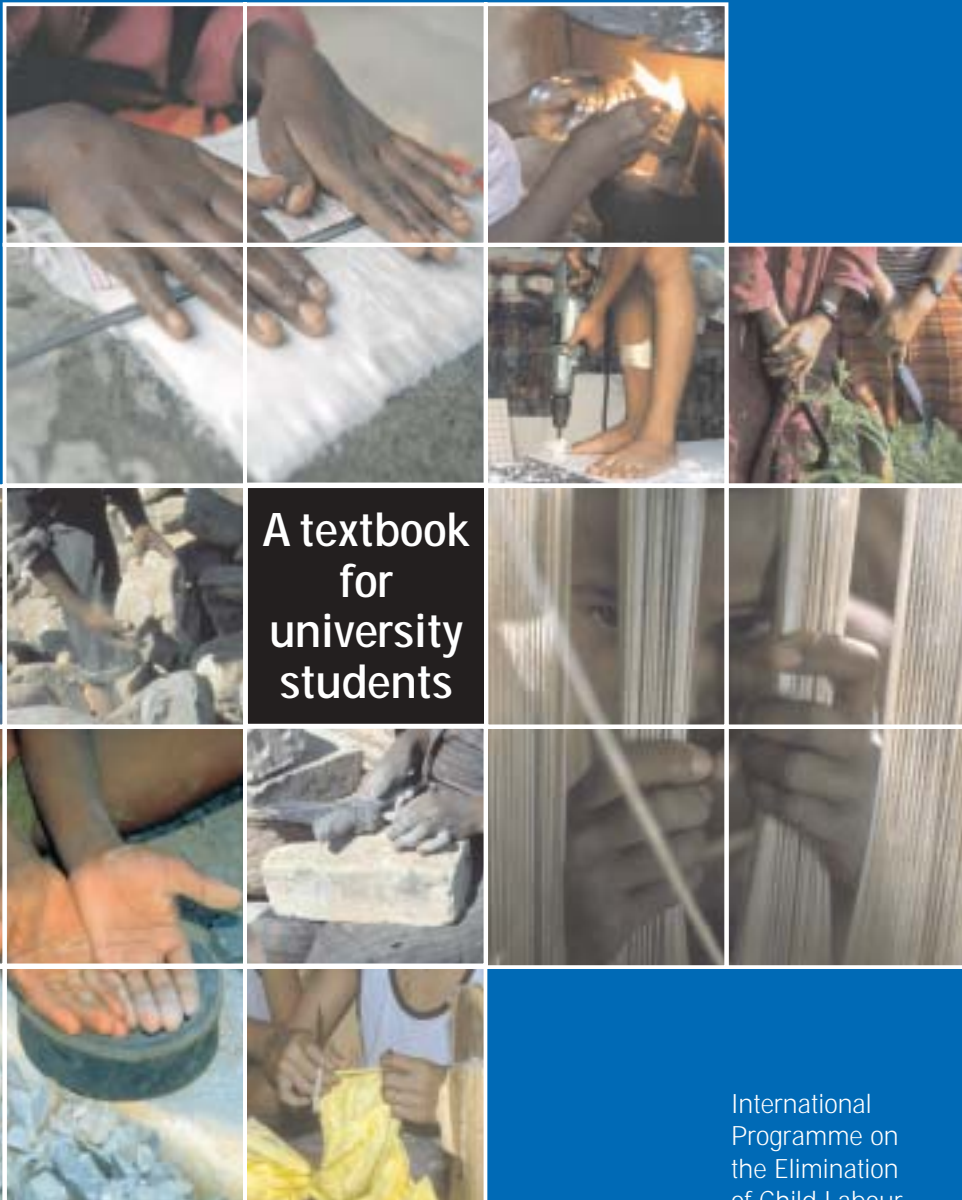




International
Labour
Office
Geneva

Child Labour



A textbook
for
university
students

International
Programme on
the Elimination
of Child Labour

Child Labour

A textbook for university students

International Labour Office

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Child Labour: A textbook for university students

First published 2004

ISBN printed version: 92-2-115548-X

ISBN web pdf version: 92-2-115549-8

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Funding for this ILO publication was provided by the United States Department of Labor. This publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government.

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The project was coordinated by Peter Matz and Frank Hagemann. Editorial assistance was provided by Louise Carleton-Gertsch. Layout and printing were done by Valeria Morra at the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin.

Special thanks go to Salvador R. Caluyo, Jr. (Aura College, Philippines), Adele Jones (University of the West Indies, Trinidad & Tobago), Michele Sogren (University of the West Indies), Natalia A. Vasilieva (St. Petersburg State University, Russia), and their students for pilot-testing this volume in April 2003.

Child Labour

A textbook for university students

International Labour Office

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Introduction

I want to...

*I want to
cry out to the world
the rage of
chained children.*

*I want to
cry out to the world
the pain of
abused girls.*

*I want to
cry out to the world
the unutterable sadness of
abandoned babes.*

*I want to
cry out to the world
the fear of
maltreated kids.*

*I want to
cry out all this to the world.
But who will cry out with me?*

Poem by Michele Bedulli, age 13
"Children's Solidarity Concert"



Photo ILO/A. Kemka

1. Why learn about child labour?

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years.

Today many people and organizations are concerned about child labour. Various research projects study child labour, and numerous books and studies have been published on the subject. The concerns partly stem from the kinds of work children do, some of which cause irreversible physical or psychological damage or even threaten their lives, and partly from the overwhelming number of children who work. This textbook is meant to serve students in any region or country of the world who want to understand an important and often overlooked aspect of the social and economic reality that surrounds us all.

The number of children working in the world today is higher than most people think, although it is difficult to obtain anything more than an educated global estimate. This is firstly because many kinds of child labour are underreported, and secondly because many countries have no desire or incentive to publicize how many of their young people work. Nevertheless, statistical techniques allow us to estimate that 211 million children aged 5 to 14 and an additional 141 million children aged 15 to 17 are “economically active”, i.e. are involved in some form of work. These numbers bring a number of key questions to mind: Why do children work? What forces them to do work? Why does society permit it?

Most people want to study child labour because they want to improve children’s conditions. They do this by asking a lot of questions about why children work, about school and education and how it relates to work, about whether children have to work, about who sends them to work, about the nature and conditions of their work, about who benefits from their work, about their health status, and even about whether work for children might be a good thing. We will discuss some of these questions in this book. Some are self-evident, but others that might appear clear-cut at first turn out to be rather complex.

2. Where does child labour occur?

In this textbook, we will try to steer clear of the trap of cultural and geographical “misrepresentation”. That is to say, we do not want to look at child labour as principally a developing country phenomenon associated with a particular (backward) stage of economic and social development – a phenomenon that is thought to disappear of its own accord when the society develops. The issue is a lot more complex, as will be shown. Child labour is not merely a problem of developing countries, as is often assumed. The following table demonstrates that children can be found working in all major regions of the world.

Table A shows that the Asian-Pacific region harbours the largest number of child workers in the 5-14 age category, 127.3 million in total. It is followed by Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America & the Caribbean with 48 million and 17.4 million, respectively. Developed economies and transition economies have the lowest absolute numbers of child workers. Seen in relative terms, Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest proportion of working children. The estimates show that almost one child in three below the age of 15 is economically active in the region. The child work ratios in other major world regions are all below 20 per cent. In Asia-Pacific and Latin America & the Caribbean the incidence is 19 and 16 per cent, respectively. In the Middle East and North Africa, it is 15 per cent.

The term “developing country” is a blurry and controversial one. Although characteristics such as low income per capita, dependent economies devoted to producing primary products, rural social structures and high population growth have been traditionally attributed to define developing countries, there is no agreement on what nations belong to this category. In this textbook, the term is used to encompass the majority of countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Table 0.1: Regional estimates of economically active children ages 5-14 in 2000

Region	Number of children (in millions)	Work ratio (%)
Developed economies	2.5	2
Transition economies	2.4	4
Asia and the Pacific	127.3	19
Latin America & Caribbean	17.4	16
Sub-Saharan Africa	48.0	29
Middle East & North Africa	13.4	15
Total	211	18

(Source: ILO, 2002)

3. How to use this textbook

The textbook is divided into three parts. Part I (Chapters 1 and 2) portrays different forms of child labour, including the worst forms. Part II (Chapters 3 to 5) looks at the possible causes of child labour and analyses the factors that correlate with the phenomenon. Part III (Chapters 6 to 9) presents the different actors in the global fight against child labour and discusses the actions these groups and individuals, including yourself, can undertake. Each chapter begins with an introduction to the chapter topic, and goes on to present the issue, leading to a conclusion. Boxes are interspersed within the text, in order to illustrate the material covered. Questions for discussion and suggestions for further reading are intended to facilitate study in a classroom setting. At the end of each chapter, coloured pages mark optional reading that can be useful for focusing in depth on a certain part of the material presented in the chapter.

At the end of the textbook, a bibliography lists all the sources used for and cited in this textbook. If you want to learn more about child labour after reading this book, you should refer to the list of resources and contact information. Some of the concepts introduced in this textbook may need some clarification, as they form the basis for the understanding of any of the chapters. For this purpose, a glossary has been included. Moreover, an index helps the reader to find recurrent subjects and phrases throughout the textbook.



QUESTIONS

- *To what extent are child labour issues addressed by your national and local media?*
- *While you are reading the textbook, collect any articles, news excerpts and reports you can find and consider the following:*
 - *Do they cover aspects of child labour in your country, other countries, or both?*
 - *On what particular points do they focus, and why do you think they do so?*
 - *If the media does not cover any issues (or only a few), what do you think the reasons might be for this?*
- *To what extent have child labour issues in your country ever been dealt with by the international media?*

Child Labour • A textbook for university students

PART I: THE PROBLEM

Chapter 1

What is Child Labour?



Photo ILO/G. Palazzo, E. Gianotti, J. Maillard



Before reading the chapter write down what work you think children are engaged in around the world.

The photos above will give you a few ideas to begin with.

Compare your notes with those of the other students.

Once you have read the chapter, discuss whether anything in it came as a surprise to you, and why.



