and since they were no longer worried on an every day basis about losing their life, they might have started to demand more social and economic rights.

<sup>41</sup> “mother” NGO = main office

international NGOs with strong ties to governments and international organizations tend to develop their strategies in Western sites and are more prone to formulate their definition of human rights in line with the interpretation of their major donors. Even though it varies from an issue to issue, such definitions are generally more oriented towards the civil and political aspects of human rights. Moreover, these NGOs are usually large in size and almost as bureaucratic as governments, which strips them of the comparative advantage of quicker reactions.

The third common supposition about NGOs is connected to the previous two and maintains that the way in which NGOs are funded renders them free of both market and political considerations, permitting them to serve as better mechanisms for aid distribution and development support. However, many authors contest this allegation. In fact, those non-state organizations that possess close links either with international organizations or states' governments are usually also largely funded by these. The greater budget guarantees them greater leverage, but also limits their autonomy in defining human rights and designing their own projects and strategies. NGOs whose links with governments and international organizations are weaker tend to raise the bulk of their budgets through smaller public gifts from individuals or corporations. While this manner of funding is much closer to the image of an "ideal NGO" and grants the non-state institution more independence in setting its goals and priorities, it simultaneously burdens these NGOs with monetary constraints regarding the scope of their actions.

The following chapter focuses on the theory of NGO work in development and human rights. As has been indicated, it addresses the topic of the "good NGO characteristics"– their local responsiveness, low bureaucratization and political and economic autonomy – and challenges their actual existence.

### ***2.1. NGO Responsiveness –Judged according to the Definition of Human Rights Employed***

The traditional understanding of human rights has been political and civil in nature, revolving around the idea of liberty and participation in political life. Present in international law since Magna Charta in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, one of the first times that human rights (civil and political

ones) were officially recorded was via the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The declaration principally listed “first-generation” human rights (using the negative definition), which are nowadays respected at least formally by most countries. Among others, these rights include the freedom of speech, the right to a free trial, the freedom of religion and voting rights<sup>42</sup>.

What is not very well known is that the UN declaration also listed social and economic rights, under the name “second generation” human rights. These contain, for instance, the right to be employed, the right to housing and health care, the right to social security and to unemployment benefits<sup>43</sup>. Since the fulfillment of these rights is much harder to guarantee and also much more difficult to monitor, countries that have signed and ratified the United Nations human rights declaration have never been held responsible on their account. In 1966, the UN General Assembly adopted the “International Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights,” which intended to bind its signatories more specifically to execution of positive human rights; nevertheless, many signatory countries including the United States never proceeded to ratify the covenant, and even most of those who did never created any special organs to implement it.

One of the underlying reasons was the sometimes inherent contradiction between the first the second generation of human rights, along with the traditionally strong emphasis on civil and political liberties. As was mentioned before, this accentuation was further strengthened during the Cold War, by the vilification of the term “economic and social human rights” as the tool of communism. While the dissolution of the Soviet bloc often altered the mentality of civil societies in the developing world, it was not so in Western civil society. Many developing countries had just freed themselves of tyrannical dictatorial regimes and had to deal with problems of poverty, inequality and stagnating economic growth. Thus, along with the core civil and political rights they started to promote social and economic rights as well, advocating the need to implement greater social and redistributive state policies, and the right to work. Various western civil society organizations (NGOs) perceived their problems from a different angle, and focused more on the promotion of labor standards, such as the prohibition of child labor and work in sweatshops.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

<sup>43</sup> UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

<sup>44</sup> Berlin

In this regard, Western action groups adopted the policy of “shaming” the Western public into actions aimed at putting an end to such “abhorrent” labor practices. Campaigns most often encouraged people to consume only products marked with labels to guarantee that they were not produced in “dirty” labor conditions. Shareen Hertel describes “the images from the period as iconic. Teenage Central American factory workers, testifying on Capitol Hill about labor rights abuses in the factories where they worked producing clothing for US customers. A small Pakistani boy – once a soccer ball producer – accepting a global human rights award before cheering crowds. Protestors clad in ‘turtle’ costumes protesting in 1999 in front of the WTO meeting in Seattle, insisting that labor rights be made part of global trade rules.”<sup>45</sup> Captured by cameras, these scenes were used to rouse people’s interest and desire to participate in these campaigns. On the other hand, the fact that many of the campaigns eventually led to a relocation of factories and the firing of most of their former child employees, who economically did not benefit from the act in any way, tempered this enthusiasm.

Even though the NGO tactic of “social labeling” has been in practice only for the past ten years, a number of political scientists believe that it has already achieved important “successes,” and thus reflects the effectiveness and potential of the international civil society. Gary Gereffi, Ronie Garcia-Johnson and Erika Sasser aver in their article “The NGO - Industrial Complex” state that “although definitive conclusions might be premature, the forestry and apparel experiences underscore the growing power of NGOs to compel corporations to adopt new environmental and labor standards.”<sup>46</sup> They argue that while it is perhaps not viable to believe that this NGO policy would ever completely replace the states’ intervention in labor practices, it is becoming an increasingly powerful tool for promoting workers’ rights in our “free trade era.” Greenpeace activists further underscore this argument, describing social labeling as the “gunpowder for social activists.” However, they all seemingly fail to realize that what they are in fact campaigning for are political and civil rights, rather than the economic and social ones.

Geeta Chowdhry and Mark Beeman propose a similar contention in “Challenging child labor: transnational activism and India’s carpet industry.” In the essay, they describe the creation of

---

<sup>45</sup> Hertel 14

<sup>46</sup> Garcia, Gereffi, Sasser 64

the trademark Rugmark, which designates certain carpets as child-labor free and hence enables western consumers to buy Indian rugs without feeling guilty about having contributed to the exploitation of hard working minors. In their view, the story of Rugmark is a good illustration of how social movements can utilize international trade to bring about improvements in human rights. Although Rugmark has (obviously) not succeeded in eradication of all the child labor in the carpet industry, they claim that it did succeed in diffusing the norms surrounding human rights in the Mirzapur – Badohi carpet belt. However, since they do not provide any information about large-scale economic-alternative programs propagated by Rugmark, they imply that their understanding of human rights comprises only the negative definition (children's freedom from work), not the positive one (children's right to economic wellbeing).

The “success” of some of these relatively isolated social labeling campaigns can be viewed as representative of the potential with which some Western NGOs now operate. However, it also reflects the way in which organizations define human rights, and hence offsets the belief in the universal local responsiveness of NGOs. Although Western activist networks are generally based in Western countries, their labor-rights campaigns are almost always formally aimed at helping people in developing countries. However, people in developing countries often care more about the social and economic aspects of human rights than about the civil and political ones. Regardless whether the action groups do not modify their definition of human rights because they are unaware of the North/South split in this regard or because they are unwilling to question the righteousness of their own attitude, their behavior often mirrors an ethnocentric lack of responsiveness to local conditions. While such deviation from responding to the needs of the targeted people occurs most obviously in the case of Western consumer action groups, it is present in numerous other NGOs as well, especially those more strongly connected to international organizations (which tend to prefer the political and civil aspect of human rights).

Aside from demonstrating the lack of responsiveness to local conditions, the existing split between the first and second generation of human rights also affects the effectiveness of NGOs. Consumer action groups are often hailed for having achieved great results, but in fact they are capable of influencing only a very small percentage of developing countries' workers. Firstly, in order to



launch a successful campaign (against exploitation) and attract enough attention from the Western audience, working conditions or breaches of certain labor rights have to be visibly shocking and document-able. In addition, the goods produced in this way have to belong among the country's exports, so that the western consumers can make a statement of disapproval by not purchasing those products until the labor conditions have not been modified. Lastly, the cooperation of both exporters and importers has to be harnessed, which is often difficult because an enactment of the campaign implies that the particular product is going to become more expensive in the West than before.<sup>47</sup> Achieving a combination of all of the three required conditions is challenging. Consequently, a lot of the planned campaigns never occur or turn out to be so insignificant that most consumers never even notice them. However, the fact that several of them did receive a great amount of publicity led some political analysts to consider them to be effective tools of the international civil society.<sup>48</sup>

The second reason behind the frequent ineffectiveness of these campaigns is precisely the difference between the Southern and Northern definition of human rights, which often affects projects that are carried out by Northern NGOs in cooperation with Southern ones. A good illustration of such an occurrence is the campaign against the use of child labor in the textile industry in Bangladesh. Initially, Western activists encouraged the U.S. government to threaten Bangladesh with passing formal trade sanctions if Bengali children were not immediately withdrawn from the textile factories producing clothes for export. However, "local activists blocked the dominant frame of the anti-child-labor campaign until it broadened to include children's rights to education and basic income."<sup>49</sup> Thus, even though the initial push of the campaign resulted in a large number of children being laid off, the overall result was not as effective as originally predicted because local NGOs rallied against children being fired without being granted any economic alternatives. This event offers one example of how the divergent definitions of human rights within the same NGO or among different ones working on the same issue can lead to a deadlock.<sup>50</sup>

As the discussion has depicted, some NGOs are very responsive to the needs and desires of people in the West, which in turn renders them less responsive to the needs of the people in the

---

<sup>47</sup> Hilowitz

<sup>48</sup> Gerefi, Johnson, Sasser

<sup>49</sup> Hertel 30

<sup>50</sup> Hertel 31

targeted developing countries. In addition, the lack of responsiveness of some NGOs often clashes with the strong responsiveness of others, producing an overall ineffective outcome of their actions.

## ***2.2. The Relationships within NGOs, and between NGOs and Other Institutions***

The previous passage alluded to the fact that generally, NGOs that are not strongly affiliated either with IOs and governments or with their “mother office” tend to be more responsive to the needs and wants of people in developing countries. However, such non-affiliation is not always regarded as positive by political scientists. While non-affiliated NGOs might have a greater leeway in identifying problems and designing projects to address them, they might lack the influence or resources to execute their projects on a larger scale.

The outcome of NGO’s effort to be independent both from corporations and public institutions is declared counterproductive by Bishwapriya Sanyal’s article “NGO’s self-defeating quest for autonomy.” Sanyal mentions the common misconception of many NGOs that in order to be successful in their mission, they must be autonomous of both the state and market institutions and avoid any interconnecting institutional linkages.<sup>51</sup> These NGOs, according to him, believe that poverty was brought about by unequal exchange, which is embedded within the market system and supported by national governments and international order. Some non-governmental organizations see a solution in complete disengagement of the poor from exploitative institutions and in enactment of bottom-up projects to facilitate the poor’s political and economic rise. However, Sanyal asserts that these bottom-up projects have proven to be largely ineffective. The economic situation of people who participated in these projects has usually improved only very slightly, due to a severe lack of demand for the products and services they produced. While it is true that this might have been partially due to the total absence of theory-based business and marketing strategies, the political impact of the bottom-up projects has been even smaller than the economic one. Thanks to the dearth of linkages to political parties, many NGOs are generally not affiliated with high-standing politicians and are thus unable to push through certain legislation. In Sanyal’s view, “the NGOs’ unwillingness to forge institutional

---

<sup>51</sup> Sanyal 22

linkages with the government greatly limited the impact of their activities. At best, their efforts created small, isolated projects that lacked institutional support necessary for large scale replication.”<sup>52</sup>

Norman Uphoff in “Relations between Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations and the Promotion of Autonomous Development” contests Sanyal’s thesis and supports the claim about NGO autonomy from the market and from public organizations. First, he warns NGOs against forming too close a relationship with the state, for the fear of being co-opted as “yet another arm of the state.”<sup>53</sup> The author’s warning can be extended to the NGOs’ relationships with international organizations, which could possibly also co-opt them. The second important objection raised by Uphoff against NGOs establishing linkages with other institutions is the danger of expanding and becoming overly bureaucratic, which would lead to a loss of one of the reputed advantages of NGOs – the relative informality and capacity of quick reactions. However, the author seems to be unaware of the fact that if NGOs do not cooperate with other institutions, they tend to expand in order to be able to focus on an increasingly greater number of issues, and thus inevitably become bureaucratic even without the presence of a linkage. Lastly, Uphoff warns against excessive politicization that can develop in a relationship of NGOs with the state/IOs. Aside from other complications, an over-involvement in politics might bear negative implications for the definition of human rights employed (rendering the NGOs less responsive).

International organizations that deal with labor rights, most importantly the International Labor Organization, have traditionally emphasized the negative definition of human rights. As its numerous conventions demonstrate, the ILO is interested in enforcing Western-style labor rules without paying too much attention to the implications that accompany such enactments. States that have signed and ratified ILO conventions are bound by international law to endorse them and monitor their compliance. Even though many current governments of the signatory countries have lukewarm feelings about the appropriateness of these treaties, (given their stage of development), they have to officially adhere to them and formally make an effort to uphold them. Consequently, most of the NGOs that cooperate too closely with the International Labor Organization or with state governments

---

<sup>52</sup> Sanyal 30-32

<sup>53</sup> Uphoff

also adopt a negative understanding of human rights and might end up compromising the amount they genuinely help local people. On the other hand, those NGOs that choose to be truly disengaged from other institutions might be more autonomous and responsive, but their programs lack the scope and effectiveness of NGOs with institutional ties.

### ***2.3. The Manner of Acquiring Funding***

The third common assumption about NGOs, one that is closely connected to their relationship with other institutions, is that they raise their funds through public donations and thus are free of both market and political considerations. However, even though this statement “has to be” true to some extent in the case of every NGO, else the organization would lose its “non-governmental” status; donor funding of NGO’s varies widely. Some political analysts argue that this reality is reflected by the different levels of independence of NGO actions, while others contend that virtually no NGO— especially not an international one – can escape the “hunt for funds” and its accompanying implications.

In “NGOs, civil society and the state in Bangladesh: The politics of representing the poor,” Sarah C. White warns NGOs against accepting financial support from the state or co-administering its projects, arguing that if organizations wish to keep their core goals and the direction they currently follow, they should try to find other sources of finance. She claims that “the scale of resources available through national collaborative projects offers a powerful incentive for the NGOs to shy away from controversial approaches and settle in the safe waters of welfare provision and infrastructural expansion.”<sup>54</sup> Those NGOs that were intent on challenging the existing social order are likely to be silenced by an offer of cooperation from the state. Since NGOs also employ people that have families, who in turn rely on their monthly income, the guarantee of financial stability provided in the case of permanent cooperation with the state is often too tempting to be by-passed. Moreover, believing that the truly devoted NGOs are often led by an inspired charismatic leader, she advises such leaders not to

---

<sup>54</sup> White 324

become involved in too many projects run by the state, in order to avoid being caught in the trap of financial safety and conformity.<sup>55</sup>

Her second objection to the state's co-optation of non-governmental organizations is concerned more with quality of the provided service than with the ideology behind it. In her view, "the danger of NGO expansion, even under franchise, is that it may lead to bypassing of the state, and further erosion of state services. The fragmentation of provision that results may not necessarily deliver the best long-term public interest, let alone meet the needs of the poor."<sup>56</sup> Hence, she believes that the NGO association with the state has a negative impact on the country's poor in two ways. On one hand, by accepting funds from the state and becoming allies, NGOs abandon their revolutionary rhetoric and no longer try to dramatically alter the existing social system. On the other hand, by becoming involved in the provision of welfare services and other social services typically carried out by the state, the state partially or completely withdraws from this area. However, since the services provided by NGOs lack the consistency and reliability of state services, the lower social classes of the state are affected negatively even further.

An opposing opinion is presented by Terje Tvedt's essay "Development NGOs: Actors in a global civil society or in a new international system?" Unlike White, Tvedt does not believe that the linkage between NGOs and the state to raise funding, is worse than any other way of raising money. More skeptical than White, he believes that the way in which relatively functional NGOs have to obtain funds for operation inevitably renders them very vulnerable to manipulation. He contends that "the boundaries of the money flow have produced a rather closed system, in the sense that the partners or members have to apply to be included to be in it or allowed to cross the 'boundaries.' If you get money, you are inside. If not, you are on the outside."<sup>57</sup> Thus, the only characteristic that NGOs according to him share is the way in which they raise money and what this method implies for them, rather than any ideological similarities. He does agree that NGOs that are largely sponsored by the state, a large international organization or a large corporation, are likely to have to follow the particular institution's line of policy. However, he claims that the difference between the lack of

---

<sup>55</sup> White 308

<sup>56</sup> White 324

<sup>57</sup> Tvedt

autonomy of such an NGO and a smaller, seemingly less linked one is not too great. Any NGO, he argues, that acts internationally, is affiliated with some kind of a mother-institution, if not with a corporation or a government, then with a particular church or even an individual. This “funding organism” is likely to be as influential in the NGO’s policy design as in the case of the larger NGO, and thus the discrepancy in autonomy is not as noteworthy as often believed. Nevertheless, he ignores the fact that many small donors can yield less power over an NGO than one large donor, and fails to take into account that donor institutions might differ in their definition of human rights, depending on whether, for example, they are a corporation or a church. In conclusion, the effect of funding on NGOs is similar to the impact of linkages with other institutions - in fact; these two characteristics often come hand in hand. On one hand, NGOs that receive money from large donors tend to be less locally responsive, more expansive and less autonomous. On the other hand, those NGOs that struggle to make a living on charity truly fulfill the ideal of an NGO, but lack funds to implement any of their projects on a larger scale.

#### ***2.4. Chapter Summary***

Many political and economic researchers see NGOs simply as a positive force at the forefront of the international civil society and regard their work in development and human rights as more effective than the work of IOs or governments. Among main advantages, these researchers list the NGOs’ responsiveness to local needs, a small degree of bureaucratization and the freedom from political and economic considerations. However, the discussion above has demonstrated that even if some NGOs actually possess such characteristics, many do not, and thus these qualities cannot be generalized as inherent to NGOs.

Moreover, the analysis has also shown that these three NGO characteristics are largely interconnected. NGOs that fall within the traditional image of locally responsive, non-bureaucratic, apolitical organizations tend to be purely local, national or connected with their main international office only very loosely. Furthermore, links between these NGOs and governments and international organizations tend to be weak, and their funding is often obtained from a large number of smaller donors. These characteristics lead such NGOs to define human rights in accordance with the definition

preferred by the locals.<sup>58</sup> Their main problem lies in their lack of funding and political influence, thanks to which they often encounter problems with implementing their projects on a larger scale.

On the other hand, there exist NGOs that seemingly lack most of the “ideal qualities” and yet are still labeled as NGOs. This category usually includes those large international non-governmental organizations which are closely tied to their “mother office” or possess strong links with IOs, governments and businesses, from which they receive the bulk of their budgets. As a result, these organizations are never “short on cash” and have the power to implement their projects on a much more expansive scale. However, strong links to other institutions also bears a negative connotation – these NGOs are often not very locally responsive, they lack autonomy in electing their projects and strategies, and often become involved in commercial or political struggles.

The following chapters demonstrate how different values of the NGO characteristics described in this chapter – the level of local responsiveness, established links with other institutions and sources of funding – affect the Salvadoran NGO’s choice of approach to child labor (described in chapter one). In addition, they explain how the differences between the particular NGOs lead them to contradict and annul each other’s individual actions.

---

<sup>58</sup> which is in case of labor rights prevalently the positive definition

### **3. Chapter Three: Case Study of Development NGOs Working in El Salvador**



Table 1.a – The apparent non-difference that the NGO work made in terms of eliminating child labor during their intensive campaign between the years 2001 and 2005.

