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World Vision® 

CANADA'S RISKY IMPORTS

Supply Chain Risk
Report 2026
World Vision Canada

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A \$63.3 billion reason to act

Canada imported \$63.3 billion in goods at risk of being made with child or forced labour in 2025—more than \$170 million a day on average, and roughly 8 per cent of total Canadian imports. From electronics and clothing to gold and coffee, the risk is embedded in Canada's trading relationships. This is a Canadian values and economic issue, not a distant problem.

Canada is actively seeking new markets and aiming to double non-U.S. exports over the next decade. It is also developing stronger legislative measures against labour exploitation, including the introduction of Bill C-35 which would strengthen Canada's ban on goods made with forced labour. **These agendas should reinforce each other.** Canada should build protection for children and workers into its trading relationships, not leave it for later. ^[6,7,8]

The numbers demand action

The value of risky imports increased by **6.2 per cent from 2022 to 2025**. Electronics remained the largest category at \$22.2 billion, followed by clothing and textiles at \$15.3 billion. Gold rose to \$7.8 billion and coffee, a daily ritual for many Canadians, reached nearly \$2 billion. These findings give government and business a starting point for investigation and action in major Canadian supply chains.

Worldwide, nearly **138 million children were in child labour in 2024**, including 54 million in hazardous work. Separately, an estimated 27.6 million people were in forced labour in 2021. Progress is possible: child labour fell by more than 22 million between 2020 and 2024. ^[4,5]

Give responsible trade a plan, a budget and a measure of success

Businesses need clear expectations and fair competition. Children and workers need protection that reaches beyond a policy on paper. The federal government has an opportunity to be a global leader in responsible trade. World Vision calls for **one Trusted Supply Chains Strategy** connecting business responsibility, credible enforcement and sustained investment in prevention. By the end of 2027, the Government of Canada should publish the strategy, name the responsible ministers and select its first prevention partnerships.



The test of success

Progress should be measured in safer childhoods and better working conditions, not just laws passed or reports filed. Trade policy, business action and development investment should work toward those outcomes together.



A young girl from the Democratic Republic of Congo selling sugarcane sticks to support her family.

Where work becomes exploitation

A continuum of labour exploitation helps explain the connection between different abuses: from wage violations and unsafe conditions to severe harm and coercion. Child labour and forced labour are among the most egregious labour rights violations. They are related but distinct, and can occur alongside other abuses. Recognizing that wider picture can help prevent harm and build the enabling environment needed for decent work and vibrant futures.

Child labour is not the same as children working

Child labour includes work below the applicable minimum age, work that harms a child's health or development, and work that interferes with schooling. Hazardous tasks, such as using dangerous machinery, handling harmful chemicals or carrying heavy loads, can be child labour even when a child is old enough for some other work.^[11]

While national laws differ on when and under what conditions children may work, International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions set common international standards on minimum working ages and protection from hazardous work and other worst forms of child labour

Not all work done by children is harmful. Age-appropriate chores, permitted light work and safe jobs for young people above the minimum working age can build skills and confidence. They must not undermine health, development or education. The child's age, the tasks, the hours and the conditions all matter.^[11]

Forced labour means work under coercion

Forced labour is work a person has not freely agreed to do, or cannot freely leave, because of a threatened penalty. Coercion can involve violence or intimidation, but also debt, withheld identity documents or threats to report a worker to immigration authorities. Low pay or poor conditions alone do not establish forced labour; the absence of genuine freedom is central.^[11]

Children can also be in forced labour. But work does not have to involve threats or physical restraint to be child labour. A child who is too young for work, or whose work is dangerous or disrupts schooling, still needs protection.^[11]

Why the wider conditions matter

Taking these issues seriously means looking at how workers are recruited, paid and treated, the conditions under which they work, whether they can raise concerns safely, and whether families have access to education and support.

Addressing those conditions helps protect children and adults across the continuum of exploitation.



In Bangladesh, Ruskar would spend 8 hours a day making paper bags.

ABOUT WORLD VISION

World Vision is a global Christian humanitarian, development and advocacy organization working with children, families and communities around the world to tackle the causes of poverty and injustice.

