Negative: Cambodia - Child Labor

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

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Negative: Cambodia - Child Labor

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Problem exaggerated

Some of the "child labor" is merely kids going to the workplace with their parents to make life easier for the family (maybe they don't have day care?)

Tith Kongnov 2022. (journalist) 19 July 2022 KHMER TIMES " Gov’t launches campaign to stop child labour" (accessed 16 Feb 2023) https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501115025/govt-launches-campaign-to-stop-child-labour/

Sokhom Chenda, director of the Siem Reap Provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training, said yesterday that using children in certain industries still exists, while some children accompany their parents to work to make life easier for the family. “Child labour in Siem Reap has been declining, but I have noticed that some brickworks seem unaware that children are working for their company as many children accompany their parents to work to help them,” Chenda said.

INHERENCY

1. Cambodia already taking steps to solve child labor

New initiative started in 2019 to enforce child labor laws in the brick industry

Leonie Kijewski 2019 (journalist) VOICE OF AMERICA NEWS 7 Sept 2019 "Cambodia Launches Campaign to End Child Labor in Brick Industry" https://www.voanews.com/a/east-asia-pacific\_cambodia-launches-campaign-end-child-labor-brick-industry/6175344.html

The government fined the factory and issued a directive barring children from brick kiln production line compounds. Children often live with their families in accommodation provided for by the brick factory, which often is in the direct vicinity of the kilns. The government said Aug. 31 that the director of the Labor Ministry's Child Labor Department, Veng Heang, had started the campaign August 26 in cooperation with local authorities. “According to the department director, any brick factory found having child labor will be severely penalised without any excuse,” the state news agency Agence Kampuchea Presse reported.

Cambodian government campaign includes: Inspections, Interventions, and Awareness

Tith Kongnov 2022. (journalist) 19 July 2022 KHMER TIMES " Gov’t launches campaign to stop child labour" (accessed 16 Feb 2023) https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501115025/govt-launches-campaign-to-stop-child-labour/

Secretary of State for the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training Soeng Sor Socheata said last week that the campaign to prevent child labour in the handicrafts sector, brick factories, and agro-industry has three aims. The first is that the government instructs judicial police to intervene and stop the use of children in the targeted industries. The next is to raise awareness and promote anti-child labour campaigns, disclosure of the causes and effects of child labour, policies and legal norms, and measures to combat child labour. Finally, the Labour Inspection Division needs greater legal authority to prevent factory owners using child labour and to inspect communities where children live.

Cambodia has launched a National Action Plan for protecting children, and the UN says they're making good progress

UN Office of the High Commission for Human Rights 2022. Experts of the Committee on the Rights of the Child praise Cambodia for policies protecting children’s rights, ask about unregistered births and laws banning surrogacy 6 May 2022 (accessed 16 Feb 2023) https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2022/05/experts-committee-rights-child-praise-cambodia-policies-protecting-childrens-rights

The national law on the suppression of human trafficking and sexual exploitation was adopted in 2008, and the national committee for counter trafficking in persons had been established.  This Committee worked to eliminate trafficking of women and children.  The Government had also launched the national action plan on the reduction of child labour and the elimination of the worst forms of child labour for 2016-2025, aiming to eradicate child labour and forced labour.  
**END QUOTE. THEY GO ON TO CONCLUDE LATER IN THE SAME ARTICLE QUOTE:**  
BUN ENG CHOU, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Interior, Vice-Chair of the Cambodian National Council for Children, and head of the delegation, expressed profound thanks to the Committee for the dialogue.  Cambodia had demonstrated its achievements in protecting the rights of children, however, there were some areas where improvement was needed.  The delegation looked forward to receiving the Committee’s recommendations, which it would work to address.  Ms. Chou reiterated Cambodia’s continued commitment to protecting child rights, and looked forward to continuing to work with the Committee towards this goal.

SOLVENCY

1. Impossible to enforce

Most child labor in Cambodia is caused by underage workers lying about their age with false documents

Reuters news service 2018 " 'Major strides' to cut child labor in Cambodia's fashion factories" 12 Dec 2018 (accessed 16 Feb 2023) https://ww.fashionnetwork.com/news/-major-strides-to-cut-child-labor-in-cambodia-s-fashion-factories,1044485.html

Cambodian factories supply global brands including [Gap](https://ww.fashionnetwork.com/tags-gap) Inc, Sweden-based [H&M](https://ww.fashionnetwork.com/tags-h-m), and sportswear brands [Nike](https://ww.fashionnetwork.com/tags-nike), [Puma](https://ww.fashionnetwork.com/tags-puma) and [Adidas](https://ww.fashionnetwork.com/tags-adidas). The ILO report noted that child labor usually involves workers under the age of 15 who have presented false identity documents to get factory jobs.