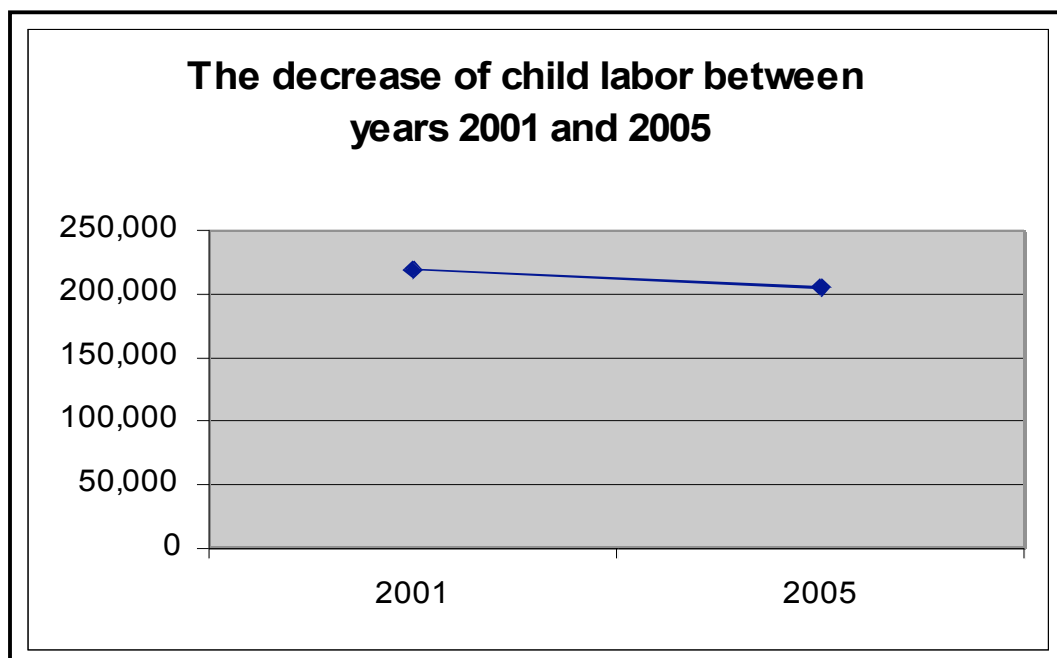


Table 1.b – The basic statistical data about El Salvador

<b>Statistics (2006):</b>	
PPP per capita	\$4,900
GDP real growth	4%
GDP composition by sector	agriculture 9.7%, industry 29.6%, services 60.7%
Unemployment rate	6%, but a lot of underemployment
Population below poverty line	36.1%
Household income/consumption by % share	lowest 10 % - 1.4%; highest 10% - 39.3%
Gini index	52.5
Inflation rate	4.3%
Public debt	44.2% GDP
Agricultural products	coffee, sugar, corn, rice, beans, oilseed, cotton, sorghum; beef, dairy products; shrimp
Industries	food processing, beverages, petroleum, chemicals, fertilizers, textiles, furniture, light metals

### ***3.1. Background Information about Child Labor in El Salvador***

El Salvador is a small country in Central America, bordering the North Pacific Ocean, Guatemala and Honduras. Its area is 21,040 squared kilometers, slightly smaller than Massachusetts and ½ as large as Slovakia. It is inhabited by close to 7 million people, with a median age of 21.8 years, which suggests a young population with a high population growth.

El Salvador achieved independence from Spain in 1821 and from the Central American Federation in 1839. The people's resistance against the military dictatorship, present in the country since 1930s, culminated in a 12-year-long civil war between the government and the leftist guerilla front FMLN. The war cost El Salvador lives of 75,000 people and was brought to a halt in 1992, when the peace treaty containing certain reforms was signed. However, until today El Salvador had not elected even one left-wing government.<sup>59</sup>

The political regime of the country is a presidential one; the president and vice-president are elected by one ticket every five years. The president is both the Chief of State and the head of the government, and therefore, after being elected, he appoints members of the cabinet. The current president's name is Elias Antonio Saca Gonzales and he came from the ARENA party.

The legislative assembly is unicameral with 84 seats. Its members are elected by direct, popular vote for three-year long terms. The ARENA party currently holds plurality also in the parliament.<sup>60</sup>

#### **3.1A Economic Context:**

While at the beginning of the '90s Salvadoran economy experienced a significant boost, since 1996 the GDP growth again started to slow down. Between 1996 and 2002, the average rate of growth was 2.71% - 3.39 percentile points less than in the first half of the 1990s. This recession was brought about by the decline in consumption, worsening exchange rate as well as the Hurricane Mitch. As a result, the GDP per capita also suffered a dramatic slow down in growth, augmenting only by 1.6% between 1996 and 2000 and after that several times even decreasing. Even though government in San

---

<sup>59</sup> CIA, Nations Online

<sup>60</sup> CIA

Salvador exerted a considerable effort to increase public investment and hence spur higher growth, private investment was very reluctant to follow the suit. The benefit of the recession was that El Salvador finally succeeded in taming inflation, which decreased from 7.4% in 1996 to 2.8% in 2002.

“Hoping to stimulate the sluggish economy, the government is striving to open new export markets, encourage foreign investment, and modernize the tax and healthcare systems. Implementation in 2006 of the Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement, which El Salvador was the first to ratify, has strengthened an already positive export trend. The trade deficit has been offset by annual remittances from Salvadorans living abroad - equivalent to more than 15% of GDP - and external aid. With the adoption of the US dollar as its currency in 2001, El Salvador has lost control over monetary policy and must concentrate on maintaining a disciplined fiscal policy. The current government has pursued economic diversification, with some success in promoting textile production, international port services, and tourism. It is committed to opening the economy to trade and investment, and has embarked on a wave of privatizations extending to telecom, electricity distribution, banking, and pension funds”<sup>61</sup>.

The rate of poverty has supposedly decreased, but poverty still remains the prevalent reality, especially in rural and urban areas whose main means of living – agriculture – is ever more deteriorating. In quantitative terms, every 25 households out of 100 (every 1 out of 4) live in conditions of extreme poverty, which means that they barely possess the means necessary to secure alimentation. The data from the second report about Human Development in Central America and Panama from 2003 indicates that half of the people living in extreme poverty are made up of children and adolescents under 18 years old. Such conditions very often lead to a premature end to education and an early entry into the labor market.<sup>62</sup>

The Salvadoran labor market has been traditionally characterized by high levels of underemployment and low levels of unemployment, the latter being the highest among the young people. In 2002, approximately 57 of every 100 of those, who “were in search of work,” were between 15 and 29 years old. Majority of the employed population works in the commercial area, about half as

---

<sup>61</sup> CIA

<sup>62</sup> CIA

many works in manufacturing and agriculture. As the data proves, women earn on average 35.7% percent less than men. Wages do usually increase with the increasing number of years of education; nevertheless, this trend is much less noticeable in the case of women compared to men.<sup>63</sup>

### 3.1B Education:

In its 2006 report, the Salvadoran Ministry of Education (MINED) claims to have achieved several important gains. It was supposedly successful in broadening the reach of education, especially of primary and secondary level in the rural areas. It also carried out a number of changes in the educational methods, introducing programs such as EDUCO or “Alternative classrooms”, which make education more accessible to older children or children with learning difficulties. In addition, it made an effort to improve the capacities of teachers, availability of educational materials and the willingness of parents to send their children to school and keep them there.

However, the Ministry states with remorse that the inequalities in the achieved level of education were decreased only barely. As Larde and Molina’s data show, while the richest 10% of the Salvadoran population complete on average 12.4 years of education, in the case of the poorest 10% it is only 4.3 years. Such large discrepancy constitutes a problem also because, as studies have shown, less than 11 years of education (high school diploma) do not make a significant difference in the obtained pay. Thus, if children that had gone to school for ten years earn the same amount as those who have finished only 4 years of school, the incentive for obtaining higher education is very low.<sup>64</sup>

### 3.1C Child Labor Statistics and Facts:

*ILO:*

In 2001, the population of children between 5 and 17 years was 1 936 987, out of whom 222 479 children worked. This implies an 11.5% rate of child labor. The breakdown by gender of the infantile workers shows that while 16% of boys between the years 5 and 17 work, only 7% of girls does. We encounter a similar difference when comparing the children living in the rural and in the

---

<sup>63</sup> CIA, Nations Online

<sup>64</sup> MINED, data supposedly obtained from Larde and Molina

urban areas. While only 7.7% of urban children work, the number is 15.7% in the case of rural children.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
Total	11.5	7.7	15.7
Masculine	16	8.9	23.5
Feminine	7	6.5	7.5

The percentage increases with age. While only 1.5% of children between the ages of 5 and 9 works, the number becomes 13% in the case of children between 9 and 14 and 27.6% in the case of children between the age of 15 and 18. Almost half of the economically active youth works in the sectors of agriculture, hunting, and fishing; this proportion becomes 70% when looking solely at the rural area. Another important factor to be mentioned is that out of the working children, 63% does not receive in return for work any remuneration (rather, their family does).

*Education and child workers:*

In the study of child labor in El Salvador, the data provides undeniable evidence that there is a strong relationship between having an occupation and not attending school. While 80% of those children who do not work does attend school, with occupied children this number is only 53%. The difference becomes even higher when looking solely at the rural regions; in those areas only 73.2% of not-working and 37.3% of working children attend school.

<b>Geographic Area</b>	<b>Working</b>	<b>Not working</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Total	53.1	80.1	27
Urban	63.7	85.8	22.1
Rural	37.3	73.2	35.9

The study of the relationship between school attendance and child labor produces interesting results also if we break up the groups of children by age.

<b>Age groups/ School attendance</b>	<b>Working</b>	<b>Not working</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Total	53.1	80.1	27
5 to 9	72.2	73.5	1.3
10 to 14	67.3	90.1	22.8
15 to 17	39.1	75.4	36.3

### 3.1D International Conventions and National Laws Regarding Child Labor in El Salvador:

El Salvador signed and ratified the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)*, which binds member countries to protect children's civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Moreover, Salvadoran Government ratified *ILO's Convention 138 (1973)*, concerning the minimum age for admission to employment, which was fixed at 15 for even the lightest types of work (14 in developing countries). Lastly, it has also ratified *ILO's Convention 182 (1999)* on the Worst forms of child labor. This convention further restricts employment of minors by stating that in dangerous or unsafe jobs, children can legally start working only once they reach eighteen years.

Provisions contained in the international conventions were largely incorporated also into the national law. Constitution of El Salvador from 1983 defines the minimum age and conditions under which children under the age of 18 are permitted to work. Children under 14 and those who have not finished a certain level of education are prohibited from working. In 1993, a National Policy on Minors was formulated, which spells out the responsibilities and obligations of the family, community and state with regard to children, including child labor. In that same year, two institutions were created to protect children's rights: the Salvadorian Institute for Protection of Minors, one of whose functions has been to implement policies and programs to eradicate child labor, and the National Secretary for the Family as the entity responsible for overseeing those policies.

3.1E The forms of Child Labor Occurring in El Salvador, Classified as “Worst Forms” according the ILO Convention 182:

1. *Sugarcane Industry* – approximately 96, 000 children work in this field. Nearly all children working on the sugarcane plantations are involved in the dangerous activities of cutting or scraping canes. Thus, these children risk cuts and mutilation due to accidents with machetes that they use. “They are also exposed to poisons from the application of insecticides, fungicides and fertilizers, and have an increased risk of respiratory and lung diseases.” Other dangers include insect and snake bites, as well as enduring long hours in the heat and humidity.
2. *Fishing* – involves approximately 48, 000 children. The risks and dangers to children working in the fishing industry vary, depending on the type of work they do. The common hazards include drowning, cutting injuries, sun-strokes and contamination by micro-organisms that inhabit specific environments. The worst type of work in fishing is the recollection of shellfish. Children who work as “curileros” face very a very unpleasant setting full of mosquitoes. In order to avoid their bites, children smoke tobacco usually since the age at which they started working. However, since not even tobacco works as a perfect repellent, children working in the swamps are more likely to get malaria or dengue than other children, and thus often – also due to frequent cases of malnutrition – succumb at a young age.
3. *Scavenging in Garbage Dumpsites* – approximately 6,000 children work in this area. They are classified as child laborers, despite the fact that they do not directly receive money for their work, only if they manage to collect enough goods that can be resold (plastic bottles, metal cans, glass). This is one of the most repelling children’s jobs, of which even the children themselves feel utterly ashamed<sup>65</sup>. Moreover, “the risks to the health and safety of children are great and many: lacerations from broken glass and jagged pieces of metal; infections and disease from unsanitary conditions; serious and sometimes fatal accidents involving the garbage trucks and machines that roll over the garbage to compact it.”<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> interview with children in San Julian

<sup>66</sup> ILO

4. *Fireworks Production* +5. *Sexual Exploitation* – even though these two types of work are equally hazardous and damaging (if not more) than the three mentioned above, they involve a smaller number of children and thus my thesis addresses them only marginally.

### 3.1F ILO-identified Causes of Child labor in El Salvador:

1. *Cultural Factors* – Salvadorians value work and “giving children responsibility from an early age is viewed positively.” Currently there is a very low level of awareness among the general population about the dangers and long-term damaging affects of child labor on children and society.
2. *Extreme Poverty* – in El Salvador, about 50% of the total population and about 60 % of the rural population live below the poverty line. According to the Human Development Index, El Salvador ranks 104<sup>th</sup> out of 174 countries. Extreme poverty often forces children from affected families to start supplanting family income from a very young age. This obligation to work creates a “poverty trap,” a vicious cycle, in which poor children who work do not gain education and thus an opportunity to find a better job, which in result forces them to send to work also their children.
3. *Rural-Urban Migration* – in the slums of bigger cities, adults are unable to find better paying jobs. Their children often do not attend school not only because their income might be need to contribute to the parents’ one, but also because the availability and quality of schools in the slums is very scarce.

### **3.2. Division of NGOs by Approach**

As the first chapter explained, there exist three main approaches to child labor. The first conceptual “adaptive” stream regards child labor to be an inevitable part of life in developing countries, one that either cannot be addressed at all or should be addressed only within its own boundaries. This viewpoint is shared by many of the working children’s parents, as well as the first of the studied non-governmental organizations, Fe y Alegría. Non-governmental organizations that share this stance generally focus on providing local children with educational and recreational activities, in



some cases even on increasing the spiritual well-being of their community. Some of them help working children organize themselves into unions to gain better working conditions, while other ones provide them with free professional formation workshops, which can guarantee them better paying and more secure jobs. Even though officially these organizations are also obliged to comply with international and national rules regarding child labor, in reality they avoid implementing them, considering them to be naïve and idealistic, completely unsustainable and frequently very unsuitable to the country's situation. This approach is the most realistic one, which is often beneficial, except in some cases it might harm children if the organization turns a blind eye even on the most appalling working conditions of some of the youngest Salvadoran children (however, such situations are extremely rare in El Salvador).

The second, “developmental” stream of thought blames the incidence of child labor on economic problems of the countries in which the phenomenon abounds. Supporters of this stance are usually aware that the problem cannot be eradicated immediately, but they do claim to have observed a trend of decrease in child labor as the country's economy improves. They believe that a complete eradication can occur only once the country experiences high enough growth to significantly raise even the poorest people's standard of living. However, since academics within this conceptual stream simultaneously agree that a partial underlying reason for existence of the problem might be the lack of distribution, they try to minimize child labor through local educational and economic-development projects. In my study, World Vision is the representative of this approach. Although it officially complies with the international conventions pertinent to child labor and signed by El Salvador, it does not encourage the children who work to quit their jobs. However, unlike *Fe y Alegría*, it does not evade discussion of the topic, but rather tries to address it. It provides working children with school supplies and uniforms to enable the continuation of their education. In addition, within its programs of economic development, it organizes workshops of professional formation and business management for the working children's parents, supposed to increase families' income and thus lower their need for the income of their minors. In case of World Vision, the most obvious problem of this approach is its “assistentialist” character.

The third analyzed approach, the “abolitionist” one, argues that child labor is principally a cultural problem, caused by the Third World’s belief that children need to work in order to learn a trade as well as to do something useful and meaningful while they are young. Those scholars who belong to this thought stream therefore consider the eradication of child labor a relatively simple and quick process, which can be carried out either by passing and enforcing prohibitions, or by raising awareness of the working children’s parents. In the case of El Salvador, this conceptual approach is represented by the International Labor Organization and those non-governmental organizations closely linked to it, such as CARE. Their efforts focus mainly on monitoring employers in the specified dangerous fields to ensure that they do not employ any children, and on family visits to change the working children’s families’ opinions about child labor. Another special group of NGOs that belongs to the abolitionist category is represented by consumer action groups, which influenced El Salvador to a lesser degree than many other developing countries struggling with the problem of child labor, but still had a significant impact on the enforcement of existing international conventions in certain industries. Thanks to the fact that the abolitionist approach is supported by most international organizations with large funds, its potential scope is expansive – however, since the approach lacks any economic alternatives, it is also seriously imbalanced.

In the effort to discover what the overall impact of NGO work on child labor in El Salvador is, the following discussion analyzes how each of the three observed NGOs connects the conceptual approach described in chapter one with the characteristics analyzed in chapter two - the employed definition of human rights, the strength of links with other institutions, and the manner of obtaining funds. In addition, it evaluates each of the NGOs’ effectiveness within its own definition of “success.” As it becomes evident, there exists a certain logical connection between the conceptual stream into which each NGO belongs and a certain position regarding each of the analyzed NGO characteristics.

### ***3.3. The First, “Adaptive” Approach***

The first approach, which deems child labor to be an inseparable part of life in developing countries, can be found not only among many of the working children’s parents but also among NGOs like Fe y Alegría. The method these organizations use can be labeled as “adaptive” because it

essentially evades the topic of child labor; often not even describing it as a negative phenomenon. In terms of labor rights, this approach places the economic and social rights of children above the civil and political ones, obviously favoring a positive human rights understanding. As chapter two elucidates, such interpretation of human rights is associated with NGOs that have weak linkage to other institutions and therefore obtain large parts of their funds from small private donors.

## **Fe y Alegría**

Fe y Alegría was founded in Venezuela in 1955 to consolidate efforts that were being made to provide educational services in the slum zones of Caracas. “The bold vision of its Jesuit founder,” Brother Jose Maria Velaz, and the collaboration of numerous people and organizations “resulted in the crystallization of a work rich in history and in vision of the future.”<sup>67</sup> The movement spread to Ecuador, Panama, Peru, Bolivia, El Salvador, Colombia, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Argentina, Honduras and Chile. In Spain, Fe y Alegría was established in 1985 as a support organization and as a means of raising consciousness in Europe. In 1999, its mission was redefined to assume new challenges in the field of international cooperation for development, with the name of Entreculturas-Fe y Alegría Foundation.

“In the search for responses to the urgent needs of students and communities, the proposals of Fe y Alegría have become embodied in a variety of initiatives.”<sup>68</sup> Besides formal pre-school, primary and secondary schools, Fe y Alegría created other spaces for human development, such as radio stations, adult education programs, labor training and school equivalency programs, professional formation workshops, as well as projects for community development, health care, native culture, teacher training, and publication of educational materials. In all the mentioned areas, Fe y Alegría acts in close coordination with the communities, seeking to “complement and support the action of other public and private bodies.”<sup>69</sup>

Fe y Alegría in El Salvador was founded in 1966. From the beginning, the organization identified as part of its main mission the necessity to create public primary and middle schools, as

---

<sup>67</sup> Fe y Alegría - website

<sup>68</sup> Fe y Alegría - website

<sup>69</sup> Fe y Alegría - website

well as non-formal schools oriented at vocational training. It started its activity with three public schools, four technical workshops and one clinic.

Whereas in the 1980s the organization greatly expanded, both through building schools and hospitals that assisted people in poor communities for free, in the 1990s many of its buildings and infrastructure were destroyed by fights of the civil war. The challenges faced by communities after the peace accords were signed were a little different from those before. The country having gone back in time virtually twenty years, Fe y Alegría started to place greater emphasis on vocational formation of the Salvadoran youth, creating traveling vocational workshops. Moreover, it began to address also some of the most modern problems, such as narcotics, and thus created ambulances to treat young drug addicts.