Across its global partnership, World Vision has extensive experience addressing the conditions that can push children and adults into harmful work—through long-term community development focused on education, livelihoods, child protection and family resilience, as well as dedicated child labour and labour-rights programs.

World Vision Canada has worked on child labour, forced labour and responsible supply chains for more than a decade through research, public engagement, programming and sustained advocacy for stronger Canadian laws.

Our work helped build public and political momentum for Canada's first supply-chain transparency law, the Supply Chains Act (S-211), which came into force in 2024. We see that law as an important first step, not the finish line.

Leading risky imports

The analysis identified Canadian imports in **145 goods categories from 54 source countries** with documented **child or forced labour risks** in 2025. Related clothing and textile categories are combined below, giving a clearer picture of the ten largest groups.

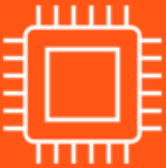
Table 1 | Values are in millions of Canadian dollars. Countries shown supplied the goods included in the 2025 estimate. Changes compare 2022 with 2025.

GOOD	MAIN SOURCE COUNTRIES	2022 CAD M	2025 CAD M	CHANGE
Electronics	China, Malaysia, Pakistan	25,379	22,237	-12.4%
Clothing and textiles	Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, China, India, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Vietnam	15,272	15,327	+0.4%
Gold	Colombia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru	2,815	7,830	+178.1%
Toys	China	2,834	2,707	-4.5%
Footwear	Bangladesh, Brazil, China, India, Türkiye, Vietnam	2,687	2,637	-1.9%
Coffee	Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam	1,237	1,966	+58.9%
Cocoa and cocoa products	Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Netherlands, Nigeria	464	1,483	+219.5%
Aluminum	China	1,802	1,412	-21.7%
Furniture	Pakistan, Türkiye, Vietnam	854	1,061	+24.3%
Sugarcane / raw sugar	Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, India, Mexico, Paraguay, Thailand	755	883	+17.0%

Related clothing and textile categories have been combined, with overlapping imports counted once. The national total includes other goods not shown. Includes cocoa beans and U.S. Department of Labor-listed downstream products—cocoa paste, butter, powder and chocolate—from the applicable country-product combinations. ^[1]

Behind the totals

Higher import values can reflect different changes: more expensive commodities, a different mix of products or shifts between source countries. Those differences matter for understanding the numbers and where businesses need to investigate. ^[12,13,14]



Electronics | The largest category, at \$22.2 billion

Electronics remained the largest category despite a **12.4 per cent decline since 2022**. That fall was uneven: data-transmission and switching equipment dropped from \$3.0 billion to \$1.6 billion, while smartphones stayed near \$6.9 billion. A smaller total does not establish safer production. Buyers still need to examine recruitment and working conditions beyond the brand name or final supplier.



Clothing and textiles | A steady total, changing sources

Combined imports were **\$15.33 billion, up just 0.4 per cent from 2022**, with overlapping clothing and cotton categories counted once. They came from 15 countries and included familiar items such as T-shirts, sweaters and trousers. Within that broadly steady total, values from Vietnam rose by 14 per cent and Cambodia by 10 per cent, offset by declines elsewhere. The mix of source countries changed even though the overall value barely moved.

Risk can arise in garment factories or in the cotton production and other materials used to make clothing. Checking the final factory alone is not enough: businesses need to trace materials and examine purchasing pressure, recruitment and workers' ability to raise concerns safely. ^[1]



Gold | Higher prices and changes in sourcing

Flagged gold imports rose **178 per cent, from \$2.8 billion to \$7.8 billion**, almost entirely in metal rather than finished jewellery. Peru and Colombia remained major origins; Nicaragua went from no recorded imports in 2022 to \$911 million in 2025. Globally, the 2025 average benchmark gold price in U.S. dollars was 44 per cent higher than in 2024. Investment drove demand growth while jewellery volumes fell. This is a story of commodity markets and sourcing, not simply Canadians buying more jewellery. ^[12]