1. Introduction

Considerable differences exist between the many kinds of work children do. Some are difficult and demanding, others are more hazardous and even morally reprehensible. Children carry out a very wide range of tasks and activities when they work, and the objective of this chapter is to provide an overview of some of them. Chapter 2 details the types of child labour now referred to collectively as the “worst forms”.

Defining child labour

Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour that is to be targeted for elimination. Children’s or adolescents’ participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling, is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes activities such as helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. These kinds of activities contribute to children’s development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life.

The term “child labour” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that:

- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and
- interferes with their schooling:
 - by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;
 - by obliging them to leave school prematurely; or
 - by requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

In its most extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age.

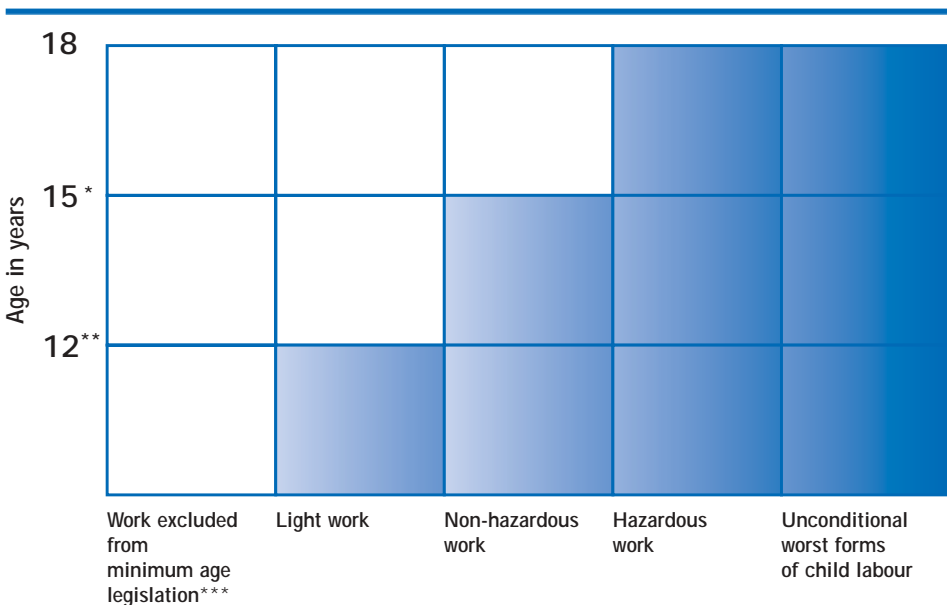
Whether or not particular forms of “work” can be called “child labour” depends on the child’s age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries. The answer varies from country to country, as well as among sectors within countries.

Adapted from: Inter-parliamentary Union/
International Labour Office, 2002

The international standards on child labour (e.g. ILO Conventions) which will be discussed in this textbook provide a normative system which will help us to distinguish between child labour which must be targeted for elimination and acceptable activities and work for children. As explained in the box, there are plenty of activities that are acceptable for children. ILO Conventions are reflecting this, and only aim at the reduction and eventual elimination of child labour. Figure 1.1 is a chart first presented in the ILO's 2002 Global Report entitled "A Future without Child Labour". It provides an overview of the types of work that constitute child labour and against which action should be taken. The white squares represent work that is acceptable for children of a specific age group.

The terms "hazardous work" and "unconditional worst forms of child labour" will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Figure 1.1: Basic distinctions in ILO child labour standards



Shaded area = child labour for abolition

* The minimum age for admission to employment or work is determined by national legislation and can be set at 14, 15 or 16 years.

** The minimum age at which light work is permissible can be set at 12 or 13 years.

*** For example, household chores, work in family undertakings and work undertaken as part of education.

2. Attitudes towards child labour

There is a large group of critics that disapproves of child labour for a range of reasons, including the following:

- allowing children to work means stealing their childhood from them;
- child labourers are subject to economic exploitation because they are paid at the lowest rates, and sometimes not at all;
- children often work under the worst conditions, which can cause physical deformations and long-term health care problems;
- some child work can perpetuate poverty because child labourers, deprived of education or healthy physical development, are likely to become adults with low earnings prospects;
- children often replace adult labour; employers prefer them because they are cheap and docile;
- the widespread use of child labour may result in lower wages for all workers;
- countries that allow child labour are able to lower their labour costs; thus they attract investors and also benefit from “unfair trade” due to their low production costs.

(Adapted from Arat, 2002)



Photo ILO/F. Moleres

Other observers of child labour have differences in opinion depending upon the kinds of work that children do. Yet, most observers and researchers - and in a few cases even the whole international community - consider certain activities more harmful, hazardous and/or morally reprehensible for children than others. In many cases, however, the line between “acceptable” and “unacceptable” work for children is difficult to draw. This occurs quite frequently, especially in rural agricultural situations, as certain kinds of work actually form part of socio-cultural traditions.

“ Children begin to ‘help’ their parents with both routine household chores and ‘productive’ activities. This is considered part of the process of learning to work and becoming familiar with ‘rules’ for harmonious family and social relations [...]. Perceptions of when childhood ends vary according to social class and culture [...]. Particularly in rural areas, where boys and girls are simply considered ‘mini-adults’, pre-modern notions of infancy and childhood are accentuated [and] children are required to perform certain chores as natural parts of their roles, even at the expense of formal schooling.

Parents often defend child work as being instructive. They say it teaches children to be responsible, to appreciate the value of things and the effort required to obtain them. Some believe it enables the young to learn an occupation or trade with which to support themselves as adults [...].

The underlying concept seems to be that all family members are economic providers and that work prepares children for assuming adult roles. In situations where the family acts as an economic unit, the work of children is widely accepted and may even be essential, particularly work by older children. But parents also justify child work, saying that it contributes to children’s responsibility, autonomy and strength to support difficulties and sacrifices. Very little value, however, is attached to play and leisure, which are seen by most parents in low-income families as a waste of time [...]. Perceptions of schooling are ambiguous. Parents appreciate the possibility for children to learn how to read and write. Peasants and the rural poor in general often think education is irrelevant; when school and work are in conflict, these parents tend to value work more, since it brings immediate benefits for the subsistence of the family. Many parents fear school will teach their children to rebel against the family’s traditions and norms. Others fear that the children will learn bad habits away from home. ”

(Salazar and
Glasinovich, 1998)



Photo ILO/F. Moleres

In the following quote, the author S. L. Bachman compares “a list of commonly accepted ideas about child labour,” which can sometimes be quite negative, to results that have emerged from new studies of child development. Based on these studies she makes a strong distinction between work that has a positive influence and work that has bad or detrimental effects on the child.

“ On the first list are the ideas that all work for children is bad; that all work under a certain age is bad [and that] all wage employment for children is wrong; work for unrelated adults is more likely to be harmful than is work for relatives; work at night, and in some industries, occupations and sectors is by definition harmful. Other occupations believed to be harmful by definition include: work performed for a certain number of hours; work that threatens school participation and performance; and work for girls, who are culturally and physically assumed to be at greater risk than are boys.

But recent studies on child development suggest that children’s ability to work, and benefit or suffer from it, varies significantly from child to child. Work that is ‘endorsed culturally’ is less harmful than work that is condemned. Work that is not ‘an expression of children’s agency’ and does not allow children to learn on the job is relatively more harmful. And, work that ‘undermines family integration and solidarity is more likely to be harmful, while work in isolated, hidden places is also more likely to be detrimental.’ These new studies also show that work has many effects, some good and some bad, not all of which can be isolated from each other. In addition, these studies show that poor schooling can actually be detrimental to a child’s development, and that a limited amount of work may actually be beneficial for children, in at least some societies. Finally, if a child feels he or she is learning from work, the work itself is likely to be less detrimental and possibly beneficial to the individual child. ”

(Bachman, 2000)

3. At what age should a child be allowed to work?

People hold very different ideas about what children should and should not be permitted to do, and at what age they should be allowed to do certain kinds of work - or even to work at all. Different countries have different minimum ages in their national legislation. ILO Convention No. 138, adopted in 1973, sets 15 as the minimum age for work in developed countries, but a child can become an apprentice at a younger age (14 years) or undergo vocational training. More than 130 countries have ratified this convention. Yet the report of an ILO meeting held in 1996 indicated that many children are still put to work as young as five or six years old.

The following table summarizes the minimum ages for work as stipulated in Convention No. 138.

Table 1.1: Minimum ages according to the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)

General minimum age	
Light work	Hazardous work
<i>In general</i>	
■ Not less than age of completion of compulsory schooling, and in any case not less than 15 years	
13 years	18 years (16 years under certain strict conditions)
<i>Developing countries</i>	
■ Not less than 14 years for an initial period	
12 years	18 years (16 years under certain strict conditions)

In some circumstances it is not easy to determine a child's age. The child may not know his or her exact age, as a birth certificate may never have been issued or may have been lost. A child who has been malnourished tends to be small and underweight, and thus older in years than in appearance; and so on.

4. Types of work that children do

Because children doing particular kinds of work often have similar lifestyles and problems, child labour is often divided into categories such as children working in various types of agriculture, in urban environments, in manufacturing, in fishing, construction, domestic service, and so on. In this section we will give a few examples of the kinds of activities children do, their working conditions and lifestyles, and their health and safety status. Some of the activities mentioned will be described in more detail in Chapter 2 because they are considered “worst forms” - they are especially harmful, morally reprehensible, or they violate the child’s freedom and human rights.