According to its website, Fe y Alegría's current areas of work include the following:

1. Creation/operation of primary schools – in rural and marginal-urban areas
2. Establishment of vocational training centers– in various professions
3. Creation of traveling vocational workshops
4. Promotion of integral development from the earliest age – establishment of infirmaries, especially for children of the adults who work in sales on the streets
5. Street education – provided to street children and drug addicts; awareness-raising about potential risks such as HIV

### 3.3A Self-characterization and the Applied Definition of Human Rights

Fe y Alegría (Faith and Happiness) characterizes itself as the “Movement for Integral Popular Education and Social Development,” whose activities are directed at the most impoverished and excluded sectors of the population, with an attempt to empower them in their personal development and social participation. “It is a movement which unites people in a process of growth, self-criticism and the search for answers to the challenges presented by human needs.”<sup>70</sup>

It concerns education because it promotes the formation of persons who are conscious of their own potential and of the reality about them; who are free, committed and open to transcendence; and who

---

<sup>70</sup> Fe y Alegría website and interviews

seek to be protagonists in their own development. It is popular because it sees education as a part of a pedagogical and political proposal for social transformation rooted in the local communities. It is integral because it presupposes that education involves the whole person in all his/her dimensions. And it concerns social development because, in the face of injustice and the needs of concrete individuals, it makes a commitment to confronting them and thereby creating a society which is just, fraternal, democratic and participative.<sup>71</sup>

In the context of NGO classification, Fe y Alegría uses a very different definition of human rights of children (and people in general), with whom it works from the one promoted by the International Labor organization. Placing economic rights above liberal rights, Fe y Alegría regards it much more important to make sure that children live in families with sufficient income than that they do not work. Thus, in effect, it accepts child labor as currently an inevitable part of life for many Salvadoran children. However, it does try to ease their burden and guarantee them a better future by promoting their school attendance, better and safer working conditions through professional training, and an overall well-being and happiness.

In order to achieve these goals, Fe y Alegría focuses on providing support to schools in difficult areas – suburban or isolated rural ones, usually affected by poverty, marginalization, and violence. The goal of the organization is to provide the targeted population with complex education. Hence, aside from teaching children to read and write, it offers also accelerated forms of education and adult alphabetization courses. In order to improve the conditions in which some of the children work, it engages them in “professional workshops,” in which the children learn to bake bread, repair electricity, and do accounting or computer maintenance. These skills enable them to find better paying and safer jobs. Lastly, in the communities around each of its schools, Fe y Alegría organizes sports clubs, theatre clubs, and music bands, trying to fill children’s free time with meaningful activities. In most communities catholic support is also provided, both to the children and to the community as a whole.

Some of the schools with which Fe y Alegría works were founded by Fe y Alegría, while other ones were originally public and now are run jointly by the state and the organization. In the semi-

---

<sup>71</sup> Fe y Alegría website and interviews

public schools the curriculum is a little different from the ones that belong purely to Fe y Alegría, because the organization has less freedom to shape their program according to its own ideas. Attendance to all the schools is free, even though donations are always welcome. In the area of the school, the organization tries to nurture a community of parents, children, their relatives, and their friends. The main focus of such a community is the physical and spiritual well-being of its members, which aims to be achieved also with the help of teachers and pastors. Once children graduate, there are a limited number of scholarships available for their further education, but the organization so far lacks funds to “sponsor” children, as do larger and better-funded organizations.

Fe y Alegría not only does not target child labor specifically, but in fact it does not even monitor the rate of its occurrence. When asked in an interview approximately what percentages of students that attend Fe y Alegría’s schools also work, the director of the community well-being section Hector Parson replied a little cynically that he did not know that it belonged among the responsibilities of the organization to find out. In any case, he remarked, such a figure was hard to estimate. Since all the schools of Fe y Alegría are located in difficult, poor and violent areas, most children that are able to find work are probably working. If their parents own a piece of land or a little store, it is virtually certain that the children help out from the age of seven or eight. If they do not own any property or business on their own, the children perhaps help out the neighbors for a small amount of money. Girls in poor, multi-children families always assist with caring for younger siblings, cooking or cleaning. “How does one distinguish,” he asked, “what is child labor? Do the children that work for money count more than those who do not? Those who work for money in these communities to be able to buy school supplies are lucky. There are many children who do not work and therefore often do not have enough money not only for notebooks, but neither for proper nutrition. Thus,” he concluded, “finding out the number of children who work for wages outside of their house would be not only difficult but also futile.”

Fe y Alegría’s intent is to work with vulnerable children in the situations, in which they currently are, and try to make their life, given the circumstances, as enjoyable and fulfilling as possible. Thus, if the children have to work to supplant their parents’ income, Fe y Alegría does not try to stop them, but rather tries to help them through pastoral services, sport activities, or theatre

clubs. When I pointed out that *Fe y Alegría*'s approach might seem concessionary and apathetic, Parson strongly disagreed. Firstly, he pointed to the (according to him) meager results achieved in the field of child labor reduction by the organizations, which target the problem directly and try to eradicate it, and claimed that child labor is currently a reality that cannot be changed or avoided. Second, he highlighted *Fe y Alegría*'s three vocational training centers as one of the best ways to teach children useful techniques, through which they can secure better paying and safer jobs.

Out of the three analyzed approaches, *Fe y Alegría*'s adaptive approach represents best the attitudes of the working children's parents. I captured them indirectly from group interviews with child laborers in San Julian and directly from my interview with Anna Carmen Rodriguez and her daughters Raquel and Anna Ruth in Usulután.

In San Julian, a village in the Sonsonate department, I held a group interview with twenty-five working children, ranging from the age of seven to the age of seventeen. Most of them work in the collection of coffee, some cut sugar cane on the plantations, yet others collect trash (plastics, metal) for further sale. Even though I did not have the opportunity to speak with the children's parents, I gained a sense of their opinions from my conversation with their offspring.

Most children stated that while they do find their work demanding and hard, they regard the fact that they have to work as something natural, given the economic situation of their families. Very much unlike Western children, who often expect parents to sacrifice themselves for their well-being, these children regarded as obvious their duty to contribute to the family income through their own work, either to "pay" for the food they eat or for the supplies they need for school. They also claimed that through working, they learn the skills necessary for their future careers, which they would not learn at school. Finally, with a slight hesitation they added that "working is fun," even though playing is even more so. From the last answer, it became evident that many of the children were previously instructed by their parents on what to say in the interview.<sup>72</sup>

The interview with Anna Carmen Rodriguez represents the same kind of opinion, only in greater detail. Anna Carmen is a woman of approximately 32 years of age; however, according to

---

<sup>72</sup> Interview in San Julian

Western standards she looks much older. This visual discrepancy can be easily explained by the hardships of her life. She lives with her three children in Concepcion Batres, a village in the department of Usulután. Her family never owned any agricultural land, and therefore ever since she was nine years old, she worked alongside her parents in the extraction of mollusks (oysters) in the swampy mangrove area that lines the coast near Concepcion Batres. Now, 20 years later, she teaches her children the same profession.

Her oldest daughter Raquel, now thirteen, started helping out with the mollusk-extraction at the age of eight years. She attends school only two or three times per week, depending on the time of high tide when the extraction is impossible. She describes her work as difficult and unpleasant. The swamp is according to her “watered-down...with a lot of mud, and when you step into it, you sink. The mud stinks and sometimes there are thorns or pieces of shells that wound your feet and hands.” However, when we enquire if she dislikes the work and would rather attend school full time, she evades the question and answers that if she didn’t work, she could not attend school even once a week, because her family would not have enough money to purchase school supplies. Nevertheless, her scarce school attendance is most likely the underlying reason for still being only in second grade.

Raquel’s mother Anna Carmen is a sensible woman; however, her hard life seems to have robbed her of all hope and optimism. On one hand, she expresses her sorrow that her children have to engage in the hard work of mollusk-extraction at such a young age. On the other hand, she predicts that the activity will remain their occupation throughout their whole life, and thus sees it fit for them to learn to make their living as soon as possible. As she remarks, she might not stay in this world for a long time and thus when she passes away, at least her children will possess the necessary skills to keep themselves alive and fed.

When asked about the restraints that the swamp activity places in the path of her children’s education, she seems only slightly disturbed by the fact that her offspring are able to attend school only part-time. Admitting that she herself cannot either write or read, she claims that she never found that to be a problem her whole life. As an illustration, she mentions case of the older children of another mollusk-extracting family, who, despite having finished five years of school, still work in the same activity as their parents have.



The one worry that she has for her children involves the ever-present mosquitoes in the swamps, which transmit dengue and malaria. The common prevention against their bites is tobacco, and thus even eight-year-olds involved in mollusk-extracting are encouraged to chew it or smoke cigarettes. However, its effectiveness as a repellent is not absolute and hence a fair amount of the children working in the swamps catches one of the two diseases and sometimes dies.

Finally, Anna Carmen remarks that she would certainly prefer if both she and the children could stop working in the swamps; however, if they want to have enough money to buy at least corn flour for tortillas, they cannot miss even one tide. After hearing the words of this woman, as well as seeing her wooden shack with no furniture, it is easier to understand the underlying reason for the “passive approach” to child labor from side of the working children’s parents.

### 3.3B Relationship with the State and International Organizations + Its Direct Implications

As the theoretical basis in the second chapter indicates, organizations that emphasize economic and social aspects of human rights are less likely to be affiliated with the International Labor Organization or the government, which generally prefer the opposite definition. This is certainly true in the case of Fe y Alegría. While their relationship is not utterly antagonistic - Fe y Alegría cooperates with the state in the schools that it manages - with regard to child labor and definition of the right approach to the issue, the state/ILO and Fe y Alegría do not see ideologically eye to eye. Nevertheless, since Fe y Alegría operates in the Salvadoran space, it cannot afford to speak out against the state and ILO publicly. Thus, it does do only silently, through its contradictory actions.

A good illustration of such relationship is the program SCREAM, which the ILO and the Salvadoran government strongly recommended to Fe y Alegría to implement in its schools. The letters SCREAM stand for “Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media.” In describing the program, the ILO states that its main goal is to empower young people to raise social awareness and bring change in their communities. The ILO believes that if young people are “empowered, given responsibility and the value of their contribution is recognized, the wealth of their creativity and commitment can be harnessed to contribute to the global campaign against child

labor.”<sup>73</sup> In order to achieve this goal, the ILO has launched SCREAM to help educators worldwide to promote understanding and awareness about child labor among children in the classrooms. Some of the described manners of children-awareness-raising, as well as their empowerment to bring about change, include making collages, painting, drawing, role-playing, creative writing, and conducting theater performances. According to the description, implementation in the classroom does not require too much material, only paper, coloring pencils, television, a computer to play the CD included with the SCREAM package, and ideally a video camera.

The people with whom I spoke at the national office of Fe y Alegría expressed a positive opinion about the program; however, at the same time they remarked that they did not implement it even in one of their schools. When asked why, they explained that they have tried to use it in their most affluent school, but it did not have the desired affect. One of the crucial problems of the project is that even though in the Western perception the necessary materials listed above are very basic, they are among those that are often deficient in the classrooms in El Salvador. The richest private schools in San Salvador do have a TV and computers, but students in the poor areas where Fe y Alegría operates its schools are often happy to have one pen and one notebook only. Without the necessary tools, the program loses a big part of its appeal<sup>74</sup>.

Nevertheless, according to Nelson Salinas, a young member of Fe y Alegría’s team at the Pastoral Department, the main problem of SCREAM lies in its fundamentally inappropriate design for an environment, where there are children who are engaged in labor. According to its own webpage, the goal of SCREAM is to educate children at a young age that only adults should work, that children have a right to play and not work, and that child labor is a phenomenon that deserves condemnation.<sup>75</sup> Thus, it is primarily aimed at educating Western children, who have probably not heard the expression “child labor” ever before. However, the program can have considerably harmful effects if implemented in schools that are full of child laborers. How will those be impacted if they are told by their teachers that their work is something worth of condemnation, something very negative? From the interviews I conducted with working children, I gained the perception that they were all proud of

---

<sup>73</sup> SCREAM

<sup>74</sup> Interview at Fe y Alegría

<sup>75</sup> SCREAM

what they were doing, of their help to their parents, even if they disliked the activity itself. What will happen to these children's self-perception and perception of their parents if they are suddenly told that their parents are engaged in close-to-a criminal activity by obliging them to work?

These questions will probably never have to be answered, because the program SCREAM is probably never going to be implemented in schools full of child workers, certainly not by Fe y Alegría. Nevertheless, as Fe y Alegría points out, another dilemma arises from its mere implementation in countries of the Western world.<sup>76</sup> The whole working module puts great emphasis on the need to eradicate child labor, not simply ameliorate it. The introductory statement to the teachers finishes with the following three sentences: "Accentuate the message of hope and the need to surround everything you do and say as a group with hope. Child labor CAN be eliminated, that is the point. It is not an unrealistic goal."<sup>77</sup> Even though it would be very gloomy to say that the problem will never be solved, implying that in the next generation, with these young children engaging in action, child labor can be absolutely eliminated, is in fact very irrational and idealistic. Most of the children who will take part in the module will be left unaffected, but certainly some will carry away with them this highly simplistic vision of child labor. Later in the future they will then be more likely to engage in consumer activism supporting immediate abolition of child labor, without feeling the need to explore other views of the issue.

Fe y Alegría's refusal to comply with the ILO's desire for SCREAM's implementation represents the NGO's weak link with the ILO, which translates into an opposite definition of human rights and a different propagated approach to child labor. The thought independence from the ILO certainly strengthens the autonomy of Fe y Alegría's projects as well as its connection to the local people; however, it bears along also a negative implication for funding of the organization.

### 3.3C Organization and Funding

The International Federation of Fe y Alegría is a con-federation of private non-profit organizations, each of which operates as a quasi-independent organization with the permission of the

---

<sup>76</sup> Interview at Fe y Alegría

<sup>77</sup> SCREAM

particular country's national government. The national offices are located in fifteen different Latin American countries. The sixteenth office is situated in Spain, and is operated by the Society of Jesus (the Jesuit order) under the name Entreculturas/Fe y Alegría.

The highest authority of the Federation is the General Assembly, which is made up by the National Directors, the General Coordinator of the Federation, the members of the Board of Directors, an additional qualified delegate from each country and the President of the Latin American Jesuit Provincials Conference. The executive responsibility lies in the Board of Directors, composed of four persons: the General Coordinator, who is legal representative of the Federation, and three others elected by the General Assembly. Every year the Federation holds a meeting of its general Assembly, which is the decision-making body determining the objectives and activities of the Federation, and an International Congress, which facilitates intra-organizational debates on themes of interest, analyzes programs and activities common to all countries and to moderates the exchange of information and experiences within the "Movement."<sup>78</sup>

The Foundation's legal status as an NGO backed by the Society of Jesus is something relatively unique in the panorama of European aid agencies. Thus, while the organization - as was expected due to a discrepancy in the definition of human rights- does not obtain funding from the ILO or state's governments, it does not obtain it purely from small public campaigns either. While these do complement Fe y Alegría's still relatively modest budget, approximately half of the donation is given by the Society of Jesus. This implies that Fe y Alegría is not completely independent in defining its goals and strategies, but since the goals and strategies of the Jesuits are opposite to those of the ILO, despite its lack of autonomy Fe y Alegría can afford to represent the opposing voice.<sup>79</sup> Nevertheless, the support received from the Society of Jesus represents only a fraction of the support typically provided by the US government or the ILO to NGOs, which results in Fe y Alegría's inability to carry out its projects on a larger scale - in the current situation, they usually do not expand much beyond the pilot project size.

---

<sup>78</sup> Fe y Alegría - website

<sup>79</sup> However, such human rights definition can be attributed more to the fact that 15 of Fe y Alegría's 16 offices are located in Latin America, rather than to its religious beliefs

### 3.3D Effectiveness

While the specific word “effectiveness” is literally non-existent in Fe y Alegría’s vocabulary, it can be inferred from the analysis of its objectives that Fe y Alegría considers a project successful if it manages to increase children’s participation in school or some other educational program, improve their working conditions and increase their overall “well-being” through engaging them in various clubs and organizations. From the interviews that I have conducted in Fe y Alegría’s projects in Chacra and San Salvador, I can safely conclude that while on account of the first objective Fe y Alegría’s results are often ambivalent, the NGO generally manages to achieve improvement in the second two.

In terms of achieving a higher school attendance, Fe y Alegría’s results are mixed because of its own contradictory policies. On one hand, the schools operated by Fe y Alegría are free and do not require students to wear uniforms, which makes it easier for children from poor families to attend. In addition, unlike public schools, the Fe y Alegría’s schools have their own budget and thus are able to provide school supplies to those students who cannot afford to buy their own. On the other hand, a large part of Fe y Alegría’s activities focuses on providing youth with vocational training, which is supposed to enable better paid and safer jobs. While this definitely helps Fe y Alegría succeed in its second objective, in many cases it encourages young students (12-13 year old) who have until then worked only in part-time agricultural work and attended school, to find a full-time job and abandon school altogether. This clearly defies Fe y Alegría’s first goal, but the organization does not object due to its strong economic perception of human rights.

In improving children’s working conditions as well as raising their level of “well-being,” Fe y Alegría’s success is less ambiguous. The organization accomplishes the first of the two objectives through its vocational workshops, which assist many children/youth in acquiring skills necessary for performing better-paid professions than agricultural work. In terms of increasing the overall “well-being” of the children, it is safe to conclude that Fe y Alegría is successful. As the organization generally works with a small poor community, in which it sets up soccer clubs, theatre societies and Bible study groups, it often provides local children with the first organized leisure activities of their

lives. Children usually love to participate and often gain a certain meaning in their lives, which they have previously lacked<sup>80</sup>.

*Fe y Alegría's effectiveness (based on its own definitions)*

Increase in local school attendance	--
Improvement in children's working conditions	+
Increase in children's happiness/satisfaction	+
<b>Overall</b>	+

### ***3.4. The Second “Developmental” Approach***

The “developmental” approach differs from the “adaptive” one in that it does consider child labor to be a negative phenomenon, but unlike the “abolitionist” one it believes that child labor cannot be completely eradicated without significant growth of the national economy. In my essay this approach is represented by the NGO World Vision. While this organization tries to address child labor by providing working children's parents with economic alternatives to increase their income and withdraw children from work, it understands that the elimination is a gradual process and therefore does not pressure child laborers to immediately stop working. Its definition of human rights is more balanced than Fe y Alegría's – it still puts a lot of emphasis on economic and social rights, but the civil and political ones also influence the design of its projects. This understanding of human rights is, in view of the second chapter, associated with lukewarm relations with the ILO and the national governments. The resulting non-funding from the ILO positively impacts autonomy of the organization but negatively influences the scope of its reach.

#### **World Vision (Visión Mundial)**

World Vision was founded in 1950 by Bob Pierce, a Christian journalist from the United States, with the goal of creating a sponsorship program for children orphaned in the Korean War. Over the next two decades, the organization expanded its programs also into the rest of Asia, Latin

---

<sup>80</sup> Interview in Chacra

America and Africa. The provided funds were used to supply children with food, education, health care and vocational training – evidently, the organization promoted a complex approach to child development from its beginning<sup>81</sup>.

In the 1970s, World Vision began to offer also emergency relief aid in catastrophes. Simultaneously, it started to address the causes of poverty in communities (predominantly rural) by organizing sanitation, education, health care, leadership training and economic development projects. In the early 1990s, following the collapse of the USSR, World Vision extended its projects into Eastern Europe and Central Asia, focusing predominantly on granting small loans to entrepreneurs and creating orphanages for boys and girls, whose parents passed away during the transition<sup>82</sup>.