Cocoa and coffee | Crop shortages and higher prices

Cocoa rose **220% to \$1.48 billion**, almost entirely from the same three origins in both years: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. The World Bank estimated that global cocoa output fell 14 per cent in the 2023–2024 season, largely because of lower production in West Africa, where poor weather also drove price concerns. ^[13] Coffee faced its own weather-related supply pressures. At **\$1.97 billion**, it is the largest food commodity in the ranking and merits a closer look. ^[14]

COFFEE: THE CANADIAN CONNECTION

\$1.97 billion

coffee imports from
flagged origins in 2025

+59%

change in import value
since 2022

\$176 million

coffee imports from
Honduras in 2025

Coffee is a significant part of Canada's risky import picture. Imports from listed origins rose from \$1.24 billion in 2022 to \$1.97 billion in 2025. Canada imported coffee from 16 of the 17 origins on the U.S. Department of Labor's coffee risk list. ^[1]

Where the coffee comes from

Colombia (\$772 million), Brazil (\$533 million), Guatemala (\$200 million) and Honduras (\$176 million) accounted for **about 85 per cent of the risky coffee value**. Other origins included Mexico, Nicaragua, Vietnam and countries in East Africa. Table 1 lists all the main origins included in the 2025 estimate.

More than **98 per cent of the value was unroasted coffee**, including decaffeinated beans. Importers, roasters and brands therefore have a central role: a roasting or packaging location says little about conditions where the coffee was grown and harvested.¹

What is behind the increase?

Coffee's higher import value coincided with a global supply squeeze. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization reported a **38.8 per cent rise in world coffee prices in 2024**, largely because of adverse weather. For Canada's coffee trade as a whole, Statistics Canada reported record volumes of unroasted, non-decaffeinated coffee imports in 2024 and rising costs for roasters in 2025. ^[14,15]

Why Honduras matters

Imports from Honduras rose from **\$95.8 million to \$176 million between 2022 and 2025**. It was the fourth-largest origin in the flagged estimate—an established Canadian trading connection, and one where World Vision works with coffee businesses and communities on prevention.

Honduras is listed for child-labour risk in coffee. Research documents children carrying heavy loads, working long days and being exposed to pesticides and extreme temperatures—hazards that threaten health and can disrupt schooling. ^[1,16] These children need protection whether or not coercion is involved. Canada's response must address child labour as well as forced labour.

Honduras: Cultivating Futures

A rule against child labour cannot, by itself, give parents a safe place for their children during the harvest or address the wider pressures that put children at risk. In Honduras, the November-to-February coffee harvest overlaps with school holidays. Coffee pickers and producers depend on seasonal income, and when poverty, unstable earnings and gaps in childcare and education come together, children can be drawn into work. Cultivating Futures addresses one of those practical pressures while also strengthening prevention around families and communities.

What changes for children and parents

A network of 11 childcare and development centres give **children aged three through 12 a safe place and learning activities while adults work.** They supplement school rather than replace it. World Vision Honduras reported average annual participation of 554 children. The network covered five coffee-growing regions, with 45 teachers trained in childcare and child-labour prevention.

For parents, this provides an alternative to taking children into the fields; for children, time for learning and development. World Vision Honduras estimates that the centres reduced child labour **by more than half a million hours between 2017 and 2025.**

But the work does not stop at the centre doors. Cultivating Futures has directly reached 5,877 people with information about the harms of child labour, while 11 local prevention committees help communities identify and respond to risks.

Business and local government have a role

Started in 2017, Cultivating Futures brings together **World Vision Honduras, the Honduran Coffee Exporters Association (ADECAFEH), JDE Peet's** (the world's largest coffee company) **and local partners.** It reflects a basic reality: child labour is too complex for families to solve alone. Businesses, communities and public authorities all influence the conditions in which children and their parents live and work.

Five local governments now allocate funding for care centres and prevention. World Vision's engagement with the Ministry of Labour and the coffee sector also contributed to a **national compliance seal recognizing companies taking action to prevent child labour.** The next phase aims for **24 childcare and development centres across seven regions by 2030.**

World Vision Honduras's wider child-labour work reinforces this approach. It has strengthened local prevention committees, labour inspection, public policy and government systems. The lesson is not that any one intervention solves child labour, but that families, businesses, communities and authorities need to move together.



