



## **Background Paper**

**Committee:** UNESCO

**Topic B:** Reducing Child Mortality Rates in the Worst Affected Countries

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Child mortality refers to the death of children around the world whereas infant mortality describes the death of any child under the age of one. Child mortality is an issue in our world since potential future leaders and generations are dying, and this affects all of us. 5.4 million child deaths were registered worldwide in 2017. The children that are at greatest risk of dying are those under the age 5, since they are the most vulnerable as their immune systems are weaker this age. The aid sent to these children includes different things such as vaccines, free health services, innovative facilities, and constant protection towards these children and the mother, especially with the first postpartum months. Nonetheless, this committee is trying to look for more solutions that will reduce the child and infant mortality in the worst affected countries, which include Afghanistan, Somalia, The Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, and Chad.

Some of the causes of child mortality are the result of diseases, such as malaria, pneumonia, HIV/AIDS. Other causes include prematurity, poor neonatal care, birth complications, respiratory infections, and malnutrition. With older children, at around 15 to 19 years of age, top causes are drowning, falls, burns, and road traffic injury.

The UN is already taking action to address this issue, it has been working to lower rates since 1990. The number of deaths worldwide for children below 5 has declined from 12.6 million in 1990 to 5.4 million in 2017. In 1990, 34,000 children died everyday but 2017 figures are 15,000 child deaths everyday, rates have dropped by 58%. The work done by the UN includes the use of free vaccines in these children, which have protected them from most deadly childhood diseases, such as measles, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis, pneumonia due to haemophilus influenzae type B and streptococcus pneumonia and diarrhoea due to rotavirus. Furthermore, the UN has also been working closely on promoting healthy lives and well-being for all children by constantly

innovating and improving the quality of child health services in different communities and facilities so they can have an optimal use.

The countries that have the highest rates of child mortality are developing countries and that don't have a strong economy. Children in Africa are 15 times more likely to die before the age of 5 than children in developed countries. The Democratic Republic of Congo is ranked as one of the countries with the highest child mortality rates in the world. The vast majority of these deaths are caused by malnutrition. Also the inhabitants of this country have been suffering from wars, political instability and violence. What the UN has been trying to do here is to establish a health care system for this country. Southern Asia accounts for 30% of all child deaths worldwide. Which is why the UN is trying to provide them with more help fighting diseases, malnutrition, and providing sanitary services. A baby that is born in a developing country is 9 times more vulnerable to die in their first month of life than a baby that is born in a developed nation, consequently, we should look to address this issue as it is having such a huge impact on many societies.

What this committee is trying to do is to inform people about what is happening outside their own lives. Millions of children die every year in different countries of the world. That is why this issue needs to be discussed and a solution needs to be found.

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