Here is a description of what some of the working children do in Brazil:

“ According to the Instituto de Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, there are approximately 7.5 million children between the ages of 10 and 17 who work in Brazil. Of these, 2.5 million are 10-13 years of age. Children work in shoe factories and in industrial ‘homework’ with their families in Franca and São Paulo; cut cane in the interior of Pernambuco; package salt in Ceara; work the tobacco fields in Rio Grande do Sul and in the sugar mills in Rio de Janeiro; pick oranges in São Paulo and cotton and sisal in Bahia. They break rocks in Bahia and take care of the charcoal ovens in Mato Grosso. The *crianças do burro* (clay children) work in the brick furnaces in Piauí and *sagueiros* work the market in Manaus selling vegetables. Medical assistance, work contracts, or security equipment are absent. ”

(Kenny, 1999)

See Chapter 6
on “Researching
Child Labour”

In countries in South and Southeast Asia, such as India and Thailand, the variety of child labour is even broader. Children do all the kinds of work mentioned above, and more. It is important to remember that throughout the world, even when children are not listed as “working” in any household-based research, they might nonetheless often be involved in work. They help to take care of the household by cooking and cleaning, they take care of the family’s livestock and watch over their younger siblings, and assume many other tasks. Lisa Dodson, an American author, devoted a whole book to the very essential work of children as unpaid child minders and caretakers in households in the USA - an invisible labour force without whose help the adults would not be able to go out to work in wage-earning jobs. The same takes place in households in many other countries (Dodson, 1999).

Work in the informal sector

The “informal sector” is the part of the economy that includes the income-generating activities carried out by the majority of the urban poor. Informal sector is a “catch-all” term for activities ranging from those generating the least income (e.g. collecting garbage and scavenging, shining shoes) to more productive enterprises with several employees (e.g. small-scale fishing, mining, quarrying, agricultural and commercial activities). In the urban economies of developing countries, the “formal sector” absorbs relatively few people. Most people have to work in informal sector activities, which are more precarious and produce less income.

Working children everywhere, especially those in the developing world, tend to be concentrated in the informal sector of the economy. Their work is not “official” - there is no government employment agency or tax authority that knows the children are working because they are not officially employed. The people they work for are in many cases unregistered as employers. For some work, the children receive no payment, only some food and a place to sleep. Children in informal sector work have no job security, receive no payment if they are injured or become ill, and can seek no protection if they are maltreated by their employer. And many of these children are working even though their country’s child labour laws prohibit them from doing so.

Table 1.2: Contrasting characteristics of the urban informal and formal sectors

Informal Sector	Formal Sector
■ Easy entry	■ Restricted entry
■ High degree of resourcefulness	■ Frequent reliance on external resources
■ Family ownership of enterprises	■ Corporate ownership (usually foreign)
■ Small scale operation	■ Large scale (possible excessive/toxic waste)
■ Skills acquired outside formal school system	■ Formally acquired skills, often dependence on expatriates

(ILO, 1972)

Until recently, many researchers, especially in the developed countries, who studied and wrote about child labour tended to refer mainly to child labour in the formal or “modern” part of the economy, where there are “real” jobs and recognized employers. One reason for this has been that it is in the formal part of many weaker economies that goods that are usually exported are produced, and activists against child labour in the rich countries focus mainly on goods coming into their own countries that may have been made by children. So when the activists look at the sources of those goods, they usually look at the export sector of the countries concerned.

But in most countries of the developing world, this sector of the economy is not the largest part as most working children are concentrated in the informal sector. Moreover, as S. L. Bachman points out, “in most countries, laws limit the employment of children in the formal sector, although these laws are not often vigorously enforced. Other factors minimizing the number of children working in formal workplaces include the presence of adult trade unions and the relatively high education, skill and physical strength demanded by most formal-sector employers.” The author adds that “estimates of child labourers in export-related jobs hover around 5 percent of the total child labour population” and that “one needs a better understanding of the economics surrounding the informal economy” (Bachman 2000).

See for example the International Labour Conference debate on decent work and the informal economy (International Labour Conference 2002).

International organizations and others concerned with child labour have now turned their attention to the informal economy. This term includes agriculture, domestic service, a host of informal manufacturing activities, mining, street vending, and a large number of other occupations, some of which will be described below.

Children working in urban environments

Child labour occurs in nearly all large cities and towns in the developing world, and also in many in the industrialized world. One major factor is the greater availability of children who need to work, because of the swelling of urban populations as people migrate to the towns and cities from the rural areas. The result is frequently urban poverty, and many of these working children live in unhealthy slum areas and work in poor surroundings.

This large category includes children working as domestics inside the homes of others; children working in restaurants, hotels and shops; children working in small workshops of many kinds; children working with their families in home work, or - if they are girls - as child minders for younger siblings (which is necessary so that their parents can engage in income-producing work either at home or outside the home).

Child domestic service in Asia

“Child domestic service has been a widespread practice in Asia and may have even worsened in recent years with growing income inequalities and rural poverty. Children in domestic service, consisting largely of young girls, perform a wide variety of tasks traditionally done by women in the household, such as looking after children, preparing food, house cleaning, washing and ironing, and caring for the sick. These young women make an important economic contribution as they free their parents or employers, especially women, to pursue more remunerative employment in the national workforce. Ironically, the value of their contribution remains unrecognized and overlooked. In fact, even though children in domestic service are likely to be among the most vulnerable and exploited of all, they are also the most difficult to protect. While their economic participation is largely unrecognized, young girls are increasingly subjected to work-related hazards and exploitation. Sexual advances and physical and verbal abuse instigated either by employers and co-workers are common. As children, they are being deprived of their right to childhood, and opportunities for self-development and education.”

Source: Thijs, 1997:
*Child labour: Trends
and challenges in Asia*

Children working outdoors are often vendors of a vast assortment of small goods. Others perform services such as shining shoes. Some cater to tourist needs, or work in the markets as porters and carriers. Some children earn money by combing through garbage dumps for saleable objects, as do many adults, or they work in construction or brick making. Many of these children live at home with their families but some live on the streets with little or no family contact. Unless they are on their own, children do not usually keep their earnings for themselves, and the money they bring home can be essential to their family's survival.

Here is a description of the kinds of work performed by children in the popular tourist town of Olinda in northeast Brazil:

“ Children’s occupations parallel those of the adults in the informal sector. Both can be seen in the lowest-paid and least-stable jobs. ‘Careers’ for children in the informal market begin by running errands for neighbors, such as getting water from the local tap or going to the store. Payment is normally ‘in kind’ (food). Children then ‘age out’ of these occupations and move into street vending, selling flowers, candy, newspapers, cigarettes, food, and other household items, or offer services such as tourist guide, shoe polishing, car watching, car washing, luggage carrying. They work as fare collectors on the kombis, which are privately owned vans that are the alternative to public bus transportation and link outlying areas with the rest of the city. Children work in markets, bus depots, in front of hotels, restaurants, or tourist spots. They are generally self-employed or work for kin in shops as assistants (principally with mechanics or carpenters), with their families as *catadores do lixo* (scavengers), or at home. Some jobs are certainly more hazardous than others. Few gender-specific occupations exist, except as local tourist guides. Girls are also guides, but they tend to be marginalized in this male-dominated occupation. Few stable occupations are open to girls, even as domestic laborers, as adult women have difficulty securing those positions themselves. Occupations not conventionally seen as work, such as prostitution, thieving, begging, and drug sales also provide earnings for many families. Once children are over the age of about 9, they are expected to be economic contributors to the household, and by the time they reach 12 or 13, they should seek a ‘regular’ job, something more steady and lucrative than begging and scavenging. Negao, age 12, said, ‘By the time I was 8 or 9 years old, I had already left my house [to work], seeing the possibilities of things to buy, seeing the tourists, and wanting a watch and sneakers.’ The younger the children, the closer they work to home. Older children (over 8) will take buses to key commercial areas in the center of Recife (those under 12 ride for free). On a popular level, the children who wash and watch cars, shine shoes, or sell food on the beach are viewed as ‘productive workers,’ as opposed to delinquent and idle, by themselves, their parents, and the larger society, while they also service the needs of the middle class for inexpensive labor. These children rarely provoke the international compassion or outrage associated with Dickensian images of children labouring in factories or sugarcane fields. On the contrary, children engaged in these activities are seen as ‘developing future entrepreneurs’.”

(Kenny, 1999)

Children in agriculture

On a global scale, far more children work in rural than in urban areas, thus the activities most working children perform are in fields and on farms. This can include caring for animals and live-stock and doing many other tasks. Some of these children work with their families and live at home. Others go out to work for employers, such as rural land-owners, on a daily basis, and still others work for employers far from their families, sometimes under arrangements that are neither legal nor beneficial to the child. The child labour in agriculture that is forced, including bonded labour, will be discussed in Chapter 2; it is an arrangement from which the child cannot easily escape unless “rescued” by some outsider. Here we look at children’s rural labour in Central and South America.

“ Some carry out traditional activities related to their family’s precarious subsistence; others are involved in commercial plantations (coffee, fruit, flowers, sugar cane). In Guatemala 65 per cent of child workers are in agriculture, and even more of the indigenous children. In Ecuador and Peru, 48 and 40 per cent of child workers work in agriculture. In Brazil the percentage is 78 and in Colombia 82 per cent of working boys and 36 per cent of working girls. All of these children come from poor rural families. Such families tend to be larger, less educated, with less access to services and with worse education and health indicators than the non-poor. They live in areas that are often marginal for agriculture and have to supplement their incomes from other sources.

Children as young as five help their parents by tending small animals. As they grow older, they take on other tasks during planting and harvesting. At adolescence, their work becomes more differentiated according to gender. Boys perform tasks that require greater physical strength, while girls concentrate more on household work, which is highly time-consuming and often interferes with schooling. Recently, however, the numbers of rural girls involved exclusively in household work have declined markedly.

A significant transformation during the last 20-30 years has been the shift in the reasons for child work. Once an activity that was intended to impart skills and help children ‘grow up’, now child work has become primarily a way to earn additional income for the family. Children appear to have more job stability in rural areas than in cities, and more of them say their work is ‘permanent’.

(Salazar and
Glasinovich, 1998)

Below is a description of the working conditions of children in the cotton fields of Egypt.