In the last decade, World Vision introduced a new model of Area Development Projects, strengthened its relief and advocacy efforts, and spoke out more forcefully on issues related to child survival and poverty alleviation. An international capital fund was also created to finance small loans, two thirds of which go to women entrepreneurs. More than two million children benefit directly from World Vision's sponsorship, while more than 100 million people have benefited from the relief help.<sup>83</sup>

The national office of World Vision in El Salvador was founded in 1975. Since this time, it has carried out projects and programs in health, education, environmental conservation, small-scale agriculture, and infrastructure, within the broad concept of bringing “transformational development” to communities, with which the organization cooperated. Today, the core programs of World Vision in El Salvador revolve around Area Development Projects, which work in communities and provide help in terms of health (including HIV prevention and treatment), education, emergency and disaster mitigation, housing and infrastructure, economic development and human rights advocacy.<sup>84</sup>

In the area of health, World Vision usually oversees a primary health program for children, youth and their families who are at risk of illness or death from preventable diseases. Thus, the organization educates them about nutrition, oral hygiene, mental health and sexual and reproductive

---

<sup>81</sup> World Vision website

<sup>82</sup> World Vision website

<sup>83</sup> World Vision website

<sup>84</sup> World Vision website

diseases. Sometimes medicines are given out and efforts made to implement sound practices in water use and sanitation. Moreover, children from the community are immunized for free.<sup>85</sup>

In the area of education, World Vision primarily facilitates the children's access to schools through provision of "mini-scholarships," scholarly packets which include school materials, a backpack, shoes and a school uniform. In certain schools World Vision tries to improve the quality of education through re-training teachers and providing computer technology, whereas in other areas it offers non-formal educational alternatives. In addition, in view of the fact that World Vision is a Christian organization, an important part of its education program focuses on establishing and teaching Bible classes once a week in each of the communities, with which it works.<sup>86</sup>

The area of economic development had been created only recently and currently focuses on three strategies – training farmers in using techniques to increase harvest production and thus improve their income as well as their children's nutrition, organizing entrepreneurial workshops and offering short courses of professional training. It also gives out very small loans (with no interest) to help small businesses make their start. For further financing, successful entrepreneurs can work with FUNSALDE (a sister organization of World Vision), which provides micro-credit to small businesses at favorable interest rates.<sup>87</sup>

The emergency-response and disaster-mitigation sections seek to protect children and their families affected by natural disasters or armed conflicts through strategic humanitarian assistance. This help is continued over long-term to help victims of disasters "recover and restore their lives with dignity." With this view in mind, new houses in the area are constructed in a manner to be able to resist earthquakes and other disasters.<sup>88</sup>

The advocacy section works with children and women suffering from domestic violence or other forms of abuse. Even though it does not have any official power of its own, the organization intends to serve as an intermediary between the local police, the abused victims and the violent family member, trying to work out a compromise, such as moving of the abused children or women in a house of a different family member. This section also deals with issues such as child labor and

---

<sup>85</sup> World Vision website

<sup>86</sup> World Vision website and interviews

<sup>87</sup> World Vision website and interviews

<sup>88</sup> World Vision website



other forms of breaches of children's rights, as contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international conventions.<sup>89</sup>

Lastly, the "child adoption" program forms an indivisible and very important part of World Vision's activity. In order to raise funds and expand its impact, in the 1980s the organization created a network, through which people from Western countries (or affluent people from developing countries) can pick a child in any country of the Third World, and contribute to its development with a monthly stipend. In return, the sponsor will receive letters from and pictures of the child, and if in the country, can also pay him/her a visit. Ideally, such a sponsorship should continue for ten years, which is the time that World Vision considers as adequate for establishment.<sup>90</sup>

### 3.4A Self-characterization and the Applied Definition of Human Rights

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization, which is dedicated to work with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Its mission is to "help the poor and oppressed in their effort to promote human transformation, seek justice and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God."<sup>91</sup>

Concerning the utilized definition of human rights, World Vision falls in the middle of the spectrum, on one side of which lies Fe y Alegría and on the other CARE. World Vision, similarly to Fe y Alegría, emphasizes the necessity to define human rights as economic rights - the rights of children to live in families with sufficient income to provide them with proper nutrition, health care and school supplies. If that is possible only if the child contributes with its work as well, then World Vision does not automatically object. However, at the same time World Vision agrees with some aspects of CARE's emphasis on civil and political rights - the right of children to full development - and thus ultimately prefers if children do not work. As a result, it addresses the working children in two ways. On one hand, it attempts to increase their school attendance, without necessarily forcing them to stop working. On the other hand, it tries to provide their parents with economic alternatives,

---

<sup>89</sup> World Vision website and interviews

<sup>90</sup> World Vision website

<sup>91</sup> World Vision website

in a hope that the increased level of income in the family will render it unnecessary for their children to continue working.

### *Education*

With regard to education, World Vision intends to make the national system more flexible and more applicable. If it is more flexible, even working children will be able to attain higher education and thus have a chance to obtain better-paid jobs. If it becomes more applicable, children (and their parents) will be motivated to stay in school longer, having in mind vision of the greater future success. Thus, within the area of education, World Vision focuses on increasing the quality and coverage of Salvadoran school system, raising its equality and augmenting its political impact.<sup>92</sup>

In terms of coverage and quality, the focus of World Vision's activity in the educational area has been for many years provision of "scholarly packets" or "mini-scholarships," which were in the form of school supplies, shoes and uniforms supposed to lower the cost of attending school and thus increase the rate of attendance. However, as time has showed, the program produces some positive results, but is very deficient in promoting self-sufficiency. Each of the World Vision's ADPs at its initiation identifies a designated number of sponsored children, which from then on receive the "scholarly packet" every year until graduating from high school. Afterwards, they can apply for a scholarship to continue studying at a university. Nevertheless, when World Vision's project in the area finishes and the ADP closes, it is likely that the school attendance will return to what it was initially. Moreover, the ADPs have been criticized for their limited scope, in which they can sponsor only two children from each family – and this takes place in an area where most families have five to ten children. In view of this reality, World Vision is starting to focus more on different approaches to raise the quality of education, such as training school teachers, providing them with better technology and better teaching materials, as well as teaching headmasters the basics of administration. While this new approach attempts to augment the quality of the education, it does not increase its coverage, and compared to the "packets program" is still insignificant in size.<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> Interview with World Vision's educational department

<sup>93</sup> Interview with World Vision's educational department

Other World Vision's programs in education focus on creation of pre-schools and alternative high school programs. According to statistics, only two percent of children between the ages of 0 and 6 attend school. While this is not necessarily a problem in itself, since the attendance of pre-schools is completely optional, there is a prevalent view that children who attend pre-school tend to do better once in primary school than children who never attended pre-school. This is especially important in case of El Salvador, taking into account that while 92 percent of its children enroll in school, only 73 percent of them reach fifth grade, which is the reflection of a high rate of grade repetition and premature school desertion.<sup>94</sup> Given the circumstances, it is hardly surprising that only 47% of men and 49% of women join high school, which explains the second focus of World Vision's activity in expanding the coverage of the education system, the creation of alternative high-school programs. One of such is a one-and-a-half-year-long program called "Educame" ("Teach me"), which seeks to provide children, who at a high-school age already have to work, with an accelerated distance high-school course. Although a diploma achieved this way is perhaps not worth as much as a diploma attained in a daily, three-year long high school program, it definitely gives participants an extra edge in the labor market.<sup>95</sup>

Claiming that education helps people rise from poverty, World Vision strives to increase the equality of Salvadoran education-distribution. Within this conviction, the organization concentrates primarily on providing rural schools with computer technology and giving interested students classes in computer science. In this manner, it grants the advantages of technology to areas, where they would otherwise never arrive. Other activities that fall under the effort to make education more equal include campaigns for a greater school attendance by girls, as well as alphabetization programs for parents.

In the context of its aim to augment the political impact of education, World Vision strives to give a greater voice to children. Since they are the ones most affected by changes in the education system, World Vision deems their input and participation in decision-making crucial to the system's improvement. Striving to achieve this goal, the organization appoints children-representatives in the directive assemblies on the local level, sponsors art competitions, and creates theater and sports clubs.

---

<sup>94</sup> UNICEF

<sup>95</sup> Interview with World Vision's educational department

Aside from participation of children, World Vision is trying to encourage cooperation also with universities, churches, and sometimes even businesses. However, these alliances have been so far few and not very strong.

### *Economic Development*

While World Vision blames the deficient Salvadoran school system for much of the country's current analphabetism and school desertion, it blames the incidence of child labor primarily on poverty. However, unlike Fe y Alegría, World Vision does not understand as "poverty" only the overall country's deficiency. Rather, World Vision maintains that not only the enrichment of El Salvador as a whole, but also of certain areas by spurring local development could diminish incidence of child labor.

With this view in mind, two years ago World Vision created a department of economic development. Activities of the department focus primarily on two areas – teaching the impoverished people in poor areas the techniques necessary to open small businesses and providing vocational workshops to adults to help them increase their family income enough not to have to send their children to work. In terms of business management training, World Vision provides workshops in accounting, finance, commerce and marketing strategies. The organization's leaders try to encourage Salvadorans to either "sell" the skills they have perfected since childhood, such as baking "pupusas," making sugar cane sweets, carving wooden souvenirs; or to provide services not yet present in the area – opening small convenience stores, washing and ironing laundry, repairing motorcycles and cars. Every citizen that participates in one of the workshops is given the opportunity to receive a micro-loan of 100 dollars (to be repaid without any interest) and start its own little business. If it turns out to be successful and further funding is needed to expand, these people can turn to FUNSALDE, World Vision's micro-credit sister institution, where they can obtain small loans without any necessary collateral. However, similarly to many other micro-credit projects, World Vision has not been very successful in this area so far. On one hand, many people who were initially interested in the workshops lost their interest after the first meeting, regarding the idea as somewhat idealistic and unlikely to produce any benefit. On the other hand, people who actually went ahead with opening a

business often went bankrupt very quickly, usually due to an excess supply of the particular type of business in the area (e.g. pupuserias).<sup>96</sup>

The second focus of the economic development department is organization of professional formation workshops. Similarly to Fe y Alegría, these also focus on providing training in professions such as cooking, bread-baking, sewing, electro-techniques, and auto mechanics. While these might potentially constitute a first step to acquire necessary skills to open one's own business, usually they supply people with the re-training necessary to find a new job. However, their problems rest both in the lack of variability (the workshops provided by most organizations revolve around the same six – seven professions, thus creating an excess supply) and the mostly urban occurrence of the particular jobs, which might potentially lead to dissolution of some rural families. If a father, in order to provide its family with a higher income, learns in one of these workshops auto-mechanics, he is likely to benefit from it only if he moves to a city. Since his family is likely to stay behind to continue taking care of the piece of land it owns, there is a certain chance that the father will eventually abandon his family altogether (these cases are common in El Salvador, where the ratio of women to men is almost two to one).<sup>97</sup>

### 3.4B Relationship with the State and the International Organizations

Fitting into the second category of thought about the best way to approach child labor, World Vision regards Salvadoran poverty, as well as the lack of re-distribution, as the main underlying problems. Thus, while World Vision sometimes collaborates with the national government as well as the International Labor Organization in their efforts to eradicate child labor, in its own projects it leaves the decision whether to continue working or stop to the children, even after they have become members of World Vision's projects. However, unlike Fe y Alegría, World Vision openly and directly addresses the issue of child labor as a negative phenomenon, mainly due to the demonstrably injurious effects it has on the education level achieved by Salvadorans.

The result is two-fold. On one hand, World Vision is held in higher esteem by the national government and the International Labor Organization because it openly joins in the anti-child-labor

---

<sup>96</sup> Interview with World Vision's economic development department

<sup>97</sup> Interview with World Vision's economic development department

rhetoric, which has become very popular in the last several years. Moreover, unlike Fe y Alegría, World Vision occasionally participates in public tenders for governmental child-labor related projects. In campaigning for these, World Vision's projected identification with the ILO's ideals is even stronger.

On the other hand, when World Vision defines its own projects, it does not follow the ILO's conventions literally. Due to a much broader definition of human rights, World Vision does not insist that the children with whom it works abandon their work places, even if those fall under the strictly forbidden category of the "worst forms of child labor." Since World Vision represents only one of many NGOs that use a similar approach, the ILO does not possess either the will or the capacity to enforce closer obedience with its rules. However, when choosing NGOs to carry out its massive projects, it often chooses from NGOs that strictly follow its conventions. This has a direct negative bearing on the funding of World Vision and similar organizations.

### 3.4C Organization and Funding

World Vision International is a Christian humanitarian organization working for the well-being of poor and vulnerable children. According to its website, the organization follows Christ's example to love one another; in this way it is motivated by the Christian faith. However, it is always respectful towards other faiths and beliefs. It never engages in proselytizing or any other kind of religious coercion. There are no conditions attached to their assistance other than human need.<sup>98</sup>

World Vision International functions as a partnership of 97 interdependent national offices, overseen by their own boards of advisory councils. The Partnership is bound together by a mission statement and core values. Each national office has to sign the Covenant of Partnership, which abides it to follow common policies and standards. Partners hold each other accountable through peer review.

The Board of World Vision International is comprised of 24 members from 19 different countries. The Boards oversees activity of the international president, approves strategic plans and budgets, and determines international policy. National offices carry responsibility for World Vision's

---

<sup>98</sup> World Vision website

activity in the particular country and make 90% of decisions regarding projects within the country. However, launching of large programs and campaigns is decided on the international, rather than the national level.<sup>99</sup>

Funding is achieved by raising private and public funds in each of the 97 member-countries. More than half of the budget comes from child sponsor donations. While perhaps unaware, people who “adopt” one of the World Vision’s children and pledge to pay a certain amount every month, do not contribute only to the well-being of the particular child, but to the well-being of the whole community. Aside from clothes and school supplies for the child, the money is used to pay for such needs as clean water, sanitation, nutrition and health care. The rest of the budget is obtained from larger private donors, businesses, foundations, governments and international organizations.<sup>100</sup>

As the World Vision’s annual report for 2006 claims, “World Vision never accepts funds or gifts incompatible with its missions or its capacity.” Thus, since its goal in addressing child labor substantially differs from the one of the International Labor Organization, World Visions rarely qualifies to receive any funds from the ILO in its work in El Salvador. The effect is two fold. On one hand, World Vision is true to its credo and does not compromise its core values. On the other hand, collaboration with the ILO would certainly endow the Salvadoran office of World Vision with greater resources, which would allow the World Vision’s area projects to be extended both in scope and in space.<sup>101</sup>

### 3.4D Effectiveness

In addressing the issue of child labor, World Vision El Salvador does not define its effectiveness specifically. However, from its general goals it can be deduced that it regards its activity as successful if it manages to raise school attendance, improve the economic standing of a particular community (and that way indirectly decrease the number of child laborers) and generally contribute to a greater well-being of the children with whom it works. It intends to achieve these goals through the described educational and developmental policies.

---

<sup>99</sup> World Vision website

<sup>100</sup> World Vision website

<sup>101</sup> World Vision website

The ADP (area development project) that World Vision runs in San Julian is a good example of how these two approaches really affect child labor. The project was initiated in 1999 and will finish its activity in 2009, three years later than initially planned. In the context of its educational efforts, the World Vision's seat in San Julian identified initially 5,000 children to be sponsored by the organization. The main idea of the sponsorship lies in the annual provision of scholarly packets, which include a school uniform, shoes, notebook and other school supplies. These packets are intended to encourage children's persistence in school, i.e. discourage desertion and grade repetition. They are given to a sponsored child annually until the last year of high school; after that the "sponsee" can apply for a college scholarship through World Vision. While relationship between the scholarly packets and school attendance is definitely positive, the packets neither necessarily diminish the occurrence of child labor, nor they are necessarily intended to do so. Even though World Vision formally adheres to the international rhetoric deeming child labor, especially its worst forms, as wrong, most of its sponsored children in San Julian continue cutting sugar-cane, which belongs to the worst forms of child labor. Contrary to the official opinion, World Vision does not regard the fact that the children work in these relatively dangerous conditions even half as serious as the fact that they might not attend school.<sup>102</sup>

However, realizing that school-desertion and grade-repetition are often caused not by the lack of means to purchase school supplies, but by the lack of time that children can devote to study alongside their job, World Vision provides working children's parents with economic workshops. These are supposed to raise the parents' incomes enough to enable their children to work fewer hours per day. In San Julian, farmers are encouraged to switch away from sugar cane collection to cultivation of vegetables like tomatoes, cucumbers or peppers, which can be used both for domestic consumption and for sale. World Vision teaches farmers how to use irrigation and fertilizers to increase production, or how to construct their own green houses to ensure two harvests per year. In terms of business-management training, World Vision workers give advice to people on how to open barber-shops,

---

<sup>102</sup> Interview in San Julian



beauty salons, “pupuserias” or small grocery stores. Even though not too many families have been involved in the projects thus far, the workshops continue.<sup>103</sup>

Overall, the project certainly benefited the sponsored children to some degree. However, the sustainability of the benefit is questionable. This can be illustrated by the story of David Alejandro Valdez and his family. David is currently eighteen years old and has just graduated from high school. At the time of the interview, he was waiting to hear if he was admitted to a university; if not, he was going to look for a computer-related job in San Salvador. Since he was eight years old, he worked on the sugar-cane plantations to help his mother feed his two younger siblings (his father left them when he was six). At the age of twelve, he became sponsored by World Vision, which helped him significantly with buying school materials and supplied him with the necessary encouragement to stay in school even while he was working. His mother was taught how to cultivate tomatoes and cucumbers but the resulting increase in the familial income was not sufficient to permit David stop working in the sugar cane fields. Thus, for eight years during the sugar-cane harvest he would get up at four a.m., walk to the field, work for five-six hours, go home, eat lunch, and then go to school at one p.m. Thanks to the high school diploma and computer-science certificate, both of which he achieved also thanks to the help of World Vision, he can now find a better-paying job than cutting sugar cane and ensure that his children do not have to work. However, his sixteen-year-old brother was never sponsored by World Vision, which perhaps contributed to his desertion in seventh grade. With no high-school diploma, he is likely to keep working in the sugar-cane fields and pass this tradition further onto his sons.

In general, the effects of World Vision’s projects on child labor are similar to the case of David’s family. The economic alternative programs are a good idea, but so far they have not been successful at providing a good enough substitute for the work of children. Thus, even the children sponsored by World Vision often continue to work. On the other hand, thanks to the scholarly packets, which significantly reduce the cost of education, school attendance in the areas where World Vision works usually increases. However, since World Vision’s funds are limited and the organization can afford to sponsor only two children per family, a considerable education gap has

---

<sup>103</sup> Interview at World Vision’s economic development department

arisen in many households. Moreover, once the World Vision's area development program is "completed" (closed down), even the sponsored children stop receiving financial support. There exists a prevailing international consensus, which claims that an NGO program should last only a limited number of years and in that time implement such reforms that the improvement would last long after the program has finished. World Vision unquestionably breaches this requirement, because once it leaves a certain area, virtually all the positive effects of the scholarly packets leave as well. World Vision has attempted to combat this assistentialist effect through its economic development program, but that is in its scope incomparably smaller than the scholarly-packets program so far.

In summary, World Vision has succeeded to some degree in all of its three specified goals – raising school attendance, raising families' income and increasing well-being of the sponsored children – but the results have temporal boundaries. School attendance is likely to drop once an Area Development Project is closed and the scholarly packets are no longer given out. The economic development projects are more self-sufficient, but thus far only marginally successful and thus capable of raising the familial income only by a small amount. During the duration of World Vision's project, the overall well-being of the sponsored children also increases, thanks to better health services, nutrition, and clothes donations. However, just like the increased school attendance, this effect is likely to dwindle once World Vision's funding is withdrawn.