540,921 fewer hours
of child labour



Supported **554**
children annually
(average)



5,877 children and
adults reached

What this means for Canada

Canada's **\$176 million coffee connection to Honduras** makes those conditions relevant here. Agricultural supply chains can involve seasonal and low-paid work, smallholder production, informal employment and vulnerable workers; poverty and weak social protection can increase the pressure on families to rely on children's work.

That means the response must be broader too: **childcare and education, stronger family livelihoods, informed workers and communities, responsible business practices, capable public institutions and sustained financing.** Cultivating Futures illustrates one part of the kind of locally grounded approach that World Vision's proposed Trusted Supply Chains Strategy could support.

Canada should help expand these approaches through trade and development partnerships, with businesses contributing and results checked over time. Enforcement remains essential. But stopping a shipment cannot, by itself, provide care, strengthen a family's income, improve labour practices or keep a child out of hazardous work.

WORLD VISION'S CONTRIBUTION

Connect trade data to what children, workers and families need. World Vision brings experience working with communities, businesses and public authorities to make protection work in practice—and uses that experience to shape its policy recommendations.



Adolescents explore alternatives to child labour through the Cultivating Futures project in Honduras.



Children's artwork portrays life in coffee-growing communities.

Make responsible trade part of Canada's economic reset

Canada is actively expanding its trade relationships and seeking to **double non-U.S. exports over the next decade**. That agenda is largely about exports; this report examines imports. Both are part of the same choice: how Canada builds reliable trading relationships while respecting the people whose work makes trade possible. U.S. tariff pressure over forced-labour practices adds urgency to that task. ^[6,10]

The federal government has an opportunity to build a world-class coherent responsible trade framework. The **Supply Chains Act has required annual reporting from covered businesses and government institutions since 2024**. Bill C-35, introduced in June 2026, proposes stronger enforcement of the forced-labour import prohibition. July–August 2026 consultations also explored potential due diligence and civil liability measures. These are important steps to build on. ^[7,8,9]

The federal government is considering all the right tools. World Vision encourages Canada to bring them together with prevention, **rather than treat legislation as the finish line**. We identify five opportunities to build a world-class responsible trade agenda: clear expectations for business, credible enforcement and better outcomes for children and workers.

1. Give Canada one responsible supply chains strategy

Publish a **Trusted Supply Chains Strategy** linking trade, customs, labour, development assistance, public purchasing and export support. Name a lead minister, assign departmental responsibilities and set shared outcomes. Businesses should be able to reuse reliable sourcing and risk information instead of meeting disconnected demands. Keep the different legal tests for company conduct and border decisions clear.

2. Make import enforcement credible and fair

Publish a **Trusted Supply Chains Strategy** linking trade, customs, labour, development assistance, public purchasing and export support. Name a lead minister, assign departmental responsibilities and set shared outcomes. Businesses should be able to reuse reliable sourcing and risk information instead of meeting disconnected demands. Keep the different legal tests for company conduct and border decisions clear.

3. Require action, not just disclosure

Modernize the Supply Chains Act and introduce targeted due diligence on **child labour and forced labour**: identify risks, take reasonable steps to prevent and address harm, and show what changed. Give smaller covered businesses practical guidance. Clear duties and consistent enforcement should support companies that invest in better practice, rather than leaving them competing against those that ignore the risks.

4. Give implementation a clear home

Create a **Responsible Supply Chains Commissioner**, or equivalent authority, to provide guidance, maintain a useful reporting registry, analyze risk and coordinate compliance. Give it powers to inspect compliance, order corrective action and impose proportionate penalties. Businesses need a clear source of guidance; Parliament needs an accountable view of whether the system is working.

5. Make prevention a standing trade and development commitment

Establish a recurring **Trusted Supply Chain Partnerships funding stream**. Start where significant Canadian imports, serious risk and credible local partners overlap. This report helps identify where to look; partnerships should then be selected using local evidence and consultation, not import value alone.

