

WHERE CHILDHOOD IS WORK, NOT PLAY.

By Michael Wines

In Sub-Saharan Africa, in places like Lusaka, more than one in four children under age 14 works full-time or for a few hours a week, nearly the same percentage as the world-wide average in 1960.

It is by far the greatest proportion of working children in the world.

By the United Nations' latest estimate, more than 49 million Sub-Saharan children aged 14 and younger worked in 2004, 1.3 million more than at the turn of the century just four years earlier.

They are prostitutes, miners, construction workers, pesticide sprayers, haulers, street vendors, full-time servants, and they are not necessarily even paid for their job.

Some are as young as 5 and 6 years old.

In Kenya, nearly a third of the coffee pickers were children, a 2001 World Bank Report found. In Tanzania, 25,000 children worked in dangerous jobs on plantations and mines. Child labor declines with prosperity, and so the region's economic plight – 44 percent of Sub-Saharan residents live on less than \$1 a day, far and away the greatest share on earth – is the big reason.

The New York Times, 2006

WRITTEN COMPREHENSION

1. Proportion of working children in Sub-Saharan Africa (the fraction) :
2. Real number (the decimal number) :
3. Ages of the children :
4. Jobs :
5. Country where most of the coffee-pickers are children :
6. Country where 25,000 children work on plantations and in mines :
7. Percentage of Sub-Saharan inhabitants living on less than 1 dollar a day :