*World Vision's effectiveness (based on its own definitions)*

Increase in local school attendance	+
Increase in local families' income	+ (slight)
Increase in children's happiness	+
Sustainability	--
<b>Overall</b>	+

### ***3.5. The Third "Abolitionist" Approach***

The US-sponsored non-governmental organization CARE represents the third, "abolitionist" approach to child labor. It deems the issue highly undesirable, internationally illegal and gravely

detrimental to development. It admits that poverty might be one of its underlying causes; however, it argues that in its basis, child labor is economically inefficient and thus has to be eliminated, regardless of the poverty rate in the particular country. CARE abides by the negative definition of human rights, which advocates the freedom of children from work rather than their right to sufficient income or proper nutrition. This understanding of human rights is a logical result of CARE's close relationship with the US Government and the International Labor Organization, with whom CARE co-administrates many common projects and from whom it receives the bulk of its funds. With view to CARE's preferred conceptual approach, its activities understandably revolve around efforts to remove children out of the workplace and return them to school, as well as to raise awareness of the children's parents about the moral rectitude of such actions.

## CARE

CARE is a non-governmental humanitarian organization sponsored by eleven countries; out of those primarily by the United States (the abbreviation CARE originally meant Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe, now stands for Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere). Unlike Fe y Alegría and World Vision, it does not have any religious affiliation. Currently it operates in seventy countries on all five continents.<sup>104</sup>

CARE started its operation in Europe in 1945 and in Latin America in 1951, but came to El Salvador only in 1954. Initially, it focused its operation on distribution of packets with food in areas affected either by extreme poverty or natural disasters. Gradually, it became the NGO most often used by the US government to distribute official US development aid in Latin America<sup>105</sup>. In the time of the Salvadoran civil war (1980-1993), the organization moved away, but continued to help through local intermediaries. In 1993, CARE re-assumed its seat in San Salvador and started focusing more on local development and the rights of children.<sup>106</sup>

---

<sup>104</sup> CARE website

<sup>105</sup> Brown, Ian

<sup>106</sup> CARE website

Today, CARE's activities center around five main areas – health, education, local development, democracy and governance, and emergency response. In terms of health issues, CARE's objective is to increase the availability and quality of health services in poor sectors. Aside from improving the infrastructure of health services, the NGO educates people about health and illness prevention, hygiene and water sanitation. In terms of education projects, CARE aims to expand the accessibility and quality of schools to lower-class students, so that all Salvadoran youth could take advantage of free and good-quality primary and secondary schooling. Regarding the issue of local development, one of CARE's main priorities is to involve certain communities in the projects of education and health (basically, it is just restatement of the already mentioned activities). The fourth area focuses on efforts to strengthen the processes of democratic governance in El Salvador; however, the described tactics are quite vague. Lastly, the organization continues in its original mission and provides emergency relief to areas affected by natural disasters.

### 3.5A Self-characterization and Applied Definition of Human Rights

In its definition of human rights, CARE finds itself in the same conceptual boat as the International Labor Organization and the US government. Considering the right of children not to work (negative definition) more important than the children's social and economic rights, CARE's activities regarding child labor typically revolve around firing illegally working children, raising the awareness of children's parents about the harmful effects of premature employment, and attempting to increase school attendance. CARE's main project that currently encompasses all of these approaches is called "Primero aprendo." The program is founded in the belief that child labor is fundamentally harmful to children's development and can be partially blamed on the failure of the Salvadoran educational system. Within this view, the program strives to reform the school system to render it more available and of better quality (to really make it worth for the children to attain a degree), and raise the awareness of children's parents about the harmful impact of work on their children's physical and mental health.

As CARE analysts point out, the Salvadoran educational system is deficient in two main areas. The first one includes the direct and indirect cost of schooling. Even though according to the

law pre-school and primary education is supposed to be free, in reality it is not. Some primary schools directly charge their students a “voluntary fee,” which they use to purchase necessary supplies and materials. This policy prevents many students whose parents cannot afford to pay the fee from attending. Many other schools do not charge a direct fee, but do require their students to own special shoes and uniforms. This constitutes an indirect, and equally unwelcome, cost for the children’s parents, and again inhibits the poorest from attendance. The situation with pre-schools is even worse. Although the constitution claims to provide free pre-school education, the existing public pre-schools have a capacity to educate only two percent of all Salvadoran children in pre-school age. While pre-school attendance is not obligatory, the paucity of public pre-schools still constitutes a serious problem, because poorer children, who cannot afford to attend private pre-schools, often encounter problems with adjustment once in primary school, which they would have avoided had they attended a pre-school. CARE argues, pointing to its studies, that a large percentage of children deserts school in El Salvador prematurely because of the unavailability of free pre-school institutions.<sup>107</sup>

The second highlighted problem of the Salvadoran education system is its poor quality. While a lot of the desertion and repetition present in Salvadoran schools can be blamed on the unavailability of public pre-schools, an equal amount can be attributed to the rigidity of the system, in which teachers are not trained to address students with different needs in a varied manner. As a result, students with learning difficulties, slower pace of learning or even different backgrounds tend to be left behind by the one-stream-only system and either repeat grades or flunk out. This reality directly touches on the topic of child laborers, who belong among students with special backgrounds and often require special attention, which the Salvadoran school system is mostly incapable of providing. However, the poor quality of the system is reflected in yet another phenomenon. Even those students that remain in school and gain their high-school diploma do not necessarily possess a great advantage in the labor market. Rigid and traditional, the Salvadoran curriculum requires a lot of memorization without fostering critical thinking, analysis or creativity. Hence, it produces graduates not necessarily better prepared to face the modern corporate world and certainly not trained to start their own businesses. The fact that the advantages of a child that remains in school and obtains its diploma,

---

<sup>107</sup> CARE website and interviews

compared to the one that flunks out in fifth grade and finds a job, are unsure makes some parents question the propriety of child-labor-elimination programs.<sup>108</sup>

Aside from striving to reform or complement the deficient education system, “Primero aprendo” intends to raise public awareness of the harmful affects of child labor and persuade parents to voluntarily remove their offspring from the workplace, especially if it falls under the category of the worst forms of child labor. According to the official ILO philosophy, fully embraced by CARE, traditional Salvadoran culture sees child labor as educational and beneficial, teaching children at young age professions that will guarantee them future income. The theory goes even further, arguing that many Salvadoran parents produce many children with the aim to secure financial support once they retire. In order to illustrate this attitude, one of the CARE representatives mentioned the case of a fisherman, with whom he worked in one of the parental awareness-raising programs. The fisherman had two sons, eight and ten year old, neither of whom was attending school. When interrogated by CARE about the reasons for their non-attendance, the fisherman argued that the children were learning a profession and that the family needed the results of their work. However, CARE’s field investigators researched the case and found out that on average, the father fisherman with his two sons worked only three hours per day. After persuading him that his sons were gaining a better future prospective by attending school, the father started working six hours a day instead, sons started going to school and the family did not suffer any economic disadvantage. While the mentioned family might really exist, from statistics as well as field research it is clear that most of the working children really come from the poorest ranks of the society, and thus it is unlikely that their parents send them to work out of pure laziness.<sup>109</sup>

While both Fe y Alegría and World Vision address the problem of child labor only on the local and national levels, in “Primero aprendo” CARE has adopted an innovative regional approach. Across Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica) and the Dominican Republic, CARE’s offices launched pilot projects aimed at reduction/elimination of child labor. Simultaneously, CARE workers were encouraged to investigate similarly directed activities of

---

<sup>108</sup> CARE website and interviews

<sup>109</sup> Interview at CARE

other NGOs, local governments and corporations. Descriptions of the best CARE's pilot projects and the best projects of the other institutions were then written up and are currently being published as "The 100 good techniques of child labor elimination."<sup>110</sup>

This way, CARE is revolutionary not only in trying to cooperate with its offices throughout the region but also in attempting to learn from other organizations. Nevertheless, there are certain crucial problems ingrained in the project. One of them is that similarly to the other studied NGOs, CARE did not apply any specific mechanism to measure the effectiveness of its programs (e.g., there are statistics about how many children were given scholarly packets or how many parents were "sensitized," but there are no statistics available about how many of the children in fact stopped working and as a result were better off). Thus, the best 20 CARE's pilot projects were chosen based on the judgment of several CARE's employees. The other 80 projects run by other NGOs, corporations and governments were picked in a similar manner, without any universal rating or evaluation, and thus their choice was more-or-less random, dependent upon the particular CARE's employee in charge of collecting the information. As a result of the non-existent universal system of effectiveness-rating, the "100 good practices" are not ranked either, which makes their application more difficult.

Seventy one of the programs included in "The 100 good techniques of child labor elimination" deal with child labor indirectly, through educational programs. Although each of them is slightly different, in reality there are only two major broad approaches applied. The recommended programs from the first approach are oriented at providing alternative forms of education to children who have to work and thus have special needs. For the children who have already deserted school, or perhaps those who have never even started, there are programs that enable obtaining secondary or even primary education at distance, either by mail or by attending school during week-ends. Other programs offer accelerated forms of primary school, in which students go to school in the afternoon and finish two grades every year. The second approach is mostly aimed at children that go to school, but repeat grades or are at a risk of repeating due to part-time employment. Projects from the second

---

<sup>110</sup> Primero aprendo

approach usually involve organization of community study halls, where child laborers-students can obtain help with their homework and thus improve their school performance.<sup>111</sup>

None of the above-described projects contains a directly removes children from the work place. However, since CARE belongs to the ideological stream that considers child labor fundamentally negative, the education projects attempt to make children stop working indirectly. Specifically, the supportive study halls were designed not only to provide children with homework assistance that they cannot obtain from their often illiterate parents, but also to offer children a meaningful after-school activity, which consumes a lot of their time, thus making them unable to simultaneously hold a job. However, these efforts are reinforced through the twenty-nine recommended programs that address the elimination of child labor in a direct manner.<sup>112</sup>

Again, there exists a slight variation among the various direct approaches, but essentially they all apply a very similar method. Intending to increase the communal awareness of the negative affects of premature labor on children's future development, they all focus on emphasizing both the possible opportunities granted by education which are at risk because of employment, and the potential dangers to physical and mental health posed by the worst forms of child labor. Some of the programs intend to target a whole community, organizing meetings in which the issue and its dangers are discussed and then expressed in various forms, through painting, sculpture or dramatic performances. For example SCREAM, one of the official ILO's projects against child labor rejected by Fe y Alegría, is fully embraced by CARE. Other programs focus more on targeting parents and thus involve visits to the families' houses. During these visits, CARE workers try to persuade working children's parents that child labor is harmful. If the parents point out the necessity of their children to contribute to the familial income, the NGO workers try to persuade the parents to work harder themselves and guarantee their children the opportunity to attend school, assuring them of an eventual repay in the future. In cases of extreme poverty, CARE by itself does not have the official power to ensure that the children are fired (only in cooperation with the ILO), but tries to ease the children's workload by encouraging their parents to engage them only in safe and light activities.<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>111</sup> Primero aprendo

<sup>112</sup> Primero aprendo

<sup>113</sup> Primero aprendo



### 3.5B Relationship with the State and the International Organizations

“Primero aprendo” has been conceived under the direct tutelage of the International Labor Organization, and thus fulfills all the criteria of the ratified international conventions. It represents both the ILO’s negative definition of human rights, as well as the “abolitionist” conceptual approach to child labor in a straightforward way. It focuses primarily on removing children from the work place and returning them to school, as well as on raising the parents’ awareness of the long-term importance of such action. Thanks to the collaboration and approval of the ILO, the US, and the Salvadoran government, neither “Primero prendo” nor CARE generally lack funding. As a result, the coverage of “Primero aprendo” is significantly more extensive than the coverage of any Fe y Alegría’s or World Vision’s program. The inevitable downside of this reality is that “Primero aprendo” represents the most “Western” notion of the correct approach to child labor, and thus arguably treats the problem from a point of view most ethnocentric and detached from local conditions.

### 3.5C Organization and Funding

CARE is an international humanitarian organization, which functions as a federation of 11 member states – Germany, Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, USA, France, UK, Norway, Japan and Brazil. The institution operates in more than 70 countries of the world; however, unlike Fe y Alegría or World Vision, the offices in most of the developing countries are not independent and follow policies formulated at supra-national level. The programs of CARE in Latin America are funded by CARE USA, whose budget is paid in its three quarters by the US Government.<sup>114</sup>

The strong links with the International Labor Organization and the US Government led CARE to choose the same human rights definition (negative) and emphasize the same conceptual approach to child labor as the two institutions. As a result, CARE often cooperates in its projects in El Salvador with the ILO, or their projects reinforce each other’s. The largest field of cooperation has been the elimination of child labor from the sugar-cane plantations – while the ILO monitors the fields and refineries to make sure that no children are working, CARE raises the children’s parents awareness

---

<sup>114</sup> CARE website

of the harmful effects of sugar-cane labor and provides alternative schooling programs for those children that have already flunked out of/deserted regular school.<sup>115</sup>

Similarly to World Vision, CARE claims to obtain its funding, from both private and public donors. However, unlike World Visions which indeed receives the bulk of its funds from private individuals who “adopt” children in the developing countries, thanks to its close connection with the financially powerful US Government and the ILO, CARE acquires significantly more resources from international and governmental organizations (72% from USAID)<sup>116</sup>. Consequently, CARE’s budget is significantly higher than World Vision’s or Fe y Alegría’s. On one hand, this enables CARE to execute its projects on a much larger, even regional scale (like *Primero aprendo*). On the other hand, it significantly restricts its autonomy in project-designing.

### 3.5D Effectiveness

Similarly to the other programs, it is hard to estimate the absolute effectiveness of “*Primero aprendo*,” because the program itself never measured the scope of the difference it makes. This might be also due to the young age of the program, which has been launched only last year and therefore most of its effects are still only expected to appear. The compilation of “The 100 good techniques of child labor elimination” was finished in January 2007, and thus it will take several years for the projects to be applied in practice in other places and their usefulness to be tested. However, it is possible to infer certain conclusions from CARE’s previous projects related to child labor. Conceptually set firmly in the abolitionist approach to child labor, CARE has always emphasized not only the necessity of children to attend school but also their necessity to stop working. Advocating the right of children to a happy youth, it encouraged such step even if it simultaneously required impoverishing the family, arguing that such impoverishment was only temporary.

The effectiveness of CARE’s programs/*Primero aprendo* based on its own definition can be defined as achieving success in raising the number of children attending school, decreasing the number

---

<sup>115</sup> CARE website

<sup>116</sup> Cooley, Ron

of working children and raising the overall children's well-being. While based on the conducted interviews it is safe to assume that CARE is achieving positive results in the first two categories; the result in the third one is more ambiguous. Thanks to generous US and ILO funding, CARE's education-oriented programs, with "Primero aprendo" currently in the lead, have been successful at enabling children to attend schools through provision of alternative and supportive forms of schooling. In decreasing the number of children working in the worst forms of child labor, CARE has been working directly with the ILO, supervising work places and giving fines for any encountered working minors. Thus, according to its own definition of human rights and ideological approach to child labor, CARE has been successful on this account as well.

Nevertheless, the outcome of the effort to make children "better-off" is not so clear. Some of the children that were forced to leave e.g. the sugar plantations found less dangerous jobs in planting tomatoes, thanks to CARE's accelerated education program finished high school and now they work as agricultural managers, earning more money than they would be if they had not obtained a high-school diploma. However, many other children lost their "dangerous" jobs thanks to CARE and since that activity was the only one available in the area, they could not find a replacement. They might have been incorporated back into the school system but since their family lost their income, it became unable to provide them with proper nutrition, which in turn might have weakened their health and their school performance. As a result, it would be incorrect to say that CARE's activity increased the children's overall well-being – in fact, often it achieved the exact opposite. Yet, since CARE succeeded in two out of the three categories defining its success, its work can still be considered as effective within its own definition.

CARE's effectiveness (based on its own definitions)

Increase in local school attendance	+
Decrease in the number of children working illegally	+
Increase in children's well-being/satisfaction	--
<b>Overall</b>	+

*Summarizing Table:*

NGO	Approach	Human Rights Definition	Relationships with Other Institutions/ Mother NGOs	Funding
Fe y Alegría	Adaptive approach	<b>Positive definition of human rights</b> – emphasis on social and economic rights, the right of children to live in households with sufficient income = the right of children to work	Out of the three, <b>the most “locally based” NGO</b> , because it is only loosely connected to the other 15 NGOs, all of which (except for one) are based in Latin America. Strong ties to the <b>Jesuit Order</b>	Funding obtained partially from the <b>Jesuit Order</b> , partially <b>raised locally</b>
World Vision	Developmental approach	<b>A mixed definition of human rights</b> – emphasis on both the social and economic aspect, as well as the political and civil aspect. Stressing the right of children to full development without work; however, also stressing the right of children to live in families with sufficient income. Hence, if necessary, tolerant of children working.	World Vision El Salvador is in a <b>federation</b> with the other World Vision offices around the world, national offices are relatively autonomous, but in the overall strategies they have to follow the <b>main centers located in the USA, UK, France</b> , Germany, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. Ties with Salvadoran government and the ILO better than Fe y Alegría’s but so far only several projects have been carried out together (three or four)	½ of the funding obtained through <b>“child adoption,”</b> the rest from different public and private donors. The US office raises by far the most money – 9 times more than the second largest one (UK)
CARE	Abolitionist approach	<b>Negative definition of human rights</b> – emphasis on the civil and political aspects, high respect for existing international conventions, which declare child labor as wrong because it violates the right of children to fully develop and not to work. Supportive of programs that raise parents’ awareness and of international and national bans.	CARE has <b>strong links both with the ILO and the US government</b> , in many projects collaborates with the ILO and the Salvadoran government. In terms of the relationship to the “mother NGO,” which is in the United States, CARE El Salvador is the least autonomous from the three discussed NGOs	CARE USA – which is the office running CARE El Salvador – obtains <b>72% of its funding from the US government (USAID)</b> , the rest comes from the ILO and private donations

## **4. Chapter Four: Analysis of the Collected Data**

#### ***4.1. Analytical Summary of the Individual NGO Work and Effectiveness***

Several decades ago, most Western European and North American countries entered the so-called “era of post-materialism.” According to the prevailing understanding of today, a country is labeled “post-materialistic” once it has reached such state of development that a great majority of its population no longer needs to worry about daily material survival. As a consequence, people have more time and energy to focus on other things, such as fashion, education, technology, environment, bio-diversity and even the development of the rest of the world. Regarding this last concern, the latter part of the twentieth century observed a remarkable rise of First World citizen activism aimed at improving various aspects of living in the Third World. Some of these activities were channeled through official governmental agencies or international organizations’ programs; however, many people felt that the western public institutions were neither capable nor willing to react to the problems in a sensitive and simultaneously devoted enough manner. This feeling certainly encouraged the great proliferation of development-oriented nongovernmental organizations. Alongside the attempts to ensure access to health care and food for everyone, non-governmental organizations increasingly highlighted the problem of child labor. However, unlike the affordable access to food and health care, the ‘desired’ solution with regard to child labor is more nuanced and harder to identify.

As labor conditions in Western countries improved throughout the twentieth century, labor laws gradually became stricter. Consequently, the practice of employing children (which was still prevalent in the developing world) started to be viewed with a bad eye. Families throughout the First World were no longer in need of the labor of their minors and thus contributed to the construction of today’s Western meaning of “childhood.” The biological term, formerly used to refer to a specific age-range of a human being, acquired strong cultural implications. The word “child” no longer defined only a person younger than eighteen years (or less, depending on the country), it also implied the person’s entitlement to be cared for, fed, clothed and housed without obligation to provide anything in return. In light of this understanding, child laborers were seen as being *robbed* of their “childhood,” and therefore the elimination of child labor seemed a cause, for which it was truly worthwhile to fight. Nevertheless, field work and research of child labor show that the Western concept of childhood is sometimes not applicable to living conditions in the developing world. The

issue's complexity has not prevented NGOs from addressing child labor; however, it has led to evolution of multiple, often contradictory approaches. As a result, only meager progress has been achieved in the matter on a global scale so far. This can be corrected, as I dispute, only through a fundamental reform of NGO behavior.

