



### **Topic Synopsis**

#### **UNICEF, Child Mortality in Third World Nations**

#### **I. Background**

Child Mortality is referred to as the death of infants and children under five years old. Lack of oxygen at birth, malaria, and pneumonia are some of the factors that play into the death of these children. Many of these diseases and complications a child faces are curable or preventable. Moreover, many of these diseases occur because of poor sanitary water conditions as well as malnutrition.

Child mortality is present in many countries around the world, but is significantly higher in third world countries such as Rwanda, Guinea, Mali, Somalia, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone. At least 10% of children under the age of five die in third world countries. In these developing countries over 30,000 children under the age of five die each. In developing countries like these, there are many issues that attribute to child mortality such as malaria, pneumonia, preterm delivery, neonatal infection, or lack of oxygen at birth. In a third world country a child is 30 times more likely to die before the age of five versus a child in Western Europe. This significant number demonstrates the major threat that a third world country faces.

Child mortality is a major problem to the world because thousands of children die each year unnecessarily. Furthermore, many of these diseases and complications a child faces are curable or preventable. Diseases such as HIV/AIDS, measles, or malaria are preventable with the right forms of sanitation and organization. When the right actions are taken, this problem can be drastically diminished.



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## **II. UN Involvement**

The United Nations have been involved in this issue since 1960 and have made significant growth in the effort to solve this pressing issue. Since 1960, the child mortality rates have been reduced by fifty percent in developing countries. Also, the UN has increased the life expectancy in these countries to 67 years of age instead of 37.

Many organizations and committees of the United Nations are involved with solving the high child mortality rates. UNICEF works with WHO and others to specifically to reduce the number of children dying each year. The World Food Programme and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) are also two major foundations that are attempting to solve the issue of child mortality.

The UN has passed many resolutions and has taken steps of action to resolve this problem. The fourth goal of the UN Millennium Development Goals is the reduce child mortality. Their target was to reduce the child mortality rate by two thirds between 1990 and 2015. 53 countries, of the 90, under this goal are developing nations. The UN has had some success in attempting to reach this goal, but they are nowhere near fully reaching it. UNICEF has also tried to implement their ability to give vaccines to these people of developing nations, but they still have million of people to reach. UNICEF has also developed systems to increase the access to sanitary water in third world nations by working with the poor governments of the nations.

## **III. Possible Solutions**

There are many solutions that can be implemented to reduce the child mortality rate in third world countries. To solve the issue of poor water condition, UN organizations such as WHO can build various wells throughout the region. The country should also promote the use of



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nets in houses to prevent diseases such as malaria from infecting the child or parent. Developed countries should aid these poor countries by funding vaccines and nets to prevent many diseases from taking place. The UN should also work these developing countries to set up hygienic and sanitary facilities for the people so diseases are less likely to spread.

#### **IV. Bloc Positions**

**ASIA-** Asia is working with the UN to achieve their fourth millennium development goal of reducing child mortality, providing safe drinking water, and improving sanitation facilities.

**LATIN AMERICA-** Latin America along with the Caribbean has seemed to make significant progress through the past decades in solving their regions’ issues with child mortality.

**EUROPE-** Since dominated by wealthy nations, Europe is in the process of helping to solve their third world countries issues of child mortality.

**AFRICA-** Africa is filled with poor and developing countries and is the continent with the highest child mortality rates. Many countries are open to taking help from the UN to solve their issue, but they need a tremendous amount of support.

**MIDDLE EAST-** Along with Africa, the Middle East suffers from very high child mortality rates. However it is not as open and willing to solve its issues.

#### **V. Guiding Questions**

1. Does your country suffer from morbidly high child mortality rates?
2. Is your country willing to solve this issue in their country and in others as well?
3. Has your country taken any steps to reduce their mortality rates?
4. Does your country offer any plausible solutions to solve this problem in third world countries?



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LINKS:

<http://iesschamannsbo.blogspot.com/2010/03/solutions-of-child-mortality.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child\\_mortality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_mortality)

<http://www.un.org/aboutun/achieve.htm>

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/childhealth.shtml>

<http://www.unicef.org/mdg/childmortality.html>

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2007-10-08-voa19-66695712.html>