“ Although the one million children in Egyptian cotton fields only work during school vacations, their situation is difficult. Employed by cotton-farming cooperatives starting at the age of seven and working as long as eleven hours per day, they routinely face beatings at the hands of foremen and are poorly protected against pesticides and intense heat. The country’s legal minimum age is twelve for seasonal agricultural work and the maximum workday allowed by law is six hours. The Egyptian government has a responsibility to ensure compliance with the 1996 Child Labour Law. A report by Human Rights Watch, ‘Underage and Unprotected: Child Labor in Egypt’s Cotton Fields,’ documents the children’s conditions. To control cotton leafworm infestations, their task is to inspect the cotton plants for leafworm eggs and manually remove the infected portions of the leaves. Young children are hired because they are thought to be the right height for inspecting the plants. Temperatures in the Nile Delta can reach 40 degrees C. (104 degrees Fahrenheit) but requests for water are granted at the discretion of the foremen. After the fields are sprayed with pesticides, the children resume work earlier than the recommended wait period. ”

(Parekh, 2001)

Children in manufacturing

Especially in the developing countries, many thousands of children work in manufacturing enterprises producing a range of goods - garments, toys, matches, brassware, soccer balls, etc. These production units can be large, but most are quite small and labour-intensive, meaning that most operations are done by hand rather than machines. The children usually work indoors under strict surveillance. Things can also be manufactured within households, with the whole family involved in the production of simple items, or even entire carpets, that have been contracted out to them on a piecework basis.

In the passage below the author Guy Thijs remarks upon structural changes in the use of child labour and what this has meant for the working conditions of the children. He writes that in Indonesia an ILO-sponsored study has shown that although the proportion of unpaid family child labour has declined, that of wage-earning children has increased:

“ Waged child labour in manufacturing and services is generally more rigid and harsh. Hours of work are longer and inflexible, such

that children are mostly out of school. The study also showed that over the years the proportion of children working fewer than 24 hours a week has gradually declined, while for children working more than 44 hours a week it has increased. Similar trends have been noticeable in Thailand. Enterprises in which children are employed are commonly very small, and operate as subcontractors for larger firms. Such subcontracting firms are often informal, with a limited life, and unregistered. The conditions under which both adults and children work are often very poor, and working hours of more than 12 hours a day are not unusual.

In South Asia, children can still be found working in intrinsically hazardous industries and occupations such as brassware and glass factories, tanneries, slate making, the production of matches, recycling of batteries, and so on, where conditions of work resemble those of medieval times. ”

(Thijs, 1997)

Here is an example of children hired to decorate bangles made of lac, a resin from trees, in small workshops in the back streets of Hyderabad, India:

“ Bangles are to be found in the bazaar, behind the Charminar, the 15th century landmark of the state capital, where there nestle many small shops. In the labyrinthine gulleys, families live in adjacent white-washed houses. Some have lived here ever since they left their homes in rural Andhra Pradesh decades ago and they still carry on their various craft traditions, including the making of bangles. Young girls still in their school uniforms sit on burlap mats, decorating the lac bangles with tiny glass beads. In their midst is a brazier. Hundreds of tiny, shining beads in many colours spill out across a griddle. Each child holds a pair of tweezers in her hands. She picks up one bead at a time and presses it firmly down onto the bangle with a swift motion of the thumb. The process takes up to three-quarters of an hour. Dozens of bangles can be made in an afternoon and are then taken to the shops.

The girls are between six and 16 years of age. Some of the older ones will soon get married. ‘Then they will have a trade they can pass on to their own daughters,’ says Zebunissa Begum, who runs a cottage industry out of her home. Only two of the girls working for her are her own daughters. The others are neighbourhood children who get paid half to one rupee for every bangle decorated. In the bazaar the bangles sell for Rs 40 (\$0.90) a dozen, Rs 75 for the more elaborate varieties. Zebunissa Begum has been in the business since she was six years old. She holds up her callused thumb, scorched from years of pressing hot beads into lac. ‘I was probably born with a blistered thumb. My mother

(Chatterjee, 1992)

made bangles, and her mother before her.' And the girls hold up their hands to show off their own hardened thumbs, a mark of the trade. 🗨️

The tanning industry and other operations associated with producing textiles, clothing and footwear are found in many countries, including Colombia, Bangladesh and Egypt. Often, working at home, children are employed to assemble finished garments or shoes under subcontracting arrangements. In India, children weave carpets in isolated or concealed loom sheds. In Pakistan, children endure similar conditions stitching leather footballs. If they work at home, they are outside the reach of labour inspectors and trade unions, and abuses are frequent even in countries where the larger manufacturers have now been made to follow laws and regulations and even cease hiring children altogether.

Examples of children working in small scale, informal sector manufacturing exists throughout the world, even in the developed world. In Los Angeles, Boston and other cities in the USA, children can sometimes be found (illegally and unmonitored by any government or trade union officials) working in sweatshops alongside their parents.

5. What do we know about child workers today?

See Chapter 6 on "Researching Child Labour"

We are still learning about situations in which children work and what this means. Research is constantly being carried out, in a variety of ways and from various perspectives, and our knowledge is increasing.

What have we learned so far about child labour in all the activities we have described above and so many others? Here is a very brief overview, which mainly concerns the developing world; we will consider developed countries in the next section.

- Payment for work activities is seldom guaranteed, and when payment is received it is often very little.
- Children experience varying health and safety conditions, working at home, in the informal sector, and in settings that often do not conform to the existing regulations and laws.



Photo ILO/J. Maillard

- Each activity where children may be found working has its own socio-cultural context and economic framework, making treatment of these issues more difficult.
- The relationship between child labour and poverty (i.e. the more poverty the more child labour, and vice versa) is complex.
- Working children face a variety of health problems and complications directly and indirectly related to their working conditions.
- Child labour adversely affects the education of many children.
- Other factors that increasingly contribute to child labour include large families with numerous children, the joint processes of economic development and modernization, increases in population movement (migration), and HIV/AIDS orphans.
- Differences often exist in the work girls and boys do, as well as in the types of problems they face.
- Many kinds of work, especially that done by girls, pave the way for sexual abuse.

All these issues will be dealt with in more detail in later chapters of the book.

6. Child labour in the developed world

In the industrialized countries, child labour is not a thing of the past; it still exists, although in lesser measure. For example, groups concerned with child labour estimate that more than 300,000 underage children are working illegally in the USA, more than half of them on commercial farms (Boston Globe, 17 May 2000). In Portugal, more than 35,000 children aged 6 to 14 are economically active, nearly 40 per cent of them working six or seven days a week (SIETI, 2001). In Italy, 145,000 children between the ages of 7 and 14 have some kind of work experience (ISTAT, 2002). Even though the figures from Portugal and Italy include 13- and 14-year-old children in permissible light work (see Table 1.1), they indicate that child labour in developed countries is an issue that cannot be ignored.

For most developed countries, there are major differences with the developing world. One concerns the employment of quite young children. In the developed countries this occurs infrequently - but exactly how infrequently is unknown, since keeping official track of younger children who are working is non-existent given the kinds of work they tend to do. Notwithstanding, children as young as six years old were found picking onions in the Rio Grande Valley (USA) in 2000 (Boston Globe, 17 May 2000).

Some of the work children do in developed countries is not so dissimilar to the “informal sector” work discussed above for the less developed countries. In fact, certain low-income “pockets” are very much present in the developed countries. For example, in many major cities in the USA, children can sometimes be found working in sweatshops alongside their parents. The footwear industry also continues to employ children in certain countries of southern Europe, mainly working at home, and clandestine workshops are proliferating on the edges of the major urban areas, which also sometimes employ children.

A major difference, though, is that in the developed countries children’s work is often part-time, and varies with their school hours and the economic cycle. Most young people manage to combine work with school, which is something so many developing country children do not or cannot do for various reasons. There is also another important difference. By and large, the conditions in which work takes place in the developed countries

are less harmful or hazardous, and protective legislation is often (but not always) better enforced.

Counting the children who work in the developed countries is not always easy because not all countries have collected accurate or comparable data. “It is likely that, whatever the published figures, more than half of all teenagers below the age of 18 are in the labour force in every industrialized country. In countries for which there is more detailed evidence, children commonly begin work by the time they are 15, although the type of work they do changes as they grow older” (Dorman, 2001).

Many articles have been written about the teen labour force in the USA. Interestingly, many of the young people who work are non-minority and not from the poorest income strata; often they are working to save for college or to pay for consumption goods. Unlike their counterparts in the developing countries, a number of them have the possibility of accumulating some discretionary income. In some jobs, they are able to rely on the US minimum wage laws, which assure some non-negligible income for the younger single person. Because of this, these teenagers are the much-contested targets of marketing companies and retailers. Their work settings are not always very “dignified”: many of them work for around 17 hours per week (and school dropouts much longer) in agricultural production, construction, as janitors and cleaners, or in private households (mainly girls).

These kinds of work might appear relatively harmless. Indeed, children in developed countries spend less time in a day or week doing them than those in the developing countries, who sometimes dedicate as many as 12-14 hours per day to similar tasks. A great deal of evidence has been accumulated in recent years about the hazards, health risks, and accident and mortality rates of young people doing many kinds of work. The work in which children are the least protected by law and the most at risk for accidents is agriculture. Tractor accidents, in particular, are often fatal and sometimes occur on the parents’ own farms, which are exempt from government safety regulations. Young agricultural workers also experience pesticide exposure, for which they have no training or protection. The Scandinavian countries have also identified agriculture as a health risk occupation. In general, the health of many rural youths is damaged by their labour. Farm work uses dangerous equipment, chemicals and exhausting work processes and should be as closely scrutinized as any other (see Dorman, 2001).

Another occupation in which some teenagers work in the USA, often alongside or as part of the disadvantaged migrant work force from Mexico and Central America, is the meat processing and packing industry. This work is especially arduous and dangerous, and the accident rates for both adults and teens are high. In the USA, child labour has been consistently regulated for 60 years.

“ While most people are probably aware that child labor laws exist, no data are available on either the awareness of the laws or the extent of knowledge about their provisions. Employers are held responsible for obeying child labor laws, but minors and parents are generally not responsible and therefore under no obligation to be aware of the laws [...]. A large number of survey respondents report employment that clearly conflicts with [such] laws, which may serve as an indication that many minors and parents are not aware of [them] [...]. The total number [age 17 and under] estimated to have been employed illegally at some point during 1996 is 290,200, of whom 285,300 worked in non-agricultural industries and 4,900 worked in agriculture. In an average week over two million hours of illegal work are estimated to be performed by these youth, totaling 113 million hours in one year. ”

(Kruse and Mahony,
1998)

These researchers find that at least in the 15-17 age range, most illegal workers are white males, especially in the Midwest and in non-metropolitan areas, and they work more hours per week than those working legally. “Illegally-employed youths are disproportionately likely to be in construction and manufacturing”, while a majority of teenagers legally employed work in wholesale and retail trade (ibid). We need to point out here, however, that the children working in agriculture receive less protection under US law than children working in non-agricultural settings.