Nongovernmental organizations fight for many issues whose desired outcome is relatively straightforward and uniformly agreed on – putting an end to torture, improving the condition of the environment, guaranteeing equal rights to minorities, providing assistance to areas affected by natural disasters... While the effectiveness of NGO work in addressing these issues is sometimes debatable, mostly because of lack of funds or sustainability of the organizations' projects, their effort to promote human rights is virtually never questioned. However, the case of NGO programs designed to address child labor is more problematic. With regard to the issue of child labor (and other labor-related issues) the two existing definitions of human rights - the civil and political one (negative) and the social and economic one (positive) - stand opposed to each other. Thus, even though all NGOs still intend to promote human rights, when tackling child labor they have to choose which one of the two understandings they are going to support. As the case-study of El Salvador shows, some NGOs promote strictly social and economic rights, while some focus on civil and political ones, and yet others strike a balance between the two and propagate both. When the mentioned typical problems of NGOs - sustainability, links and funding<sup>117</sup> - are added to the playing field, it is not surprising to find that the overall outcome of NGO activity in addressing child labor is, if not harmful, then at least not convincingly beneficial.

The previous three chapters demonstrate that there exists a clear connection between the active linkages and funding sources of a particular organization, and the employed definition of human rights (= the elected approach to child labor). CARE, the organization chosen to represent “abolitionist” NGOs, emphasizes the civil and political definition of human rights, i.e. the freedom of children from working. Based on the theory presented in chapter two, it is logical that CARE has elected this approach, in light of its strong links with the US government and the International Labor

---

<sup>117</sup> Discussed in chapter two

Organization, from which it also obtains a majority of its funding (72% of its budget is from the US Government).<sup>118</sup> Both of the mentioned actors (ILO and US Government) promote a negative definition of human rights<sup>119</sup> and therefore CARE, which has to ‘follow’ their policies, does the same. The choice of the particular approach is associated with certain negative implications. Since many local people currently accentuate their social and economic rights, by promoting the complete opposite, CARE is not precisely listening to the desires of the people and hence is not as locally responsive as some believe that NGOs are (or should be). Moreover, by establishing close links with the US Government and the ILO, CARE has become overly bureaucratic and less autonomous – again, traits never praised when referring to NGOs. On the other hand, thanks to the large availability of funds, CARE has been able to expand its projects all over El Salvador and thus impact many more people than it would have, had it not cooperated with public institutions.

The emphasis that the International Labor Organization, the US Government and many other public and international institutions place on the negative definition of human rights<sup>120</sup> can be partially attributed to the communist stigma of the positive one. Throughout the Cold War, communist regimes hailed themselves as promoters of the social and economic aspects of human rights. However, this promotion came at the cost of an egregious defiance of their citizens’ civil and political rights. The democratic world at the time was eager to disassociate itself from the type of “human rights” endorsed by the Soviet bloc, and therefore focused solely on propagation of the negative definition of human rights. Additionally, in many parts of the world, negative human rights reflected the most problematic areas at the time.<sup>121</sup>

However, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the arrival of the Third Democratization Wave, the situation in many countries of the developing world changed. Having in some cases already obtained political and civil rights, impoverished populations started to focus more on the economic and social aspects. This was especially true in Latin America, where many dictatorships were toppled in the 1990s. Such occurrences “solved” the issue of civil and political rights, leaving the greatly

---

<sup>118</sup> Cooley, Ron

<sup>119</sup> ILO, USAID website

<sup>120</sup> Hertel 18-23

<sup>121</sup> Berlin 178-181



economically divided citizenry to worry about the economic and social ones.<sup>122</sup> While some local NGOs responded to this change by modifying their employed version of human rights, many other institutions found it hard to overcome the traditional association of economic rights with Marxism. Additionally, in the case of the United States and international organizations (often largely controlled by the United States), this traditional emphasis was further strengthened by the skeptical libertarian view of state's intervention in the economy.<sup>123</sup> The government has never been considered as responsible for the citizens' social and economic well-being as in some European countries, and hence the international focus on the promotion of civil and political aspects of human rights was natural. However, these organizations (such as the ILO) often failed to take into account that living conditions in developing countries were very different from those in the First World, and thus the human-rights focus also needed adjustment.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to conclude that the resulting "abolitionist" approach is wrong in every aspect. Certainly some Salvadoran children are working not because their families are in desperate need of their income but because they are unaware of the benefits brought by higher education. In such cases, the monitoring of employers carried out by the ILO and CARE (and other abolitionist NGOs) to make sure that no children are working is beneficial. Moreover, CARE realizes the importance of education in children's lives and is quite successful at raising the level of "scholarization" of the Salvadoran population<sup>124</sup>. While CARE's strong links with the US government and the ILO render it on one hand less autonomous and less locally responsive, on the other hand they enable CARE to be more influential in its educational efforts. Hence, CARE might harm some children by forcing them to quit working and live in even more impoverished conditions, but at the same time it might guarantee some children a brighter future by helping them remain in school. The mixed impact of CARE's actions reflects the controversial nature of the problem of child labor itself.

World Vision, the organization chosen to represent "developmental" NGOs, which aim to decrease child labor gradually through promoting economic development in the country's poorest

---

<sup>122</sup> Philip 217

<sup>123</sup> Bergstrom and Gidehag

<sup>124</sup> Proven by data in some areas where CARE set up study-halls and alternative schooling programs – CARE's statistics

areas, attempts to find an equilibrium between the positive and negative definition of human rights. World Vision has been able to elect this approach because unlike CARE, it does not hold very strong links either with the ILO or any government in particular. World Vision obtains more than half of its funding from small private donors<sup>125</sup>, and thus is relatively independent in designing its own policies and responding to the population's local needs (economic and social rights). Nevertheless, the fairly strong ties that connect World Vision El Salvador to the main World Vision offices in Europe, the United States, Japan and Taiwan are probably responsible for the equally strong emphasis on civil and political rights.

At first sight, World Vision's decision to be "neither black nor white" and strike balance in the human rights approach seems as a very good choice. Thanks to the promotion of economic and social rights, World Vision is more accepted by the locals, while its appreciation of civil and political rights guarantees it a good relationship with the ILO. It is more sensitive than CARE in addressing the situation of children who are working because it never legally enforces their dismissal, but tries to put an end to their labor indirectly. Like CARE, it promotes educational programs that are supposed to increase school attendance. It also endeavors to increase the quality and applicability of the Salvadoran education, so that graduates of the system are easily employable and can grant *their* children a labor-less childhood. Moreover, World Vision provides alternative economic programs to the working children's parents. These are intended to raise their income and make it unnecessary for their children to continue working. However, unlike CARE, World Vision never pressures parents to stop their children from working if it sees that their family is in real need of the minor's income. Thus, even though World Vision does not have such extensive funds as CARE<sup>126</sup>, after a cursory analysis it might seem that it has found the ideal approach to child labor.

Results from the survey about effectiveness according to the organization's own definition seemingly support this notion. Pursuing its goal of improving lives of Salvadoran children, World Vision is trying to increase school attendance, incomes of working children's families and children's overall well-being. Regardless of the fact that the economic-alternative programs aimed at augmenting

---

<sup>125</sup> World Vision – 2006 Annual Review

<sup>126</sup> That is, World Vision El Salvador has less funds than CARE in El Salvador – not a comparison of the NGOs as a whole

familial income have so far not been as successful as was hoped for, World Vision manages to achieve a positive outcome in all three categories. However, the problem lies in their temporal limitation, which is related to the issue of NGO assistentialism.

Attempting to increase school attendance through distribution of scholarly packets, World Vision lowers the cost of education for poor families. Unfortunately, as soon as World Vision's project in a specific area runs its course, children stop receiving these scholarly packets and hence the situation often goes back to the point where it started. Those children that already gained a higher education thanks to World Vision often leave for jobs in other parts of the country and the poor children remaining in the area are left without any further assistance. Consequently, the long-term impacts of the projects are often very small, which explains why even World Vision's approach is not ideal.<sup>127</sup>

Fe y Alegría, the last discussed organization, represents “adaptive” NGOs, which are concerned with the fate of Salvadoran children but do not address child labor in any significant way. Fe y Alegría emphasizes the positive definition of human rights over the negative one. Practically ignoring the existing international conventions that have declared dangerous work of children under 18 years and any labor of children younger than 14 years as illegal, Fe y Alegría sees the fact that a large percentage of Salvadoran children work as reality with which one has to come to terms. Claiming that all children have the right to be properly fed and clothed even if they have to work for it, Fe y Alegría makes generally no attempt to decrease child labor, either directly or indirectly. It has been able to work within this approach thanks to its non-association with the ILO or any government in particular. In addition, its national offices are more independent in designing their own policies than the national offices of World Vision or CARE, and hence Fe y Alegría is able to act as the most locally responsive NGO of the three.

Fe y Alegría also deviates from being a completely autonomous NGO (described in chapter two as one with links to no major actors – organizations, governments...) in the way that it is sponsored in half by one institution, the Jesuit order. Consequently, the organization does not possess

---

<sup>127</sup> While the flaws attributed to CARE and Fe y Alegría are inherent to the approach to child labor that they had chosen, it is not quite the case with World Vision. Thus, it is possible that other NGOs with the same definition of human rights as World Vision's that are simultaneously assistentialist already follow a relatively flawless strategy.

total freedom in designing its policies. Nevertheless, the definition of human rights employed by the Jesuit order coincides with the locally preferred one, and hence the desires of the order, the NGO and the locals match rather than clash. The reason why the Jesuits propagate the positive definition of human rights through Fe y Alegría lies probably more in the location of Fe y Alegría's offices than in the order's ideology. Since Fe y Alegría has all its offices in Latin American countries (except for the office in Spain), it logically represents less Western thought than do CARE or World Vision (who have their main offices in the United States and Western Europe).

As the most locally responsive and grassroots-friendly organization, focused primarily on the social and economic well-being of Salvadoran children, Fe y Alegría comes closest to the “ideal of an NGO,” as described in chapter two.<sup>128</sup> However, talking about NGOs as being “closest to the ideal” also implies a set of problems. In the case of Fe y Alegría, in some sense its major setback<sup>129</sup> is the lack of links to other institutions, which leads to a lack of funding. The funds of the Jesuit order, the major donor for Fe y Alegría, are exponentially smaller than the funds and “generosity” of the International Labor Organization or the US Government. As a result, while Fe y Alegría is interpreting human rights in a more locally responsive way than CARE, also thanks to its unfriendly relations with the, ILO it is perpetually short of funds and thus unable to extend its projects into many parts of the country. In addition, the lack of advertisement of the organization diminishes its importance even in the eyes of the locals, who have heard the names “CARE” or “World Vision” repeated a countless number of times, but might have never heard the name “Fe y Alegría.”<sup>130</sup> This non-recognition renders people more apprehensive in initial collaboration. Lastly, the emphasis that Fe y Alegría places on the urgent necessity of children to find better-paying jobs sometimes interferes with their studies. If a child that normally goes to school in the morning and helps his mother in the sugar-cane field in the afternoon is suddenly taught by Fe y Alegría's vocational workshop how to drive, it is possible that this child will abandon school and sugar-cane work altogether and get a job as a driver in one of the bigger towns. Even though the profession of a driver is relatively well-paid

<sup>128</sup> William Fisher, Bishwapryia Sanyal – in second chapter, “ideal NGOs” praised as more responsive to local needs, unburdened with large bureaucracies, and funded in a way that guarantees them independence

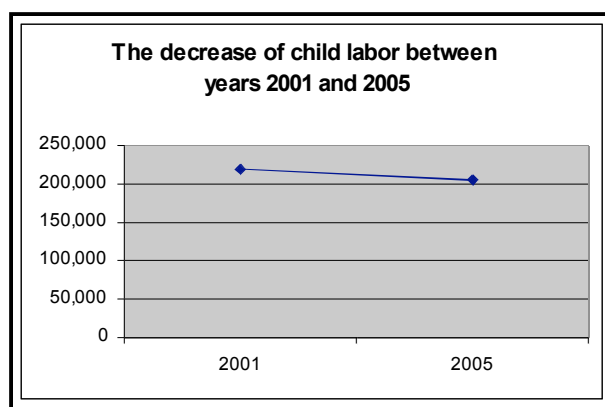
<sup>129</sup> Of course, the lack of links is according to many NGO theorists a great advantage – thanks to it, Fe y Alegría is the most locally responsive and autonomous of the three discussed NGOs

<sup>130</sup> Interviews/talks with local people in El Salvador

and held in high enough esteem, (though by nature dangerous in El Salvador due to the high rate of violence), had the child stayed in school and obtained a high-school or even a university diploma, he might have found a more secure, better-paid job. Thus, the emphasis placed by Fe y Alegría on the social and economic aspects of human rights (in the short term) and its disregard for child-labor-related international law might in some cases harm future prospects of the children with whom it works.

The conclusion of the analysis of the NGOs' approaches and effectiveness (within their own definition) is that while all the organizations succeed in some areas, all also fail in some. While CARE is good at raising school attendance and removing children from workplaces, its effect on children's overall well-being is prevailingly negative. World Vision seemingly succeeds in all of its goals; however, in raising school attendance and children's well-being, the positive results are often unsustainable. Lastly, Fe y Alegría manages to increase children's well-being and provide them with more secure working conditions, but it might increase the number of child laborers and thus decrease children's school attendance.

#### ***4.2. The Overall (In)Effectiveness of NGO Work and the Underlying Explanation***



Chapter three as well as the passage above suggest that the individual effectiveness of each of the analyzed NGOs is questionable – achieved in some areas, while not achieved in others. What about the collective effectiveness? The conventional measure of the overall effectiveness is determined by looking at the number of child laborers that have been “saved” over a certain period of time. The graph above demonstrates that the incidence of child labor between the year 2001 and 2005 decreased

roughly by 15,000 (from 220,000 to 205,000). According to the Directory of Development Organizations, there are 390 NGOs in El Salvador concerned with the topic of development and thus also child labor. Their budgets vary considerably from roughly \$ 25-30 million of CARE to \$ 2-4 million of World Vision to approximately \$ 1-2 million of Fe y Alegría<sup>131</sup>. On average, all the organizations spend approximately 500 million dollars a year in their efforts to solve the problem. In light of such an enormous sum, the diminishment by 15,000 children seems very insignificant (133,000 dollars per child). The following discussion elucidates the reasons behind the collective ineffectiveness.

The previous three chapters have indicated that even though there exists an official national policy against child labor (one identical with the ILO's), NGOs acting in the same way as private enterprises are not obliged to follow it. Naturally, internationally operating NGOs do have to obtain the initial permission of the government to establish a national office in El Salvador.<sup>132</sup> However, their programs are not monitored by the state afterwards. Thus, the NGOs – often according to the wish of their donors- choose the line of action toward child labor that they deem the most effective and most fitting to their understanding of human rights. Since these NGOs normally neither cooperate, nor significantly communicate, they do not ponder what the impact of their actions is on the actions of other NGOs working on the same issue. When asked if this does not constitute a problem, they disagree, disputing that since each organization acts in a specific area, one population is never involved in projects of more than one NGO.<sup>133</sup> Even though this is literally true, NGOs do not seem to fully comprehend the global nature of the matter and consider the aggregate impact of their actions.

In fact, if NGOs did know more about each other's approach and contemplated the situation in greater depth, they would realize that some of their actions are mutually contradictory. This is particularly evident in case of the opposite tactics of CARE and Fe y Alegría. CARE, being the compliant follower of the ILO conventions, aims its projects at the effective eradication of all illegal child labor, both indirectly and directly. Indirectly, it pays visits to families' houses or speaks at family reunions in schools, trying to persuade parents to stop requiring their children to work, because

---

<sup>131</sup> Websites of CARE, World Vision and Fe y Alegría

<sup>132</sup> Salvadoran Ministry of Work and Social Provision

<sup>133</sup> Interviews with CARE, World Vision and Fe y Alegría

it weakens their school performance, which is more important for their future potential than the few dollars that their children can earn in a week.<sup>134</sup> In case the indirect approach does not produce the desired results, CARE, in cooperation with the ILO, carries out regular visits to make sure that employers are not employing any children. The control is particularly strict in the "worst jobs," which include the sugar cane plantations, the fishing industry, and the pyrotechnical industry. If the controllers encounter any underage workers in these places, the employer receives a fine and children have to stop working.

Quite the opposite, Fe y Alegría's approach might be in fact contributing to increasing the number of working children. Firstly, by providing vocational workshops to even very young youth (10 years upwards), the organization professionally capacitates several hundred children every year, many of whom subsequently abandon schools and start working full time. Secondly, Fe y Alegría helps working children by means of offering them moral support and increasing their well-being. As a result, children that work are encouraged because they feel that what they are doing is beneficial to their family.<sup>135</sup> Lastly, by making child labor more secure and better paid, Fe y Alegría possibly attracts more children to work (i.e. they make the activity of child labor seem less repulsive, which might cause parents of other children to see it in a fairly positive light). Consequently, the work of Fe y Alegría might to some extent annul the results of CARE's work.

Although the mechanism by which the activities of the two organizations contradict each other is obvious, one could wonder how it is possible that an organization with a budget as small as Fe y Alegría's could affect in any significant way the results achieved by an organization with such a large budget as CARE. Partially, the answer can be found in the fact that out of the 390 NGOs working in El Salvador, between three-fourths and four-fifths work only on a national or a local level<sup>136</sup>. According to the theory from chapter two, these organizations tend to be more locally responsive and prefer the positive definition of human rights over the negative one. As such, their policies contradict the policies of CARE and the ILO. The fact that CARE and similar organizations

---

<sup>134</sup> Interview with Juan Carlos Rodríguez

<sup>135</sup> In the absence of collaboration with Fe y Alegría, they might have abandoned work place to either go back to school or become "street children"

<sup>136</sup> Directory of Development Organizations

were able to decrease the number of child laborers only by 15,000, despite their funding, supports this claim.

There are other possible reasons behind the overall insignificant outcome of NGO work. One of them is the fact that the children who are fired from their workplace by CARE are then often hired by someone else. If a 13-year-old boy is caught cutting sugar cane alongside his father, he is sent home. Subsequently, he is entered into the system as another “saved child.” However, if his family needs money, he will do his best to find a new job, for instance down the street from his house as a vendor in a candy store<sup>137</sup>. In fact, if he comes into collaboration with an “adaptive” NGO like *Fe y Alegría*, he might be encouraged or even assisted in finding another job. Once that happens, he is again considered to be a child laborer. In the eyes of an NGO like CARE, he will still be carrying out “illegal child labor,” but the fact that he has been removed from the “worst form of labor” (sugar-cane cutting) will definitely be regarded as improvement. However, his family might view his dismissal with aggravation, bearing in mind that the work in cutting sugar cane is better paid than the work of an assistant in a corner store.