Invest before harm occurs: in labour inspection, responsible recruitment, worker organizations and safe complaints channels; and in education, childcare, child protection, family livelihoods and social protection. **Help smallholder farmers, cooperatives and other local producers** build viable, resilient businesses through affordable finance, risk-sharing tools, traceability and improved practices.

Coffee in Honduras illustrates the logic. Due diligence can identify a risk during the harvest. A partnership can help provide the care and learning that families need. Follow-up can test whether children are safer and harmful work has fallen. **Prevention is not an alternative to business accountability. It helps turn that accountability into change for children.**

Establish a delivery timetable

Within 12 months: publish the strategy and a public implementation plan, name ministerial leads, align guidance and evidence requirements, design the implementation authority and select the first country-and-sector partnerships. Set out the resources and responsibilities needed for delivery.

Over years one to three: phase in improved reporting and targeted due diligence, put the enforcement and implementation arrangements into operation, and begin two or three prevention partnerships. Preparation for those partnerships should not wait until every legislative step is complete.

Judge success by what changes for people

For children, track harmful work, school participation and safety. For workers, track recruitment practices, wages, access to complaints and remedy. For businesses, assess clearer expectations, better traceability and less duplication. Publish what improves, what does not and why, with workers and communities helping define and assess progress.

MORE THAN GOODS CROSSING A BORDER

A trusted supply chain must be safer for the people in it, not just easier for a company to document. Strong enforcement, responsible purchasing and investment in prevention are parts of the same job.

Action for business and the public

For businesses: do due diligence, then act on what you find

Due diligence means identifying risks, preventing and addressing harm, and reporting on the results. Know where goods and key inputs come from. Listen to workers through safe channels, examine recruitment and purchasing practices, and work with suppliers to improve conditions.

Finding child labour or forced labour can be evidence that due diligence is doing its job, not a reason for a knee-jerk withdrawal. What matters is what happens next: protect people, address the harm and check that conditions improve. Work with suppliers and affected workers to address the situation. A child leaving hazardous work needs education and family support; workers need remedy. Due diligence does not excuse abuse or override import prohibitions.

For Canadians: everyday choices can support change

The things we buy connect us to the people who make them. Most of us want those people to work safely and children to have the chance to learn and grow. We do not need to know every supply chain to ask better questions and support practical change. Coffee is one place to start.

Check the origin on the package and ask your coffee brand: **Who grew and harvested this coffee? Under what conditions? What are you doing to prevent child labour and forced labour, and what happens when a problem is found?**

Look for answers about sourcing, identified risks, action with suppliers and support for children and workers. Certifications and audits can help, but are not guarantees. A company's supply chains report is another place to look. ^[9]

SUPPORT CHILDREN'S WELL BEING

Reducing children's vulnerability to harmful work requires sustained investment in education, well-being and stronger families and communities. Child sponsorship is one way to support this long-term work, alongside asking businesses and governments to do their part.



Scan or [click here to learn](#) about child sponsorship

Keep the focus on shared responsibility

Canadians should not have to investigate every farm or factory before buying something. Public action matters, but it cannot replace business responsibility or government leadership. Ask for better information, support prevention and call for progress measured in safer childhoods and better working conditions.

PROGRAM IMPACT

World Vision works across supply chains - with children, families, workers, businesses and government - to prevent child labour and exploitation and strengthen the systems that protect people.



3,000

Migrant workers
direct assisted
(Thailand)



86%

Reduction in
hazardous child
labour (Philippines)



92%

Businesses
confident in
prevention tools
(Mexico)



Mexico | Harvesting Labour Rights | 2022-26

Through the Government of Canada-funded **Harvesting Labour Rights** project, World Vision worked with agricultural workers, exporters and government in Sinaloa and Jalisco to prevent child and forced labour in **tomato, cucumber and other produce supply chains** — including companies supplying Canadian markets. The project strengthened worker rights, business due diligence and labour inspection — with 92% of participating private-sector respondents reporting confidence in prevention tools.



Philippines | ABK3 LEAP | 2011-16

Across 11 **sugarcane**-producing provinces, World Vision combined education, family livelihoods, child-labour monitoring and industry action to move children out of hazardous work. **Hazardous child labour fell 86% among 54,479 participating children.**



Thailand | CTIP & CREST | 2017-26

World Vision worked with migrant workers, employers and authorities to reduce exploitation in high-risk sectors, including **garments and agriculture**. The programmes strengthened safe migration, labour rights, grievance mechanisms and access to protection and remedy.