In European countries, child work is an established feature. Unpaid work in the family, and certain types of paid work are commonplace for young people and approved of by society. While all European countries have legislation designed to ensure a basic education and protect a child from exploitative employment, in practice unacceptable exploitation of children is occurring in most - if not all - of these countries to some degree. Many of these categories of exploitation have remained fairly invisible. The following examples are illustrative and not considered inclusive. Much if not most of European child labour has not yet been documented.



Photo ILO/J. Maillard

- In Bulgaria, the plight of predominantly Roma children working in the streets of the major cities has been documented by human rights organisations and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Bulgarian street children work in begging, odd jobs, waste material collection, prostitution and theft. In Bulgaria, attention has been drawn to the abuse and torture of these children by the law enforcement authorities and by skin-head street gangs. The example illustrates that working street children and child labourers in general are highly vulnerable to abuse and crime precisely because they work in an unregulated or illegal sector.
- In Great Britain, a number of surveys have estimated that around 50 % of children aged 13-15 are engaged in some kind of part-time employment, most of them working illegally without formal registration, and thus without an assessment of whether their employment is exploitative. A 1985 survey showed that children were employed in a wide range of jobs in service provision sectors and that many children had more than one job. Child prostitution is a major problem and a common source of income for homeless children
- In Italy, there is a demand for child labour in small industrial workshops and in agriculture with no registration or regulation, where children work in unhealthy and unsafe conditions. Children are smuggled into the country from the former Yugoslavia to work as forced labourers in gangs, where they are trained and then sold to the crime rings in the large cities.

- In Romania, about 6% of children were found working more than six hours per day. Main types of work were domestic work, agriculture, begging, delivery work and loading/unloading goods. Street children were also employed in these professions in addition to prostitution.

The work of younger children has been documented in Great Britain. In the autumn of 1996, one factory was fined for hiring girls as young as ten years old for six-hour shifts, “at the end of which time they were forced to line up for their employer to decide whether they deserved to be paid £2.50 or receive a box of chocolates” (Labour Research, Feb. 1997). A trade union survey on school age labour “confirmed previous studies that illegal child employment is not only widespread but is simply not being tackled” (ibid.). Other researchers estimate that as many as seven out of ten children are likely to have been in some kind of paid employment outside the family by the time they reach the age of 16 (ibid.). Work is most often combined with schooling. One persistent finding is that children work before arriving at school in the morning or after 7 p.m. in the evening, both of which are not permitted.

7. Conclusion

It is clear that there are more children as a percentage of the total child population working in the developing countries than in the industrialized ones. They start work at a younger age, sometimes but not always within the family home. The variety of jobs they do is greater than in the developed countries, and less recognized by the authorities. They enjoy fewer legal or other protections, if any, and no training to help them deal with the health and other hazards of their work, and they are often helpless to counter poor treatment and exploitation by their employers (or by their families). When laws exist, they may not be implemented. All in all, children in developing countries work much harder than those in industrialized countries, for less reward and most often foregoing the benefits of schooling. Some even have to create their own jobs, which they do by working on the streets or scavenging for garbage.

The young workers in the developed countries are in a better position. Perhaps their biggest advantage is that many of them manage to combine work with schooling, and one reason for this is the heavy emphasis on school attendance by the local authorities. Another advantage, at least for those children working legally, is the existence of certain measures of protection. However, ignorance about the hazards and longterm health consequences of the work and the lack of training to confront them are still prevalent.

If we ask how many children working in the world are doing so in safe, healthy, legally acceptable environments, there is probably no one who can answer this question. We will see in Chapter 6 how difficult it is to collect statistics and what is involved. Also, answering such a question would involve a “judgment call”. What actually constitutes a safe, healthy, acceptable, legally approved environment? Although these terms might seem self-evident, they are culturally loaded. What is judged safe or an acceptable risk for parents of a working child in one society may not be so in another, and may actually be outlawed. The same goes for the whole idea of children working. It is considered acceptable in some societies or by some groups and individuals and unacceptable in others, or a distinction is made among kinds of work. Ideas relating to children and work are also quite complex. If we then add to this the family’s economic circumstances and the nature of the external environment, plus other factors that influence whether children work and what they do, the result is of a complicated reality that does not lend itself to easy answers.









If we now ask the opposite question, i.e. how many children working in the world are carrying out dangerous and hazardous, illegal, unhealthy, high risk or morally reprehensible kinds of activities, there are more answers. This is because over the last few years it is these kinds of work, the “worst forms”, that have attracted most attention from the international, national and local communities. It is to these kinds of work that we now turn in Chapter 2.



QUESTIONS

- *What working activities are children in your country engaged in? Into which categories would you put these activities, and why (child labour below the minimum age for work; light work; hazardous child labour; unconditional worst forms of child labour)?*
- *Gather information on legislation regarding “child labour” (e.g. restrictions on the work they may do, minimum age requirements, etc.) in your country. To what extent does it conform to the ILO Convention?*
- *Discuss whether you think children should be allowed to work at all. In what situations do you think it might be acceptable for a child to work? What kind of activities do you think are appropriate? What kind of restrictions would you put on these activities (e.g. hours worked per week, working conditions, etc.) and should there be rules concerning them?*

Suggestions for further study

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-  Schlemmer, B. ed. 2000. *The exploited child*, (London, Zed Books). Originally published as *L'enfant exploité: oppression, mise au travail, prolétarisation*, Paris Editions Karthala-ORSTOM, 1996.
-  U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labor Affairs. 1994. *By the sweat and toil of children*. Vols. I-VI, (Washington, D.C.)
-  Alarcón Glasinovich, W. 2000. *Profundizando la exclusión: El trabajo de niños y adolescentes en América Latina* (Deepening exclusion: The work of children and adolescents in Latin America), (Lima, ed. Infancia y Desarrollo Series, Oxfam)
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OPTIONAL READING

A brief history of child labour

Although “child labour” as a social issue emerged as a consequence of the industrial revolution, children have always worked. They carried out tasks in the home, participated in agriculture, and learned crafts from an early age. This activity was taken for granted, and there were no debates over whether children should play a role in the economy.

All of this changed with the recruitment of children for industrial production beginning with Britain in the eighteenth century. The situation of children in British mines and textile mills was the target of several Parliamentary investigations in the early nineteenth century, and the plight of youthful chimney sweeps young children who cleaned the inside of coalburning chimneys, in the process acquiring serious respiratory diseases, challenged the conscience of the country.

Over time, legislation was introduced which gradually outlawed many of these activities, beginning with the introduction of Half-Time Working in conjunction with the Factory Acts of 1833 and 1844. The purpose behind this system was to restructure child labour so that it no longer interfered with education (Hobbs and McKechnie, 1997). Beginning with the Education Act of 1918, regulation sought the removal of all younger children from the labour force; this approach was extended by the Young Person’s Act of 1933, which embodied the modern approach of age limits and hazardous orders.

Nevertheless, there has been a debate surrounding how consequential these legislative actions really were. On the one hand, many children continued to engage in economic activities prohibited under law,



Boy sweeper, wearing knickers, standing alongside carding machine in Lincoln Cotton Mills, Evansville, Indiana (USA), 1908.

Photographer:
Lewis Hine

and inspectors either failed to recognize infractions or they turned a blind eye to them (Hobbs and McKechnie, 1997). On the other, while the prevalence of child labour in Britain certainly declined over the span of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many scholars have tended to downplay the role played by legislation compared with other changes in society. Some, such as Fyfe, believe that the increasing availability of education and the greater importance attached to it by most British families, was the primary factor at work. In most cases, agitation and action by politicians and trade unionists and also by some entrepreneurs has led to legislative and concrete action to reduce the incidence of child labour during the closing decade of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century. Others, such as Nardinelli, hold that rising family income encouraged families to withhold their children's labour (Nardinelli, 1990). Unraveling these factors is difficult since they were contemporaneous and deeply interrelated. The British experience was echoed by other industrialized countries, although each has a distinctive history (Cunningham and Viazzo, 1996).

Early years of industrialization were accompanied by an important role for children in the factory workforce, although in some countries, such as Japan, this participation was muted by the cultural value attached to children's freedom to play.

Eventually, public concern for the welfare of children was aroused and protective legislation enacted. The parallel forces of emerging mass education and rising incomes also played their part. To some extent, all of these countries have tended to converge on a new pattern of youthful employment, which is the subject of this report. Although the problems of the past have not been fully eradicated, it is fair to say that, until recently, public opinion in most of the developed countries regarded child labour as a topic for the history books, and there was no systematic attempt to monitor the economic activity of children.

Source: Dorman, Peter
2001. *Child labour in the
developed economies*
(Geneva, ILO-IPEC)



Six black workers in
the Alexandria
Glass Factory,
Virginia (USA),
1911.

Photographer:
Lewis Hine

Chapter 2

The Worst Forms of Child Labour



Photo ILO/F. Moleres



1. Introduction

This chapter presents what are now referred to as the “worst forms” of child labour. These are the activities that are hazardous, detrimental to children and/or morally repugnant, and they are today the special target of both international research and action programmes. They occur everywhere, not just in a few countries. In this chapter, a definition of the worst forms will be offered, and several occupations that are linked to the worst forms will be discussed, including the impact on the children’s health and safety. The last part of the chapter will focus on the incidence of the worst forms of child labour in developed countries.