Another possible cause for only a marginally positive outcome in the effort to eliminate child labor lies in the problematic monitoring of employers. It can be explained by the case of a boy, who after being caught by the controllers in the sugar cane fields stayed home for several weeks and then returned, hoping that the controllers would not catch him again<sup>138</sup>. He and his family did not carry any legal responsibility; it is only the plantation-owner who has to make sure that no children are cutting his cane. If there are, he is the one who has to pay a fine. Consequently, it is in the plantation-owner’s interest to make sure that no children are working on his fields. However, that is complicated by the fact that the owner does not actually hire people, but rather he divides the land into parcels and has people from surrounding villages sign up to cut the cane, paying them by the number of parcels they have cut. Salvadoran families often work in the sugar-cane fields as one unit and in that case their children’s names never enter into the official system. The first time a minor child is caught working on a plantation, his/her family is warned but usually not forbidden from continuing to work on the

---

<sup>137</sup> Interview in San Julian, case of Pablo Gonzales

<sup>138</sup> Interview with David Alejandro Valdez



harvest. However, if it happens a second time, the director of the plantation might be inclined to disallow the particular family from working any longer on the plantation. But since the plantations are very large and the controllers still relatively few, it is probable that there are many more rural children working illegally in El Salvador than estimated. This custom of children to be “fired” and then sent back to work contributes to the small size of reduction in the overall number of child workers, and confirms the prevailing positive definition of human rights by the locals.<sup>139</sup>

So far, the discussion has demonstrated how approaches used by the “abolitionist” and “adaptive” organizations enter into tension and escalate in a clash, which renders actions of both groups inefficient or at points even useless. How do the “developmental” NGOs enter this picture? That is hard to generalize, yet in this dimension the “developmental” NGOs seem to be the most balanced ones and thus less likely to be in tension with other NGOs, or at least in a milder one, depending on which understanding of human rights they stress. If a “developmental” NGO focuses more on the goal of decreasing child labor, it might find itself in conflict with the aims of “adaptive” organizations. If on the other hand it leans more toward the goal of ensuring economic and nutritional well-being of every child, it might be more supportive of children working if the family needs it, and therefore might clash with the desires of “abolitionist” organizations. However, generally it is unlikely that the better balanced-out organizations like World Vision would be the main source of tension in the developmental NGO concoction.

In summary, there are 390 organizations in El Salvador that are in one way or another trying to solve the problem of child labor. Some of them have been working in the field for several decades, but the attention they pay to the child labor has increased dramatically only in the past five-ten years. This is thanks to the passing of the ILO Convention 182, as well as the famous 2004 Human Rights Watch report, which blamed the El Salvadoran sugar industry for illegally exploiting young children<sup>140</sup>. As a result, budgets of Salvadoran development NGOs substantially increased, but the overall effect of the investment seems rather ephemeral, since the number of child laborers decreased only by 15,000 (6.5%). One of the underlying reasons can be found in the inherently contradictory

<sup>139</sup> Information taken from interviews with David Alejandro Valdez, children in San Julian, children in Concepcion Batres, people from Fe y Alegria and people from World Vision

<sup>140</sup> Turning a Blind Eye: Child Labor in El Salvador's Sugarcane Cultivation

approaches of the different NGOs addressing the issue. While some, like *CARE*, preach total abolition and invest considerable funds into effectively decreasing the number of working children, others, like *Fe y Alegría*, do not fight child labor *per se* and in some ways might even encourage it. The third type of NGOs like World Vision lies somewhere between *CARE* and *Fe y Alegría* in its approach and thus can increase the tension either way.

#### ***4.3. Does the Official Overall Ineffectiveness Constitute a Problem?***

Pondering if the overall official NGO ineffectiveness really constitutes a problem is very valid. While the above-discussed “ineffectiveness” is measured purely in the number of former child laborers that officially stopped working, the analyses of the individual organizations showed that the term “effectiveness” has a different and much more complex meaning for each of the NGOs. Thus, one could argue that while together as a group these organizations are incapable of significantly decreasing the incidence of child labor (which is logical since it does not constitute a common goal for all of them), it is irrelevant as long as they are aggregately successful at reaching other goals or at least achieving their individual objectives. However, the following section explains that the official overall NGO ineffectiveness is only one reflection of a more complexly problematic situation. Firstly, the distinct NGO approaches clash in multiple ways – not just in the numerical eradication of child laborers - and thus the overall effectiveness measured in alternative terms is also low. Secondly, even if viewed separately, each of the three groups of NGOs fails in an important way. Thirdly, the collectively ineffective result implies that the enormous funds of the 390 NGOs could have been spent in a more meaningful manner.

Aside from poor results in decreasing the number of working children, the tension between the different approaches of NGOs leads to meager aggregate results also in other areas, namely in the fields of education and children’s well-being. In the field of education, the Salvadoran Ministry of Education asserted in 2006 that despite the relative progress achieved in increasing the overall enrollment number of students, not much progress has been achieved either in increasing the equality of education (the rich/poor difference in number of grades completed) or decreasing the desertion and repetition rates. Since these issues belong among those which all of the three discussed NGOs are

attempting to improve, the measly accomplishments suggest that the tensions between the NGO approaches have affected also the area of education.

On one hand, the “adaptive” approach might be directly decreasing school attendance rates in the poor areas where organizations like *Fe y Alegría* work. Even though the increase in attendance rates is one of their goals and they try to achieve it through lowering the cost of education, the fact that they provide young children with vocational training might contribute to a higher school-desertion rate. As I have mentioned before, from the interviews that I had with people in Chacra I found out that children in the area, who have been going to school and working part-time in the fields, often, after learning a certain profession, obtained a full-time job and no longer had time to attend school. *Fe y Alegría* provides vocational training to children at a young age because it believes that this way it is providing them with safer and better paying jobs. However, in the long run it might be actually depriving them of more lucrative opportunities. The “developmental” NGOs are unlikely to be decreasing the school attendance but it is possible that in some cases they are not increasing it either. Since they do not insist that children stop working, situations might arise in which the children are no longer capable of handling the amount of school work in the little free time left outside of work. While an “abolitionist” organization would force the children to stop working and focus on school, “developmental” organizations such as World Vision do not do so, and thus the children might drop out of school.

There exists a certain (though very slight) possibility that the “abolitionist” organizations could also decrease school attendance. In some cases, when an organization like *CARE* forces children to stop working in poor areas where not many economic alternatives exist for their parents to increase their incomes, the resulting poverty might prevent the children from going to school altogether. For example, in Usulután I interviewed children “curileros” who work four-five days a week and attend school two or three times a week. According to the interviews but also the evident poverty of the area, families would not be able to eat properly if their children weren’t working. World Vision, which has set up projects in the locality, respects this and does not force the children to stop working. However, *CARE* most likely would have tried to. In such case, the families of the children would suddenly be even poorer. Consequently, even if they still had enough money to be able to buy rice and corn to eat,

they certainly could not afford to buy school supplies, shoes and uniforms to attend school. Thus, it is possible that organizations like *CARE* might in some instances decrease school attendance. However, only “adaptive” NGOs do so on a more regular scale. In this way, they enter in a conflict with “developmental” and “abolitionist” organizations and annul some of the improvements made to the Salvadoran educational system.

The afore-mentioned story from Usulután is more related to the third area in which the approaches of the different NGOs might be clashing, and that is the area of children’s well-being. While it is hard to prove this overall ineffectiveness numerically, since there has never been a survey conducted about the “well-being” of Salvadoran children, it can be supported by existing literature. Radley Balko provides an overview of the largest campaigns against child labor, which pressured corporations in particular development states to lay off under-age workers. The results were often disastrous for the children. For example, in Bangladesh the carpet industry fired 50,000 children in 1990s, only 7,000 of whom were compensated economically. The rest either suffered of malnutrition or found less safe and worse paid jobs in construction and prostitution. In the case of these children, one could hardly speak of any well-being improvement thanks to the enforcement of the ban against child labor. Large campaigns against Nike and the GAP in the following years produced similar results in Pakistan and Cambodia<sup>141</sup>.

All of the NGOs concerned with development and child labor include the increase in children’s well-being among their chief goals. Nevertheless, while “adaptive” and “developmental” NGOs score positively on this account, “abolitionist” NGOs do not. The rationale for the “ambiguous” mark that they have received should be clear from the previous paragraph. If children in Usulután were forced to stop working - like many children in Sonsonate and La Libertad were- the income of their families would decrease substantially. Even if the enforced dismissal from employment allowed some of the children to return to school or perhaps granted them more free time to do their homework, it is probable that the sudden impoverishment halted an increase in their overall well-being. The decrease in household funds might have lead to malnourishment of those children, whose families had to consequently resort to cheaper, less varied and thus also less nourishing food. Lower

---

<sup>141</sup> Balko

income could also bring about health problems, if the family, after losing the minors' income, could no longer afford to pay for doctor's visits. Last but not least, with less income in the family there was likely less money available for any kind of "luxury" or entertainment – movie visits, candy, toys, books, soccer balls, new shoes or clothes. Hence, even though no official survey of well-being has been conducted in El Salvador, it is probable, that by stripping families of their children's income, CARE is perhaps enabling some children to reach a higher education level, but diminishing the level of children's overall mental and physical well-being.<sup>142</sup>

The situation would be different if CARE were rescuing children from bonded or extremely hazardous work. However, in El Salvador that is rarely (almost never) the case. While work in the sugar-cane cutting and fishing industries is classified as dangerous, Salvadoran children work in these fields usually alongside their parents and even though the activity is somewhat physically damaging, it cannot be compared to the damage inflicted upon some working children by their occupations in Asia or Africa. In El Salvador, it is very rare to find a child working such a harmful job, that liberation from it without receiving any kind of compensation would automatically be better than perseverance. Thus, it seems that part of the mistake of CARE's approach lies in the standardization of its child-labor strategy across all the countries in which it works. While some of the child labor strategies that CARE uses would perhaps be applicable to solving child slavery in India or Sub-Saharan Africa, they are not very appropriate for solving the conditions in El Salvador. In fact, most of the child labor in which Salvadoran children are engaged can justifiably be labeled as "harmful" only because it interferes with the children's studies and free time rather than because it damages them physically.<sup>143</sup> Therefore it can be safely concluded that CARE's activity of putting an end to children's employment without any economic compensation generally diminishes the well-being of the former child laborers.<sup>144</sup>

In this regard, CARE and other "abolitionist" organizations are in tension with the other two streams of NGOs, which not only identify raising of the overall well-being of Salvadoran working children as their goal, but also fulfill it. World Vision and other "developmental" NGOs undoubtedly

<sup>142</sup> This happened in case of children fired from sugar cane plantations by ILO, Fundazucar and CARE all over El Salvador

<sup>143</sup> I am not arguing it does not cause certain mental and physical damage – depending on the type of work of course – but the scale of damage cannot be compared to the damage caused by child labor in some other parts of the world

<sup>144</sup> Certainly in the short run and often also in the long run

increase the well-being of their sponsored children throughout the duration of their projects. They do not enforce the law forbidding children to work but do provide poor children with scholarly packets and their families with economic alternatives. In addition, they facilitate the community's access to health care, teach mothers about nutrition and organize celebrations and birthday parties for local children. Aside from the temporal boundary of their projects, there is nothing inherent to World Vision's activity that could diminish rather than increase the well-being of their protégés.<sup>145</sup> Fe y Alegría and other "adaptive" organizations engage in different activities from "developmental" NGOs, but likewise they appear to contribute to the children's well-being. In areas where they have set up schools and conduct community building activities, they establish youth clubs and organizations of all kinds, ranging from bible study groups through book seminars and cooking clubs to amateur soccer teams. While these activities do not address child labor in any way, they do tend to entertain children in their free time and hence raise their well-being. As I have mentioned before, in cases of some children the actions of Fe y Alegría actually lead to their school desertion; however, they do not bring about an immediate decrease in their well-being<sup>146</sup> (the children often choose to work full-time instead of part-time and abandon school because of the advantages involved in receiving higher income).

As the passage above has shown, the activities of child-labor-related NGOs in El Salvador are collectively ineffective not only in the area of decreasing child labor but also in the area of children's education and well-being. At this point, one could still argue that the overall effect of the NGOs is irrelevant and that each of the NGOs should be studied as a specific entity, taking into account the fact that each NGO works only with one population at a time. However, this argument can be easily countered by pointing to the serious flaw in each of the studied approaches. The crucial defects inherent to the strategies of CARE and Fe y Alegría have been already analyzed in depth. While CARE by itself is good at reducing the number of child laborers in a certain area as well as increasing the level of schooling that these children receive, it decreases the children's overall well-being, which makes its presence often harmful and locally undesirable. Fe y Alegría is successful at increasing the

<sup>145</sup> The children interviewed in San Julian and Usulután confirm this supposition, claim that "they are happier" since they started working with World Vision

<sup>146</sup> The supposition confirmed by the group interview with the children in Chacra

overall well-being of children and providing them with safer and better paid jobs, but through its contradictory policies often increases the number of working children and decreases the number of children attending school.

At first sight, World Vision appears relatively flawless, because it achieves to some degree all its goals - it manages to reduce child labor, increase school attendance and increase children's well-being. However, its main flaw lies in the fact that most of the achieved improvement is quite temporary. Unlike CARE, which creates alternative school programs and study halls and Fe y Alegría, which builds its own schools, World Vision attempts to increase the rate of school attendance by providing children with "scholarly packets," which lower the school's cost and thus enable many poor children to attend. However, the program is not sustainable, which presents two problems.

First, it promotes the culture of assistentialism, often criticized by development analysts in relation to western NGOs. By supplying Salvadoran people with hand-outs, World Vision is not promoting self-sufficiency, which could carry over to other areas of life. Second, once the duration of the program (usually 10-15 years) expires, children of the area stop receiving the packets. Consequently, the rate of school attendance often falls back to the level prior to the establishment of the program<sup>147</sup>. The improvement made in the area of greater well-being of children is partially a victim to the same non-sustainability. Once World Vision abandons a certain project, children that have benefited from receiving scholarly packets, cheaper healthcare, and organized activities will no longer benefit and thus their overall well-being is likely to decrease. In fact, the only sustainable activity promoted by World Vision is the business and vocational workshop program offered to children's parents in order to spur economic activity in the area. However, the economic development department of World Vision is the least funded one, receiving only five percent of the organization's national budget.<sup>148</sup> Hence, the non-sustainability of the majority of World Vision's programs constitutes quite a serious flaw.<sup>149</sup>

<sup>147</sup> In terms of percentage – happened in Cabanas – World Vision evaluation records

<sup>148</sup> Interview at World Vision's economic development department

<sup>149</sup> As mentioned, this non-sustainability is not inherent to the "developmental" child-labor approach, and therefore cannot be generalized across the whole pool of developmental NGOs. Nevertheless, since it does not significantly worsen or ameliorate the NGO policies' contradiction, it does not effect in any way the final conclusions.

The final reason why the overall ineffectiveness of development NGOs (in all the various areas) matters is that it reflects a “wasted potential.” As I have previously mentioned, the 390 development NGOs working in El Salvador spend around five hundred million dollars every year trying to solve the issue of child labor in one way or another. Despite the grand size of the budget, they have been able to achieve relatively little. Had the organizations cooperated or at least communicated more, so that they would not employ directly contradictory policies but rather invested the money into achieving common objectives, the aggregate effects would certainly be more encouraging.

#### ***4.4. Policy Considerations***

The graph of the overall reduction of child labor in El Salvador, as well as the report of the Ministry of Education, suggest that the collective work of development NGOs in El Salvador is not achieving significant results. Even though this finding is unpleasant and certainly not accepted as true by the NGOs themselves, it is not all that surprising within the context of the existing literature.

From a broader point of view, the conclusion corresponds well with the ongoing debate about the nature of civil society. Often associated with non-governmental organizations,<sup>150</sup> civil society since the time of Tocqueville was considered a generally positive, democratizing element. Several years ago, Robert Putnam vigorously supported this notion in his books Bowling Alone and Making Democracy Work, arguing that voluntary civic organizations nurture in citizens “a culture of trust, reciprocity and collaboration,” which, when translated to the macro-level, guarantees the existence of a more stable democracy<sup>151</sup>. However, Ariel Armony and Omar Encarnación among other political scientists recently challenged this idea, warning that civil society does not necessarily contribute to creation of a more liberal democracy. In his book The Dubious Link, Armony demonstrates on the examples of Weimar Germany and post-dictatorial Argentina how a lively civil society might actually have a negative impact on democracy. He agrees with Putnam that civil society often possesses a large

---

<sup>150</sup> civil society, just like non-governmental organizations, is a result of people’s voluntarism, and therefore these two terms are often inter-changed

<sup>151</sup> Armony 6



potential, but opposes the generalization about the potential being always employed in a positive way<sup>152</sup>.

Several other authors argue along the same lines, but in a more specific relation to NGOs. However, the reasons they offer as explanations for the organizations' collective ineffectiveness vary. Oleksander Sydorenko discusses the case of Ukrainian NGOs in his article "Changing the Not-for-Profit Mentality: The Case of the Ukrainian NGOs." Describing the work of developmental non-governmental organizations, he claims that despite the fact that their number grows significantly every year, the organizations have not been able to achieve any significant improvement. Sydorenko does not see the underlying reason in a potentially negative nature of the NGOs (unlike Armony or Encarnación), but rather in their "internal shortfalls." Among those, he mentions the lack of organizational structure and managerial skills, as well as the fear of transparency in conducting activities.<sup>153</sup>

In "Relief and Rehabilitation Work in Mozambique: Institutional Capacity and NGO Executional Strategies," Erica Egane describes the work of emergency-aid NGOs in Mozambique. She agrees with Sydorenko that the organizations are collectively ineffective, but she does not see their flaws as inherent. As the original reason for the NGO failure, she regards weakness of the public structures. In the times of emergencies, when governments are incapable of either assuring a proper channeling of the aid provided by IOs and NGOs or dealing with bureaucratic details, NGOs generally try to expand the coverage of their actions to substitute for the miserly public services. Nevertheless, this effort often diverts attention of the NGOs from their primary focus, the provision of relief in communities or rebuilding endeavors. As Egane sees it, the NGOs attempt to solve too many problems, and therefore eventually do not solve any of them properly.

Academics Alexander Cooley and James Ron provide the third distinct reason for NGO ineffectiveness - the market environment in which NGOs exist and thanks to which they are unable to overcome the nature of competition and rent-seeking. In their essay "The NGO Scramble: Organizational Insecurity and the Political Economy of Transnational Action" the authors challenge

---

<sup>152</sup> Argument that civil society, despite being voluntary, does not always contribute to democracy (Armony)

<sup>153</sup> Sydorenko 6

the notion that the “growing number of NGOs will create a liberal and normatively driven transnational civil society.”<sup>154</sup> Rather, they reason, the higher number of NGOs logically leads to a greater amount of mutual competition for funding. As a consequence, NGOs avoid information-sharing and therefore are less efficient than they potentially could be. While Cooley and Ron do not offer any specific solution to the problem, they do suggest that scholars pay as much attention to the relations between NGOs as they currently do to their “nominal agendas.”<sup>155</sup>

My essay touches in its analysis on various aspects of all the afore-mentioned NGO critiques, but the authors of “The New Tactics in Human Rights Project” come to a conclusion closest to mine. They discuss the effectiveness of NGOs working on torture-elimination throughout the world and claim that the organizations are ultimately very ineffective because of a very low level of mutual cooperation. As a solution, they suggest to use “tactical innovation and strategic thinking within the international human rights community.” The executive director of the organization, Douglas A. Johnson, argues that advancing human rights “requires the capacity to innovate tactics and combine them to create strategies as comprehensive as the problems we face,” and therefore he urges organizations to engage in consultations with each other as well as with other actors in society.

However, even though there obviously exists a strong parallel between the ineffectiveness of the NGOs working on the elimination of torture and those working on the elimination of child labor, solution to the problem cannot be the same. The New Tactics group urges human-rights NGOs to work together and come up with innovative and comprehensive strategies. Firstly, even though it would be ideal if development NGOs working with child labor could do the same, the crucial difference is that while the goal of human rights NGOs dealing with torture is common and clear, the goal of NGOs working with child labor is not. Whereas all NGOs presumably agree that torture is non-acceptable under virtually any conditions and aim to eradicate it, not all the children-related NGOs try to eliminate child labor. Secondly, an even more difficult problem is that even if the child-labor NGOs were willing to give up their approaches and pursue a common one, it would be difficult to choose which one. As the analysis has shown, each of the three major ones is flawed.