Methodology

World Vision Canada matched documented child-labour or forced-labour risks to Canadian import data. The estimate covers the value of goods from the listed countries, not the amount proven to have been produced through exploitation.

Sources and scope

The U.S. Department of Labor's **2024 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor** identifies 204 goods across 82 countries and areas. Some entries concern risks in a product's inputs. Import values come from Canada's Trade Data Online, by country of origin, accessed on Aug. 25, 2026. The comparison uses complete calendar years and the same risk list. ^[1,2]

Matching goods and avoiding double counting

Goods were matched to six-digit Harmonized System customs codes, the international classification for traded products, using U.S. Department of Labor tools and additional review. Matches were rated high, medium or low confidence according to how closely the product description fitted the code - not how likely exploitation was. An import category was included if at least one applicable match for that country had high or medium confidence; categories with only low-confidence matches were excluded. ^[3]

Each country-and-customs-code combination was counted once per year in the national total. Clothing, cotton clothing, textiles and cotton textiles were also combined for presentation, counting overlaps only once within that group. Original risk classifications were retained. The national share compares this total with all Canadian merchandise import value.

Comparing years

Comparisons begin in 2022, when customs classifications changed. Growth is calculated from unrounded values as $(2025 \text{ value} / 2022 \text{ value} - 1) \times 100$. Values are in current Canadian dollars: price changes, exchange rates and quantities affect them. An increase does not establish an increase in exploitation. Updated risk coverage and corrections to earlier calculations also mean these totals should not be compared directly with previous reports' headlines.

What the estimate cannot show

Trade records do not identify which shipments or producers involved exploitation, so the estimate includes the full value of matched categories. Broad codes may include goods outside a specific risk description; missing evidence and processing through other countries can leave risks uncounted. This is not a complete measure of all risks, and absence from the list is not proof that a product is risk-free. ^[1]

AI disclosure

Produced with the assistance of AI and reviewed by World Vision Canada staff.

AI assisted with data analysis, drafting and document preparation. Selected figures were checked against trade data and cited program sources.

References

Import findings are World Vision calculations; market context and external evidence are cited separately. Trade data accessed Aug. 25, 2026.

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[5] ILO, Walk Free and International Organization for Migration, "[Global Estimates of Modern Slavery](#)," 2022. Forced-labour estimates refer to 2021; populations may overlap with child-labour estimates.

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[10] Global Affairs Canada, "[Statement on U.S. Section 301 tariffs](#)," July 23, 2026. Trade-policy context only.

[11] International Labour Organization, "[What is child labour?](#)" and "[What is forced labour?](#)" Definitions checked Sept. 15, 2026.

[12] World Gold Council, "[Gold Demand Trends: Q4 and Full Year 2025](#)," Jan. 29, 2026. Annual average benchmark price in U.S. dollars; investment and jewellery demand.

[13] John Baffes and Ece Temaj, "[Cocoa and coffee prices rebound on renewed supply concerns](#)," World Bank, Jan. 7, 2025. 2023–2024 crop estimate and weather context; not its forecasts.

[14] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "[Adverse climatic conditions drive coffee prices to highest level in years](#)," March 14, 2025. World prices rose 38.8 per cent in 2024.

[15] Statistics Canada, "[It's costing you a latte more for that cup of coffee lately, and here's why](#)," Sept. 18, 2025. All-origin coffee context, not the flagged basket.

[16] U.S. Department of Labor, "[Final evaluation: Addressing Child Labor in the Honduran Coffee Supply Chain](#)," 2022, page 11. ILO project; used for sector hazards, not Cultivating Futures results.



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For more information, please contact media_relations@worldvision.ca

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World Vision is a Christian humanitarian aid, development, and advocacy organisation, working to end extreme poverty and injustice – one child, one family, one community at a time. As a global collective, we protect and provide for children, refusing to accept poverty and injustice as the end of the story.