2. Defining the worst forms of child labour

Ratification: *a solemn undertaking by a State formally accepting the terms of a Convention, thereby becoming legally bound to apply it. The country must, if necessary, adopt new laws and regulations or modify the existing legislation and practice to support the Convention. It must apply the Convention not only in law but also in practice, and provide reports on its application to the International Labour Office.*

In 1999, the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182 was adopted at the International Labour Conference in Geneva by delegates from employers’ organizations, trade unions and governments of the 175 countries that are member States of the International Labour Organization. The vote for this international agreement was unanimous, expressing a growing international consensus that certain forms of child labour are so fundamentally at odds with children’s basic human rights that they must be eliminated as a priority. The individual member governments may each ratify the Convention, and more than 140 of them have already done so (as of June 2003). In so doing they commit their country to take immediate and effective measures to prohibit and eliminate all worst forms of child labour for all children under the age of 18. No other ILO Convention has ever been ratified at such a rapid pace.

Recommendation: *an ILO instrument not open to ratification but which lays down general or technical guidelines to be applied at a national level. It often provides detailed guidelines to supplement principles set out in a Convention, or it may provide guidance on subjects which are not covered by a Convention.*

Highlights of Convention No. 182 and Recommendation No. 190 on the worst forms of child labour

The Convention:

- covers children under age 18;
- requires immediate and effective measures for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency;
- includes as worst forms of child labour: slavery, forced labour, sale and trafficking of children; forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; use of children in prostitution, pornography, illicit activities; and hazardous work;
- requires effective enforcement, including penal or other sanctions;
- requires measures for prevention, removal, rehabilitation and social integration, and access to free basic education;
- requires taking account of the special situation of girls and other children at special risk;
- requires monitoring mechanisms and programmes of action; and
- provides for international cooperation and/or assistance.

The Recommendation encourages member States to:

- adopt national programmes of action which:
 - identify and denounce the worst forms of child labour;
 - protect the very young, girls, children in hidden work situations and other especially vulnerable children;
 - include measures for prevention, removal, rehabilitation and social integration;
 - and raise awareness and mobilize society;
- consider given criteria in determining hazardous work;
- establish monitoring mechanisms to ensure effective implementation;
- compile data;
- provide appropriate penalties and remedies;
- designate certain activities as criminal offences;
- consider a wide range of measures aimed at eliminating the worst forms of child labour; and
- cooperate with international efforts and enhance cooperation and/or assistance among members.

For the complete text of the Convention, see Appendix 1.

Thus, the activities that are considered worst forms in Convention No.182 are the following:

- Slavery or similar practices, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and forced or compulsory labour (including the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict);
- Using or offering a child for prostitution or for pornography;
- Using or offering a child for illicit activities, such as for the production and trafficking of drugs;
- Work which by its nature or because of the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of the child, i.e. “hazardous work”.

Various factors are given as defining this last category of hazardous work, and some of them are listed in Table 2.1 at the end of this chapter. These include exposure to abuse, work that is conducted underground or under water, work done at heights or in confined spaces, work that involves using dangerous equipment or tools, work that is carried out in unhealthy environments or involves hazardous substances, or any work carried out in particularly difficult circumstances. Working excessive hours or being confined to an employer’s premises, transporting heavy loads or having to work at night are also included.

3. The two types of worst forms of child labour

Many people and major international organizations make a distinction between the worst forms activities “**by definition**” (also called the “unconditional worst forms”) and those “**by condition**” (i.e. hazardous work). Worst forms “by definition” are often illegal and also unacceptable for adults. They include all those activities whose status as worst forms cannot be altered no matter what is done to improve conditions of work. No changes that one can imagine, for example, could improve working conditions sufficiently to make the commercial sexual exploitation of children or the use of children in pornography an acceptable occupation for a child.

It was internationally agreed to tackle all of the first three categories in the list above - slavery, trafficking, debt bondage, and other forms of forced labour (including the forced recruitment

of children for use in armed conflict), use of children for prostitution or pornography, and illicit activities - activities which are defined and prohibited directly by Convention No. 182 for all children under the age of 18. There is no scope for national decision whether or not the use of a child for prostitution should be considered a worst form of child labour. Thus, these are called worst forms “by definition”.

In contrast, a list of what should be prohibited for the fourth category, hazardous work, needs to be determined on a national level. Thus, we call it a worst form “by condition”. In addition, some of these are activities that can be improved. If they are currently affecting the health and safety of the children who do them, this can in some cases be changed by altering the circumstances. A good example is adolescents above the minimum working age engaged in conditions of work which are inherently hazardous or too arduous for them. If a young person works in a factory using machinery without safety guards, then fitting a protection device to the machine may make it non-hazardous, and then this activity would cease to fall under the category of worst forms as defined by Convention 182. The kinds of hazardous work in question can be either an occupation as such or specific tasks. The latter tend to be easier to deal with in that it is often specific tasks and working conditions that make the work hazardous, e.g. operation of power-driven machinery, the presence or use of dangerous chemicals, work at night or work in isolation, and these can sometimes be changed. Some situations are hazardous wherever they occur, but each country needs to determine what children under 18 should be prohibited from doing in relation to conditions in this particular country, economic sector, and so on. But in short, hazardous work is something that children should never be permitted to do.

Examples of some of the worst forms by condition are hazardous manufacturing operations, mining, crushing rocks, deep sea diving, working at heights in construction, scavenging or rag-picking, or carrying heavy loads. However, it is also important not to forget work that leaves no physical scars but which is nonetheless likely to damage the psychological health of the child or stunt his or her social or intellectual development. Examples of such work are situations in which the child is subject to verbal abuse, strain or pressure to produce something, is exposed to adult behaviour (drinking, smoking, gambling), or in which the child is isolated from peers or stimulation.

Some of the actual tasks involved and some of the health effects are given in Table 2.1 at the end of this chapter.

All these activities differ from one another and each has its own safety hazards and risks, its own health effects, and its own psychological and moral consequences for the child. In many cases children should not be doing some of these jobs at all, or at least not the younger children. Laws differ from country to country concerning different occupations, and in general, the country's official school-leaving age is the age at which a child is permitted to work. Unfortunately, many countries do not set a separate age for hazardous work and many younger children are involved. This is a complicated subject, which will be discussed further.

The following section describes some of the worst forms in which the greatest numbers of children are concentrated, and those which are the most dangerous or morally repugnant.

4. A discussion of some of the worst forms

Forced and slave labour

Forced labour and slave labour are not a thing of the past; they exist today and assume many guises. They are not an occupation in themselves, but a condition, the condition of being unfree, and they cut across many occupations. The occupations in which most children are working as forced or slave labourers are in agriculture, drug trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, and as child soldiers in (para-)military combat units.

Debt bondage to a landlord is a particular kind of forced labour that can entrap children from poor families in agriculture without land or with too little of it to meet their subsistence needs. If the parents become indebted, they may have little choice but to bond their children into agricultural or domestic labour to repay the debt. Debt bondage places children ultimately at the mercy of the landowner (or a contractor or money-lender), where they suffer economic hardship and are deprived of an education. Bonded child labour flourishes in different parts of the globe - not only in South Asia, with which it is most commonly linked, but also in Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia. Worldwide, at least 5.7 million children are working as forced labourers (ILO, 2002).

A bonded child worker in rural India

"I am 14 years old. I am an orphan. I have five brothers and two sisters. I live in the house of my landlord, who owns 22 acres of land. I live in his house 24 hours a day. I work during the day in the fields. I scatter manure in the fields, fetch water from the well, graze cattle, give them fodder, bathe them in the pond, wash utensils, water the garden in the house of my landlord. I don't get paid any wage for this work. Only food. As food I get rice, dal and some times subzi (vegetables). Once a year, I get clothes on festivals. Two lungis (wrap-arounds), and sometimes old rejected clothes from the master's house. I have been working in this landlord's house for the past four years. My family has no land. My master doesn't allow me to leave. I tried last year, but he said no. My master doesn't beat me, but abuses me often. I would like to learn carpentry or tailoring or else I would like to do farming, if the government gave me land."

Source:
Haspels/Jankanish
2000: *Action against
child labour*

Trafficking

Trafficking may be associated with forced labour. Children are often forced to work, or put into captive labour, by traffickers who take the children (by persuasion, ruse or kidnapping) and sell them to employers. Sometimes it is unfortunately the parents who accept this (or even arrange it) because they cannot afford to feed their child any longer - or simply because they need the money offered in order to repay their debts. Girls are especially disadvantaged in this situation, because they are more desirable for what they can bring to an employer through sexual exploitation or as child domestic workers. They are not as respected in many traditional societies and cultures as boys, and they are also often more docile and less self-assertive by cultural training as well as being physically weaker. However, boys are also sometimes kidnapped and enslaved for various kinds of work, or sold to employers. A recent case of trafficking children in West Africa caused an international scandal. These children had been kidnapped from their villages and forced to work in other countries of the region in a range of occupations.

*For more on the
situation of girls,
see Chapter 5.*

The father of an abducted girl in Sudan

"My wife and four children were abducted during a raid in March 1994. Three of my children and my wife managed to escape, but my eight-year-old daughter remained behind. She is now kept by a man who bought her from her captor. When I discovered where she was, I went north and tried to get her back by legal means. I opened a case against the man at the police station, and had to pay the police 20,000 Sudanese pounds (approximately US \$250) to do this. A police officer accompanied me to the home of the man. This man refused to give me my girl and demanded 50,000 Sudanese pounds for her release. The policeman said that as the man had bought the girl from her captor, she was his property and he could not insist on her release. I was forced to leave her there where she is badly mistreated by the man's wife. I also lost the 20,000 pounds which the policeman refused to return to me. I had to return home empty-handed".

Source:
Haspels/Jankanish
2000: *Action against
child labour*

Child trafficking in West Africa

Fifteen children from Benin were recently repatriated to their home country, four years after they were brought to Côte d'Ivoire to work as under-age labourers. The boys and girls, aged between 11 and 18 years old, were brought to Côte d'Ivoire in 1998 and 1999 by two Benin nationals. They were taken to a village 418 km west of Abidjan, the capital, where they worked on coffee and cocoa farms, as street vendors, domestic workers, and helpers on construction sites. The children said they were promised 1.14 million FCFA (US\$1,600) in return for four years of work. But they were only given 50,000 (US\$70), prompting them to run away. But they were apprehended by Ivorian police who informed Benin's embassy in Côte d'Ivoire.