---

<sup>154</sup> Cooley, Ron 37

<sup>155</sup> Cooley, Ron 37

What is the solution then? Naturally, the highest level of effectiveness in employing the financial and human resources of all the children-related NGOs in El Salvador would be achieved if all the “cooks” followed the “same delicious recipe;” if all the organizations together identified one *most correct complex strategy* and then pursued it collectively. The approach would have to differ from the three analyzed ones because they are all harmful in some ways and because it would be easier to group all the NGOs around a commonly created strategy than make them all adopt one that one group of NGOs has been using all along.

In order to identify the ideal approach, the definition of childhood has to be considered. Tobias Hecht in At Home in the Street discusses the difference between the western and non-western notions of childhood. He calls it the distinction between the “nurtured” and “nurturing” children<sup>156</sup>. In western societies, childhood is seen as “the age when life should be dedicated exclusively to tenderness, study and play”<sup>157</sup>. Children are viewed “as an exclusively emotional and effective asset which precludes instrumental or fiscal considerations. In the increasingly commercialized world, children are reserved a separate non-commercial place”<sup>158</sup>. Parents strive to give children the very best, and all they expect in return is love and gratitude. However, as Nandy points out, “there is nothing natural about this type of childhood. Childhood is culturally defined and created; it, too, is a matter of human choice”<sup>159</sup>. Hence, in the non-western world, especially among poor people, children are still usually loved and cared for, but they are seen as potentially productive individuals capable of returning their parents at least part of the cost of their living. In some cases, they are even seen as the “nurturers” of the family; as beings who were given birth to take care of their parents.

While the Western definition of childhood is often not applicable to the poor areas in El Salvador<sup>160</sup>, the second definition in its pure form is not suitable either. Families that are dependent on their minors’ income for basic survival cannot afford to treat their children like families in the west. On the other hand, expecting children to provide for the whole family would be fundamentally exploitative and harmful. Biologically, children are developing, and thus work that is too hard or

---

<sup>156</sup> Hecht 70

<sup>157</sup> Munoz

<sup>158</sup> Zelizer 11

<sup>159</sup> Nandy 56

<sup>160</sup> If a family is very poor and needs the income of the minor for survival, they will send the child to work

prevents them from attaining any education should be avoided at all costs. Thus, NGOs should ideally strike the golden middle and choose a definition of childhood somewhere between the “nurtured” and “nurturing” one, one that balances children’s civil and political rights with their economic ones. The approach of World Vision and other “developmental” NGOs seems to have done exactly so.

Nevertheless, that does not imply that all NGOs should adopt World Vision-style policies – as I have argued before, those are fundamentally flawed because they encourage too much dependence on the organization and do not foster self-sufficiency. Therefore, the common strategy could adopt the definition of basic human rights/childhood, along with the economic-alternatives program, from World Vision, while embracing CARE’s policies aimed at increasing school attendance and Fe y Alegría’s policies of increasing children’s well-being. Children would be encouraged to attend school and seek help when having difficulties in the classroom. Their families would be given business-training and logistical support necessary to start own businesses, which could guarantee them the extra income enabling their children to stop working. However, if that did not work, children would not be forced to quit working and in that way live in impoverished households. Rather, non-governmental organizations would provide them with moral support and incorporate them into clubs and organizations, hence increasing their mental well-being.

In view of the fact that a particular child-labor approach is not chosen by an NGO arbitrarily but has firm structural foundations, it is perhaps not feasible to imagine that the various organizations will be willing to compromise these approaches in the foreseeable future. However, an increased degree of communication could still greatly help with the overall results. Currently, the existing development NGOs in El Salvador generally do not communicate with each other. Often they do not even know about each other’s existence, let alone about each other’s policies. Consequently, it is possible that they are largely unaware of the conflicting effects of their actions. If they were all members of a forum in which ideas about the different approaches and their possible side-effects were discussed, it is likely that even if their approaches did not merge, they would lie closer to each other on the spectrum of different possibilities. If Fe y Alegría and similar organizations were warned about the possibility that the vocational workshops provided at a young age might be actually increasing the

incidence of child labor and were criticized for it, Fe y Alegría would perhaps not eliminate the practice, but almost certainly modify it. On the other hand, if CARE and similar NGOs were constantly condemned for forcing children to stop working without providing them with any economic alternatives, they would probably make an effort to incorporate at least some economic elements into their programs.

Moreover, if a national forum of NGOs were established, the organizations could decide to coordinate their actions even if they were reluctant to give up their personal approach. If it became clear that the complete eradication of child labor is a disputed goal, in which no significant results are being obtained because some organizations are trying to decrease the incidence while others might be effectively increasing it, the organizations could focus their budgets on areas in which they all want to achieve the same goal. One such area is education, in which all three major streams of NGOs desire to increase attendance. However, Fe y Alegría and other “adaptive” organizations might be in fact hindering this improvement by turning some school children or part-time school children into full time child laborers. World Vision could also use advice on how to effectively augment their assistance program since the technique of scholarly packets is very unsustainable. Thus, different tactics to increase school attendance could be discussed among all the organizations in the forum. The best, non-harmful ones would be chosen and then pursued by all the NGOs, whether individually or as a group. Pooling resources and acting collectively would certainly award these organizations with greater level of effectiveness, as well as a more thorough coverage of the country’s problematic poor areas.

The other area in which all the organizations want to achieve enhancement is children’s well-being. CARE is the organization most seriously flawed in this matter, since it forces children to stop working without providing their families with an alternative source of income. That could change either by expanding and connecting the economic development programs of World Vision with CARE’s programs or by focusing on activities that unquestionably raise children’s well-being, such as nourishment controls, health check-ups, organized clubs and activities. Again, through common discussion the most innovative and effective projects could be picked and then pursued by the NGOs collectively, that way having a much greater impact (especially because CARE’s budget is much

larger than most of the other organizations’). Thus, if nothing else, an NGO forum could serve as a venue for exchanging ideas. It would not have to force the participating organizations to cooperate but rather bid them to modify their own strategies in view of the strategies of others’. Such type of coordination could gradually and organically evolve into a more-collectively acting group.

Nevertheless, accepting the correctness of the previous idea brings up a following question – who is going to convince NGOs to set up this forum and participate? Robert Fugere in his article “Future Directions for Development Non-Governmental Organizations” argues that in order to survive, non-governmental organizations have to realize their flaws themselves and start communicating. However, since his argument is based on a claim that the NGOs will realize their mistake only once the sources of their funds have completely dried up, it would probably take a very long time for Fugere’s solution to come into effect. Other authors, such as Ewards and Hulme, argue that since it is ultimately in the donors’ interest to ensure that the funds allocated to the NGOs are put to a good use, the donors should persuade the development organizations to at least talk to each other. Nonetheless, the possible flaw within this idea is that the donors differ tremendously in size as well as motivation, and therefore it could be hard to implement. The last proposition suggests that the state itself enforces a higher level of communication. On one hand, this solution is the most logical one, since it is the state that in the first place allows the international NGOs to set up offices on its territory and hence has the best opportunity to continue monitoring their actions even after their establishment. On the other hand, for this solution to work out in a beneficial manner, the state would have to make a sensible choice regarding its own policies. Currently, the Salvadoran state has adopted the very same policy towards child labor as the International Labor Organization, which – as has been showed – is harmful in many aspects. Decisions about the elected conceptual approach to child labor have been made under strong pressure of international institutions thus far. By enforcing an open NGO discussion about child labor, the state could perhaps better comprehend the complexity of the issue and modify/ameliorate its own abolitionist approach to the problem. However, such an act would require the state’s willingness to object to the official ILO conventions. Would the Salvadoran state be capable of such a move?

Even though a solution to the conundrum is currently not available, it is certain that in order to increase the effectiveness of international non-governmental organizations, more controlling mechanisms have to be put in place. In order to achieve this, discussions with the NGOs' donors and the states in which the NGOs work might be more useful than simply discussions with the NGOs themselves.

## Conclusion

In “Too Many Bad Cooks Spoiling the Broth?” I question the common notion that the recent proliferation of international NGOs “with pockets full of donors’ money” implies an automatic improvement in developing countries’ conditions. I tried to find the answer through a case-study focused on the work of NGOs in addressing child labor in El Salvador. Being as controversial an issue as it is, the different international non-governmental organizations came to El Salvador with very different ideas about how to approach child labor. Their elected strategy often depended on the source of their budget and their relations with other institutions. Having come with their own funds and presumably “good intentions,” the government of El Salvador let these organizations choose their policies and set up their projects in a mostly unrestricted way.

The results have been mixed. As my essay acknowledges, the motives behind the “voluntary actions” of non-governmental organizations in El Salvador have been prevailingly positive. Furthermore, some of the organizations’ programs are truly beneficial for the targeted population and more efficient than governmental development policies. However, the study has also shown that NGO proliferation does not necessarily lead to a situation’s improvement, especially not in the case of child labor. The major underlying reason lies in the organizations’ lack of mutual coordination and communication, which lead to very ineffective outcomes. In illustration, there are currently 390 organizations working to solve child labor in El Salvador, a geographical area only one fourth as large as Maine. Every year these organizations spend approximately five hundred million dollars tackling the issue and yet they have been incapable of achieving any significantly positive results so far.

The conclusion of my thesis, which finds NGO work in tackling child labor both individually and collectively ineffective, is not interesting only within itself but carries certain implications also for the broader human-rights and civil-society debate. The finding supports the notion that the increasing NGO flock moving around the world today is becoming an ever more important actor on the international playing field. Thanks to the grand size of its donor funds, it undoubtedly holds in its hands a great potential. However, as my paper suggests, in many areas it has not utilized its budget in a way as good and as efficient as possible. Aiming for improvement, I



encourage the NGOs' donors and the states in which the organizations work to take the initiative and exert greater supervision not only over the NGOs' individual but also over their collective actions and results. I believe that if the donors and states indeed do so, non-governmental organizations can transform the large potential that they already possess into a very effective reforming force.

## Works cited:

### *Primary Sources:*

1. "Atención a Necesidades Educativas Especiales, Registro e Incorporaciones." Ministerio De Educación De La República De El Salvador. 12 Dec. 2006 <<http://www.mined.gob.sv>>
2. CARE. 21 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.care.org>>
3. CARE. Personal interview. 15 Jan. 2007
4. Children in Chacra. Personal interview. 27 Jan. 2007
5. Children in San Julian. Personal interview. 17 Jan. 2003
6. "El Salvador." CIA - the World Factbook. 25 Sept. 2007  
<<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/es.html>>
7. "El Salvador –At a Glance." UNICEF. 16 Apr. 2007  
<<http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/elsalvador.html>>
8. Fe y Alegría. 16 Oct. 2006 <<http://www.feyAlegría.org>>
9. Fe y Alegría. Personal interview. 22 Jan. 2007
10. "Guía De Derechos Y Obligaciones Laborales, Convenios OIT, Trabajo Infantil." Ministerio De Trabajo Y Previsión Social, El Salvador. 19 Nov. 2006  
<<http://www.mtps.gob.sv>>
11. "Global Issues: UN and Partnerships." United Nations. 10 Mar. 2007.  
<<http://www.un.org/issues/ngo/ngoindex.html>>
12. International Labor Organization. Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age Convention). 1973. <<http://www.ilo.org>>
13. International Labor Organization. Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labor). 1999. <[Http://www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)>
14. "IPEC: International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor." International Labor Organization. 12 Feb. 2007  
<<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/newsroom/index.htm>>
15. "New Tactics in Human Rights." The Center for Victims of Torture. 24 Apr. 2007  
<<http://www.newtactics.org/main.php>>
16. Parson, Hector (Fe y Alegría). Personal interview. 22 Jan. 2007
17. "Primero Aprendo." CARE. 14 Feb. 2007 < <http://www.primeroaprendo.org>>

18. "Republica de El Salvador – Country Profile." Nations Online. 14 Mar. 2007  
<[http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/el\\_salvador.htm](http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/el_salvador.htm)>
19. Rodriguez, Anna Carmen (Usulután). Personal interview. 19 Jan. 2007
20. Rodriguez, Juan Carlos (CARE). Personal interview. 15 Jan. 2007
21. Rodriguez, Raquel (Usulután). Personal interview. 19 Jan. 2007
22. Salinas, Nelson (Fe y Alegría). Personal interview. 23 Jan. 2007
23. "SCREAM." International Labor Organization. 28 Feb. 2007  
<<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipe/scream>>
24. Valdez, David Alejandro. Personal interview. 17 Jan. 2007
25. Turning a Blind Eye: Hazardous Child Labor in El Salvador's Sugarcane Cultivation. Human Rights Watch. Vol. 16, No. 2 (B), 2004
26. "UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)." United Nations. 15 Mar. 2007  
<<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc>>
27. "UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights." United Nations. 10 Dec. 1948.  
<<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>>
28. The World Bank. 12 Feb. 2007 <<http://www.worldbank.org>>
29. World Vision. 17 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.wvi.org>>
30. World Vision (Educational Department, Economic Development Department, Justice Department). Personal interview. 11-12, 29 Jan. 2007

### ***Secondary Sources:***

1. Agal, Renu. "Misery Goes on for India Child Workers." BBC 10 Dec. 2006.  
<<http://www.bbc.co.uk>>
2. Anheier, Helmut; Marlies Glasius, and Mary Kaldor. Introducing Global Civil Society, in ibid. Global Civil Society. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001
3. Armony, Ariel. The Dubious Link. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004
4. Bacon, David. "INS Declares War on Child Labor." The Nation.  
<<http://www.thenation.com>>
5. Baines, Edward. History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain. 2nd ed. A. M. Kelley, 1971
6. Baland, Jean-Marie, and James A. Robinson. "Is Child Labor Inefficient?" The Journal of Political Economy 108 (2000): 663-679

7. Balko, Radley. "Sweatshops, Boycotts, and the Road to Poverty." Capitalism Magazine. <<http://www.capmag.com>>
8. Basu, Kaushik. "Globalization and the Politics of International Finance: The Stiglitz Verdict." Journal of Economic Literature 41.3 (2003): 885-899
9. Basu, Kaushik, and Pham Hoang Van. "The Economics of Child Labor." The American Economic Review 88 (1998): 412-427
10. Beegle, Kathleen, Rajeev Dehejia, and Roberta Gatti. Why Should We Care About Child Labor? World Bank. Manuscript, 2003
11. Beeman, Mark, and Geeta Chowdhry. "Challenging Child Labor: Transnational Activism and India's Carpet Industry." Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 575 (2001): 158-175
12. Bergstrom, Fredrik, and Robert Gidehag. EU Versus USA. Stockholm: Timbro, 2004
13. Berlin, Isaiah. "Two Concepts of Liberty." Inaugural Lecture. University of Oxford, Oxford. 31 Oct. 1958
14. Bhalotra, Sonia, and Christopher Heady. "Child Farm Labor: the Wealth Paradox." World Bank Economic Review 17 (2003): 197-227
15. Blanding, Michael. "Coke: the New Nike." The Nation. 13 Mar. 2007 <<http://www.thenation.com>>
16. Boyden, Jo, Birgitta Ling, and William Myers. What Works for Working Children. UNICEF. Italy and Sweden: Radda Barnen, 1998
17. Brown, Drusilla K. "Labor Standards: Where Do They Belong on the International Trade Agenda?" Journal of Economic Perspectives 15 (2001): 89-112
18. Brown, Ian. "This Fatal Compromise." The Guardian 19 Nov. 2004
19. By the Sweat and Toil of Children: Overview. U.S. Department of Labor: Bureau of International Labor Affairs. 22 Apr. 2006 <<http://www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/sweat/overview.htm>>
20. Cooley, Alexander and James Ron. "The NGO Scramble: Organizational Insecurity and the Political Economy of Transnational Action." International Security 27.1 (2002): 5-39
21. Deb, Partha and Rosati, Furio C., "Determinants of Child Labor and School Attendance: The Role of Household Unobservables" (2002). Understanding Children's Work (UCW) Working Paper
22. Dessy, Sylvain, and Stephane Pallage. "A Theory of the Worst Forms of Child Labor." Economic Journal 115 (2005): 68-87
23. Edmonds, Eric V. "Does Child Labor Decline with Improving Economic Status?" The Journal of Human Resources 40 (2005): 77-99
24. Edwards, Michael and David Hulme. "Too Close for Comfort? The Impact of Official Aid on Nongovernmental Organizations" World Development 24.6 (1996): 961-973

25. Egane, Erica. "Relief and Rehabilitation Work in Mozambique: Institutional Capacity and NGO Executorial Strategies." Development in Practice 1 (1991): 174-194
26. Fisher, Julie. Nongovernments: NGOs and the Political Development of the Third World. West Hartford: Kumarian P, 1998
27. Fisher, William F. "Doing Good? The Politics and Anti-Politics of NGO Practices." Annual Review of Anthropology 26 (1997): 439-464
28. Fugere, Robert. Future Directions for Development Non-Governmental Organizations. The Coady International Institute. St. Francis Xavier University. Oct. 2001
29. Garcia-Johnson, Ronie, Gary Gereffi, and Erika Sasser. "The NGO - Industrial Complex." Foreign Policy 125 (2005): 56-65
30. Harrison, Ann. Globalization and Poverty. National Bureau of Economic Research. NBER Working Paper No. 12347, 2006
31. Hecht, Tobias. At Home in the Street. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998
32. Hertel, Shareen. Unexpected Power: Conflict and Change Among Transnational Activists. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2006
33. Hilowitz, Janet. "Labelling Child Labour Products: A Preliminary Study." ILO/IPEC: Geneva (1997)
34. Korey, William. NGOs and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A Curious Grapevine. Palgrave Macmillan, 1998
35. Lapp, Hannah. "A Defense of Child Labor." The American Enterprise Sept.-Oct. 1995
36. Lavalette, Michael. A Thing of the Past? Child Labor in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century. Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1999
37. Maia, Monique. "Child Labor Seen as Good for Country and Kids by Brazilians." Brazzil Magazine 24 June 2006. <<http://www.brazzilamg.com>>
38. Munoz, Cecilia, and Martha Palacios. El Nino Trabajador. Bogota: Carlos Valencia, 1980
39. Nandy, Ashis. Tradition, Tyranny, and Utopias: Essays in the Politics of Awareness. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1992
40. "NIKE and Child Labor." TED Case Studies. 15 Feb. 2007  
<<http://www.american.edu/TED/nike.htm>>
41. Philip, George. "Democracy and Development in Latin America." Latin American Research Review 40.2 (2005): 207-220
42. Ray, Ranjan. "Child Labor, Child Schooling, and Their Interaction with Adult Labor." World Bank Economic Review 14 (2000): 347-367

43. Ravallion, Martin and Wodon, Quentin T. "Does Child Labor Displace Schooling? Evidence on Behavioral Responses to an Enrollment Subsidy" (May 1999). World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 2116.
44. Sanyal, Bishwapriya. "NGO'S Self-Defeating Quest for Autonomy." Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 554 (1997): 21-32
45. Swinnerton, Kenneth A., and Carol Ann Rogers. "The Economics of Child Labor: Comment." The American Economic Review 89 (1999): 1382-1385
46. Sydorenko, Oleksander. "Changing the Not-for-Profit Mentality: The Case of the Ukrainian NGOs." William Davidson Institute. Policy Brief No. 24 (2005): 1-8
47. Thompson, Ginger. "Successful Anti-Sweatshop Campaign Against Nike in Mexico." The New York Times 8 Oct. 2001.
48. Tvedt, Terje. "Development NGOs: Actors in a Global Civil Society or in a New International Social System?" Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations 13 (2004): 363-375
49. Uphoff, Norman. "Relations Between Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations and the Promotion of Autonomous Development" (Paper delivered at the Conference for Autonomous Development, Oegstgust, The Netherlands, 1986)
50. White, Sara. "NGOs, Civil Society, and the State in Bangladesh: The Politics of Representing the Poor". Development and Change. 30 (1999): 307-326
51. Zelizer, Viviana A. Pricing the Priceless Child: the Changing Social Value of Children. New York: Basic Books, 1985

# The End



Image(s) reduced in both size and resolution for copyright reasons.