2. No solvency or advocacy evidence

AFF failed in their duty to provide even 1 piece of evidence that mentions their plan and says it will work

Nobody besides the Affirmative debaters, who have no qualifications nor credentials, says this plan will work.

3. A/T "Sanctions on Russia prove plan will work" - Sanctions on Russia failed, so that proves plan will fail

Sanctions on Russia made things worse: They make it harder for Putin to back down and toughen his resolve to win the war

Dr. William Ruger 2022 (Ph.D. in politics specializing in foreign policy, president of the American Institute for Economic Research) 5 May 2022 REASON magazine " William Ruger on Russia's Invasion of Ukraine" <https://reason.com/2022/05/05/william-ruger-on-russias-invasion-of-ukraine/> (accessed 23 June 2022)

The history of sanctions shouldn't leave anyone all that sanguine about their ability to effect the ultimate ends that you're trying to seek. Now, these sanctions may be extreme in many ways. If you impose essentially a financial blockade, they may have more bite. But the question is, do they actually cause what you're trying to achieve or do they make it much harder for Russia to stand down? You can imagine Putin and the Russian state not wanting to appear to cry uncle to this pressure. I think that's a real concern.

Thousands of sanctions on Russia have really had a big economic impact… On the US, not Russia

Prof. Edvard Chesnokov 2022 (adjunct professor at the Far Eastern Federal University in Vladivostok, Russia) US tries to hit Russia with severe sanctions, but fails 26 May 2022 <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202205/1266663.shtml> (accessed 23 June 2022)

After the events of February 2022, instead of the previous hundreds of sanctions, we've faced thousands. The US tried to disrupt the Russian externally oriented economy, prohibiting our agricultural, oil, and gas export. This really caused disaster - at another shore of the Atlantic. Since the beginning of the year, petrol cost in the US has 27.6 percent increased; it is the largest price jump from the 1970s oil crisis, as Vyacheslav Volodin, the Chairman of the Russian Parliament, pointed out in his May 23 statement. Moreover, the US and its allies are hit with food shortages, the largest inflation since the 1980s, consumer price runs and a critical fall of their political leaders' ratings.

4. Even if Cambodia complied, it wouldn't solve

Until the root cause (Poverty) is solved, even a complete ban wouldn't reduce child labor

Prashant Bharadwaj, Leah K. Lakdawala and Nicholas Li 2018. (Prashant Bharadwaj, University of California, San Diego; Leah K. Lakdawala, Michigan State University; and Nicholas Li, University of Toronto) "Perverse Consequences of Well‐​Intentioned Regulation: Evidence from India’s Child Labor Ban" 14 Feb 2018 (accessed 16 Feb 2023) https://www.cato.org/research-briefs-economic-policy/perverse-consequences-well-intentioned-regulation-evidence-indias

Finally, we would like to highlight that recent research has shown the importance of cash transfers in alleviating child labor in families. Eric Edmonds and Norbert Schady show that cash transfers in Ecuador result in large declines in the number of children involved in paid employment. In that context, one of the central models of child labor, created by Kaushik Basu and Pham Hoang Van, shows that policies based on alleviating poverty are extremely likely to have an effect on reducing the incidence of child labor. The broader point of our work suggests that bans alone are unlikely to solve the problem of child labor because they simply do not address the main reason children work in the first place: poverty.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Child labor gets worse

Link: AFF cuts off, according to them, a LOT of Cambodia's trade

That's their plan and their evidence.

Link: Trade is the key driver for economic growth to lift people out of poverty in poor countries

Jim Young Kim and Roberto Azevedo 2018 (Kim - President, World Bank Group. Azevedo - Director-General, World Trade Organization) TRADE AND POVERTY REDUCTION: NEW EVIDENCE OF IMPACTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (accessed 16 Feb 2023) https://www.wto.org/english/res\_e/booksp\_e/wto\_wbjointpublication\_e.pdf

There is a trend away from trade openness, and the unstable trade policy environment has developed into one of the key risks facing the global economy. It is essential that we do not lose sight of the significant implications for the poorest and most vulnerable. Trade is a key driver of global growth and poverty reduction. An open global economy has created opportunities for hundreds of millions of people to lift themselves out of extreme poverty.