Source: [http://
www.AllAfrica.com](http://www.AllAfrica.com)

Children in armed conflict

This category concerns a relatively small child population worldwide, less than half a million, but one in apparent expansion as local and regional conflicts proliferate in many countries. Children may be kidnapped and forced into combat in rebel military units or government forces; there are even cases where entire classrooms of children have been kidnapped from their rural schools for this purpose. In a few cases the children are persuaded to join military units by their peers or family members who are already involved. In these cases, they may be motivated by religious beliefs, and/or by the hope that their minority ethnic group or impoverished region will one day enjoy political independence and material benefits.

Most often, however, the children have been coerced into what is a form of forced labour. The actual work they do can include wielding sophisticated weaponry at a very young age and with little training. They may be forced to commit acts of extreme savagery, often under the influence of drugs to dull their sensitivity and moral conscience - and under pain of their own death if they refuse to carry out the order. Other assignments, seemingly less horrific but highly dangerous, can include acting as advance lookouts and guards at roadblocks; if there is an enemy ambush they will be the first victims. Girls are used both as cooks and as sexual workers; they live with the units and are often forced to serve the sexual needs of large numbers of male combatants. Some girls are also involved in armed combat. Escape for child combatants is very difficult, and unfortunately rehabilitation even in specialized facilities has proven very problematic. Children who have been traumatized and obliged to commit heinous acts against other human beings or who have been repeatedly raped over long periods may never return to total normalcy.

*“An army recruitment unit arrived at my village and demanded two new recruits. Those who could not pay 3000 kyats had to join the army”
(Zaw Tun, 15, Burmese ex-army soldier)*

A former boy soldier in Sierra Leone

Abbas, who is now 17 years old, lives with his aunt and goes to school. During the civil war, which broke out in Sierra Leone in 1991, he was forced to join the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a rebel group. He recalls his life before the war: "In the morning my mother would ask me to sweep and clean. My father drove a big truck. When the moon was full I would play with my companions. We would bounce a ball and play hide-and-seek in the moonlight." Then he was recruited by the RUF: "I was on my way to the market when a rebel demanded I come with him. The commander said to move ahead with him. My grandmother argued with him. He shot her twice. I said he should kill me, too. They tied my elbows behind my back. At the base, they locked me in the toilet for two days. When they let me out, they carved the letters RUF across my chest. They tied me so I wouldn't rub it until it was healed. Later, they gave me injections in the legs and cut the back of my head to put in cocaine... It happened any time we were going on the attack - more than 25 times."

As a child soldier, Abbas had to perpetrate many atrocities: "When villagers refused to clear out an area we would strip them naked and burn them to death. Sometimes we used plastic and sometimes a tire. Sometimes they would partially sever a person's neck, then leave him on the road to die slowly." It will take a long time for Abbas to find his way back into a normal life: "Three months ago a friend insulted me, called me a rebel who killed so many people and destroyed the whole world. I said, 'You won't make remarks like that again.' I met a woman slicing potato leaves. I snatched the knife from her and stabbed him. I ripped his skin."

Source: Newsweek,
13 May 2002

Commercial sexual exploitation

This takes place in numerous countries. An estimated 1.8 million children worldwide, some of them very young, are used for the gratification of adults' sexual needs (ILO, 2002). The children are most often young girls, who may have been trafficked by intermediaries and coerced into this activity or who fell into it through peer pressure or certain damaging events that made it difficult for them to live "normal" lives due to trauma or stigma (early rape, for example, that reduced their chances of marriage). The increasingly frequent loss of parents through HIV/AIDS and the need to earn money to support younger siblings or an ill parent, in the absence of any education or skills and in a labour

market offering them no other possibilities, also contribute to their entry into sexual exploitation. Sometimes this occupation is practised in their own villages, sometimes far from home. Some of these girls contract HIV/AIDS while still young teenagers, but they cannot obtain any of the life-extending medicines that are available in the wealthier countries. Many return to live in their home villages, where they are sometimes not well received because of the double stigma of their occupation and illness, or they end up in rehabilitation centres where both the required medicines and counselling are usually in short supply. Other girls become pregnant and bear children at a very young age and have to take care of them while exercising their occupation, an occupation that offers no future prospects. These girls, barely teenagers, are trapped by circumstances, and it is likely that their daughters raised in this environment will be as well.

Gabriela, 13 years old

“My name is Gabriela. I am 13 years old. I’ve been on my own for three years now. I used to beg for money, but now I am working. I am a prostitute. I don’t like to say that, because it’s not who I am inside. I dream of my village, and the fresh mountain air there, and the smell of the freshly turned earth. But here in “El Hoyo,” it smells like a dirty toilet, and the diesel smoke from the buses turns my stomach. I hate this place. I hate the men who I sleep with. All I can do when they touch me is think of something else - of the walks I used to take through the fields with my sister Juliana on Sunday mornings. I think of the good things I loved at home. It makes it all a little easier.”

Source: <http://www.casa-alianza.org>

Activities that involve sexual exploitation are not restricted to girls. There is a demand (that may be on the increase) for boys by male tourists from rich countries who come to seek out young boys in certain known tourist areas. Some recent research has demonstrated the growing attraction these contacts offer to the boys, since they are given money, clothing, and perhaps also the (almost inevitably false) hope of a materially richer future that they would have no other means of achieving. A keen desire for the more glamorous lifestyles depicted in western mass media plays a role here, along with the decline in more traditional and less individualistic values, a decline that has been remarked upon by researchers in many countries. In some cases, the same clients return year after year to the same boy. Some boys may be encour-

aged to enter this occupation on account of peer pressure, but poverty and the need (or desire) for money and, more fundamentally, the lack of alternative prospects in life are the deeper causes. The families may sometimes approve and turn a blind eye for these reasons. And they may be less approving of patronage of the same children by local clients because there is less to be gained from it.

The situation just described concerns the demand side of the commercial sexual exploitation of children. In general, however, although much research has recently been devoted to the children involved in this activity in various countries and their pathways into and out of it as well as their problems, far less is known about the clients. It is harder to interview them, as many of them are locals and have every reason to want to conceal their identities. There is a need to study these clients further, for without them, the children could not sell their services and employers could not exploit them to do so. The threat of contracting HIV/AIDS does not seem to have diminished the market for children's sexual exploitation. On the contrary it may actually have increased it, since children are mistakenly imagined by some clientele to be "healthier" than older people; and it has certainly helped the market for virgins. Paradoxically, however, child labour in the sex sector partly fuels the spread of the disease: children in prostitution do not have the bargaining power



Photo ILO/
A. Khemka

to insist upon the use of condoms, and many of their male clients are married transients (from truck drivers to businessmen) who take the disease home with them to their wives and girlfriends.

Bina, aged 17, from Nepal

Bina's father is a sharecropper. Her mother died long ago. She has an elder brother, two elder sisters (both married), a younger sister and a younger brother at school. Bina went to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, with her friends to work in a carpet factory. She stayed with a friend from her village and worked in the factory for two years. The woman owner had promised her a wage of 300 rupees per month (US\$4). She provided her with food and shelter and said that she would give her money when she went home. When Bina wanted to leave, she told her not to go and warned her about the danger of being trafficked to Bombay. Despite the warning, Bina and a friend ran away at night with two Nepalese men and a woman who had promised them a better job. The traffickers took them to an apartment and the next morning, they set out for India. On the way, Bina and her friend were handed over to two Nepalese persons. When the original party disappeared, Bina asked about them but got no answer. On arrival in Bombay, the traffickers put Bina and her friend on different buses. When Bina asked about her friend, she was told that she could meet her later. She was then taken to a brothel owner (a woman) in Bombay and was sold to her. She met 25 to 30 other women in the brothel, mostly Nepalese and some Indians and Bangladeshis, aged 20 to 25. There were five to six girls and women in a room divided by a curtain. Bina learned later that she had been sold for 50,000 Indian rupees (US\$1,100). After three days she was asked to serve an Indian client. When she tried to resist, she was beaten. Others told her that she would starve to death if she resisted. So she gave in. She served up to six or seven clients a day. She was told that she would receive money when she returned home, but she feared that day would never come.

After a year or so, the brothel was raided by the police, who took her and the other girls into custody. She was brought back to Nepal by an NGO. She feels that she has been very lucky in having been able to return to Nepal. She is undergoing a six-month course in literacy and income-generating activities. She wants to find a job to support herself, and she wants to help other girls who are at risk.

Source: Haspels /
Jankanish, 2000:
Action against child labour

Dealing or trafficking in drugs

This becomes a way of life for the children who engage in it. It is an activity encouraged and sometimes enforced by adults (perhaps including family members) who are the de facto employers, and the child's involvement tends to be maintained both by the rewards of money, prestige and power, and by friendships with peers who are similarly employed. Drug-related activities can start at a very young age, and the child's personal drug addiction often ensues to set the seal on involvement in the drug world. The external environment also contributes, because the child often comes from a community where dealing in drugs is one of the few employment options available. Adversarial relations with the police and being known by them, as well as by rival groups, makes it difficult for a child to opt out of this occupation once he or she becomes identified with it. The only way to leave is to change locations, and it is indicative that recent research into children involved in drug trafficking in some communities of a large country found that the dream of many of them was to earn enough through their activity to be able to buy a house far away from their community so that they and their families would be exposed to less risk.

Drug trafficking in Rio de Janeiro

Interviews with child drug traffickers in Rio de Janeiro revealed their motives for becoming involved in this illicit activity: "For some, it's lack of work; others want to buy expensive clothes. Some say they get involved to help their families, but actually they don't. Sometimes a guy spends money on immoral conduct. Sometimes an addict spends money buying cocaine or marijuana. Others spend it on women, motels." - "We only hang around together, since we are all kids. Then you get involved. I'm with you and you are pushing dope. And the other guy asks: 'Can you help me, just in pushing'. Then another one, who is with you, ends up getting involved as well and so on. If you're working you won't get involved. But if you are not doing anything...."