Link: Economic growth is what Cambodia needs to actually solve the root cause of why child labor exists

Leonie Kijewski 2019 (journalist) VOICE OF AMERICA NEWS 7 Sept 2019 "Cambodia Launches Campaign to End Child Labor in Brick Industry" https://www.voanews.com/a/east-asia-pacific\_cambodia-launches-campaign-end-child-labor-brick-industry/6175344.html

He welcomed the initiative but called just focusing on child labor a “symptom-led approach” not likely to address the root causes of the problem. He said that poverty pushes people into debt-bondage at the brick kilns, poor working conditions, and brick kiln contracts barring workers from employment elsewhere. “It's a focus which won't necessarily produce any long-term tangible change, [which] is very much a kind of symptom-led focus with what we see as being an undue focus on the issue of child labor, which is obviously a very evocative topic,” he said. “It's something that gets a lot of attention. But to us, the child labor is essentially part of the wider structural problem.” “The reason that these conditions exist is essentially because people are desperate enough to keep bonding themselves into work in the brick industry,” he said.

Impact: Turn the harms, child labor gets worse after the plan

Taking away the economic growth that would have helped people avoid child labor makes it worse, not better.

2. Violates human rights (punishes the innocent with the guilty)

Sanctions violate the human rights of US persons and companies

J.D. Tuccille 2022 (contributing editor) 13 May 2022 REASON magazine "Don't Oppose Russian Authoritarianism With More Authoritarianism" <https://reason.com/2022/05/13/dont-oppose-russian-authoritarianism-with-more-authoritarianism/> (accessed 23 June 2022)

The plight of a troubled yet functioning liberal democracy under assault from a brutal neighboring regime should involve the defense of freedom against those who would dictate terms to the unwilling. But sanctions have creeped from punishing the Russian state, to targeting the Russian people, to telling private firms and individuals in the United States that they can't do businesses with the customers of their choice. "The United States will prohibit U.S. persons from providing accounting, trust and corporate formation, and management consulting services to any person in the Russian Federation," a separate White House [fact sheet specifies](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/08/fact-sheet-united-states-and-g7-partners-impose-severe-costs-for-putins-war-against-ukraine/). So, admittedly not for the first time, the private sector is being used as a tool of foreign policy. Businesses are being ordered to close offices and sever ties with clients because they're subjects of rulers our rulers don't like, without regard for those customers' relation to that country's government or its invasion of a neighboring state.

3. Child labor laws backfire in poor countries

Fall in child wages due to the ban can lead to supplying more child labor to make up for the lost wages

Prashant Bharadwaj, Leah K. Lakdawala and Nicholas Li 2018. (Prashant Bharadwaj, University of California, San Diego; Leah K. Lakdawala, Michigan State University; and Nicholas Li, University of Toronto) "Perverse Consequences of Well‐​Intentioned Regulation: Evidence from India’s Child Labor Ban" 14 Feb 2018 (accessed 16 Feb 2023) https://www.cato.org/research-briefs-economic-policy/perverse-consequences-well-intentioned-regulation-evidence-indias

Despite facing near‐​universal opposition for decades, child labor is endemic. According to a recent report by the International Labor Organization, there are nearly 168 million child laborers, of whom 85 million work under hazardous conditions. While many policy options exist to address this, laws banning or regulating child labor remain the predominant response. However, the effect of these laws on child labor and household welfare is theoretically ambiguous. The obvious mechanism is that when enforced, bans increase the cost to employers of hiring children, thereby deterring their use. A less obvious mechanism pushes in the opposite direction: if only the poorest families use child labor to reach subsistence, a fall in child wages due to the ban may actually lead them to supply more child labor.

India Study found: Decline in child wages led to more younger children working after the ban, even though poor families didn't want them to

Prashant Bharadwaj, Leah K. Lakdawala and Nicholas Li 2018. (Prashant Bharadwaj, University of California, San Diego; Leah K. Lakdawala, Michigan State University; and Nicholas Li, University of Toronto) "Perverse Consequences of Well‐​Intentioned Regulation: Evidence from India’s Child Labor Ban" 14 Feb 2018 (accessed 16 Feb 2023) https://www.cato.org/research-briefs-economic-policy/perverse-consequences-well-intentioned-regulation-evidence-indias

We find that child wages fall relative to adult wages after the ban; this relative decline occurs in the manufacturing sector targeted by the ban. We also find that a child below age 14 is more likely to work after the ban relative to someone just above age 14. Using a more refined empirical approach, our results show that a child between the ages of 10 and 13 with a sibling below age 14 significantly increases his or her labor force participation, by 0.8 percent compared to a child of the same age with a sibling over age 14, which is approximately 5.6 percent over the pre‐​ban average participation for that age group. We find that young children between the ages of 6 and 9 are significantly less likely to be in school, so the increase in child labor likely comes at the cost of human capital investments. A key aspect of the theory is that only very poor households supply child labor because in general households would prefer to not make their children work.