Source: Moreira, 2000:
*Nem soldados,
nem inocentes*

Manufacturing work

Manufacturing work can be a path to success in life for a girl in Bangladesh, for example, or it can be harmful and unhealthy and thus a hazardous worst form of child labour. The difference depends on the conditions of the work and the age of the worker. Some workplaces are notorious for the dangerous working conditions of both children and adults. The glass factories of Firozabad, India, which have been the subject of many outraged descriptions over the years, produce bangles made of glass. The description below might have been found in any of at least ten different sources.

“ In the glass factories of Firozabad, near Agra, thirteen per cent of the 70,000 workers are children, according to Labour Ministry figures. Other estimates put the number much higher. Furnaces range in temperature from 800° C to 1,800° C. Bangles are arranged on trays by small boys for the ‘pakaiwallah’ who places the trays inside the furnace. They also carry burning loams of molten glass on four foot-long iron rods without handles. Children are thus constantly moving around broken glass and burning materials, soot and coal dust. Many of them work on late-shifts because the furnaces are kept going all night to avoid the expense of having to shut them down, according to several accounts that have appeared in the Indian press. ”

(Chatterjee, 1992)

Other types of dangerous work found in the manufacturing sector mentioned in Chapter 1 are work in tanneries, which can expose children to hazardous chemicals and fumes, or hand-knotted carpet making, where children work in cramped positions for many hours on end, which may affect the proper development of their muscles and bones. In many small manufacturing operations children work in enclosed surroundings with little ventilation, breathing contaminated air and dust and cloth particles; they use powerful and harmful chemicals or industrial solvents; or they work close to fire or use heavy tools with no protection for their skin and eyes. Industrial accidents involving children are common but there are no reliable statistics on them for most countries and they are almost never compensated. If a child is injured he or she may simply be sent out the door. In one case involving the carpet industry, a working child who cut his hand was “treated” by the employer, who applied a burning match to the wound to cauterize it and then expected the child to continue to work despite the pain. If a child is killed, the family may well receive no compensation. In these occupations, the hours are very long, the regular pay is very low and

overtime pay does not exist, and breaks are few. If food is provided, it is usually insufficient to provide the nourishment needed for the work. In some cases, employers have been known to ensure the children are underfed, fearing that a child with a full stomach will fall asleep on the job.

In most countries, children are legally prohibited from working in such situations but that does not mean they do not work in them. Even though it would be possible to improve conditions if there were a will to do so, children are usually ignorant of this. Although they may know in general about the laws against child labour, they may know nothing about the health and safety risks, especially those that pose a long-term threat, and so they continue to do the work whether improvements are introduced or not. In other types of work, no improvement is possible: for example, nothing can justify having children climb inside dye-covered vats used for leather tanning to clean them for an employer.

Agriculture

Large numbers of children around the world work in the farm sector. Farming probably accounts for more hazardous child labour than manufacturing, and tends to have a high accident rate, in the developed as well as the developing world. The risks faced by child agricultural workers in poor, rural communities include exposure to the elements (hot sun, rain) as well as harmful animals and insects; they may be cut by tough stems and the tools they use. Rising early to work in the damp and cold, often barefoot and inadequately dressed, some develop chronic coughs and pneumonia. The hours in the fields are long - eight to ten-hour days are not uncommon.

Picking jasmine in Egypt

In Egypt, many children are regularly employed picking jasmine. Between July and October, recruiters take children from villages in the Nile Delta to gather the flowers in the middle of the night, when the essence is purest. Recruiters prefer small children, because their small hands better enable them to pick delicate single flowers. The children work barefoot in the mud and must rely on their sense of touch as there is no light. The children work 9-hour shifts without eating or stopping until the morning sun grows too strong. The children are paid 3 Egyptian pounds (US \$0.5) per day. If the children stop work for any reason (to avoid swarms of mosquitoes) they may be caned by the recruiter.

Source: Monsen, 2002:
*Bitter harvest: Children
in agriculture*

Children working on commercial agricultural plantations are known to pick crops still dripping with pesticides or to spray the chemicals themselves. Skin, eye, respiratory or nervous problems can result from exposure to pesticides. Studies of children harvesting tobacco in Tanzania indicate nausea, vomiting and fainting from nicotine poisoning. Children involved in processing crops such as sisal can suffer respiratory problems due to dust, or wounds from handling the sharp, abrasive leaves. Frequent awkward or heavy lifting and repetitive strains can permanently injure growing spines or limbs, especially if poorly designed equipment is being used. Transport machinery accidents can be common such as being run over by forklift trucks, falling off or under tractors or harvesting machinery.

It cannot be assumed that children working on small family farms do not face these risks. In many countries, such farms produce much or most of the agricultural grains and/or fresh produce, and they may be mechanized and make heavy use of pesticides. Small farms are as likely as larger commercial enterprises to misuse chemicals, through lack of education and training in their handling.

Children are often included as part of hired family labour for large-scale enterprises producing for export. The use of casual labour by contractors in plantations on a piece-rate or quota system not infrequently involves children as cheap labour, although they are not formally hired and may be engaged in dangerous tasks. Management can plead in such situations that they have no direct responsibility for the health and safety of child workers. With a dramatic rise in the use of contract labour worldwide, the demand for child labour on farms and plantations is likely to remain strong.

Yog, 12 years old, working in a tea plantation in Nepal

“My normal daily wage is 12.50 rupees (US \$0.17) but in order to earn this I need to pick 16 kilos of leaves every day and the weighing centre for the leaves is a 2 kilometre walk from the gardens. It’s a heavy load! Often I get sick with stomach aches and headaches and I cut and bruise myself all the time. A little while ago, I got this deep cut from the sickle. I have to keep it bandaged with the rag. We don’t get any help if we are sick. There are no days off. Every day is a working day, whether you are sick or not.”

Source: Child Workers in Asia, 1993: *The World of Working Children*

Samson, a 15 year-old boy working on a tobacco plantation in Urambo, Tanzania

Samson moved to Urambo from Kigoma with his parents. Like his brothers and sisters, he started working on the plantation when he was nine years old, during holidays and on weekends, to pay for his school fees. He has since completed his primary education and now works full-time.

Samson works 10-12 hours a day, felling trees and weeding to clear fields for cultivation; transplanting tobacco seedlings and tending the farms; and plucking and curing the leaves.

Samson walks barefoot and thorns often prick him. He complains of back pain especially after carrying bags of tobacco leaves to the weighing station five kilometres away. There is no safe drinking water on the plantation and Samson and his friends frequently suffer from diarrhoea and typhoid. All medical expenses are deducted from his salary. He looks anaemic and has several burn scars on his arms.

Source: Masudi et al, 2002: *Tanzania: Child labour in commercial agriculture - Tobacco: A rapid assessment*

Domestic work

One may think that domestic work is relatively “safe” compared to other occupations described in this chapter. However, this is not so. Since domestic labour is usually unregulated, this type of work is often hidden from the public eye. Children, particularly girls, are often exposed to cruel treatment, forced to work excessive hours, and prohibited from attending school. Sometimes, they have been trafficked into the situation. Most child domestic workers are girls, although the proportion of girls and boys varies from place to place. Children are constantly on call and deprived of sleep. They may get inadequate food, and may perform hazardous jobs for which they are unprepared. In many cultures, sexual favours are seen as simply part of the job. Girls who drop out of domestic work often run a high risk of ending up in prostitution or other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Even though Convention No.182 does not mention domestic work among the worst forms, such slavery-like situations or other worst forms of child labour need to be tackled urgently.

On the other hand, domestic employment for children may be permitted within the framework of the minimum age for

admission to work under Convention No. 138. This could be done by regulating the conditions, including allowing children to go to school, providing them with a good place to sleep and nourishing meals, some free time to do schoolwork and play with others, the freedom to visit family, and so on. Of course, it will also be necessary to protect those children from certain hazardous tasks undesirable for a child, and make sure that it is not a way of hiding a worst form behind a closed door.

More on domestic work can be found in Chapter 5.

5. Worst forms in the developed countries

Child labour that is, or may qualify as, a worst form is not confined to developing countries. It is found in all countries. It is, however, less prevalent in the developed world. In the developed countries and the countries in transition a lower percentage of children aged 10-14 (no more than 4 per cent) is economically active, and the number performing activities that should be considered worst forms is not known. Within the last several years, however, at least five developed country governments have acknowledged the suspected existence of one or more of the worst forms of child labour in their country.

Two areas in which children are most frequently found to be exploited are agriculture and commercial sexual exploitation. This was alluded to in Chapter 1. Younger children working alongside parents in the fields tend to “fall through the cracks” in countries with a large agricultural sector. Teenagers work illegally in some countries, doing a range of hazardous jobs in rural or outdoor settings, the most dangerous being agriculture (especially using tractors and other machinery) and construction (working at heights, working with electric tools and equipment). The meat packing industry was also mentioned in Chapter 1; this is considered a worst form occupation for anyone under 18.

It is impossible to determine the extent of commercial sexual exploitation of children in the developed world. One survey (Kane, 1998) cites reports of more than 400 children in prostitution in Calgary, Canada, and up to 3,000 in Montreal, Canada. Another survey (cited in Cecchetti, 1998) identified nearly 3,000 child prostitutes in Athens, Greece. The US Department of Health and Human Services estimated that there might be as many as 300,000 children in prostitution in the USA as a whole.

Child prostitution in France

Between 2,000 and 3,000 children are estimated to be involved in prostitution in France. Every year up to 3,000 new sex workers come to France. Very often, the real age of the victims is unknown, either because traffickers confiscate their passports or because their birth is not registered in their home country. Many immigrants are particularly vulnerable to prostitution. For example, after the local authorities in Paris took measures to prevent Romanian youths from looting parking meters, the concerned youths were forced into prostitution by organized criminal networks.

Source:
<http://www.ecpat.net>

These children often find their way into prostitution after spending a period of time living on the streets.

Many children enter the sex trade by being trafficked from other countries. For example, in the USA, Mexican girls as young as 14 were recruited by offers of domestic employment and then delivered to brothels frequented by migrant workers (Dorman, 2001). In Europe, 500,000 women and young girls are trafficked each year, especially from former Soviet states (UNICEF, 2003). Some girls are trafficked for forced marriage. In 2002, the British Government reported that in the previous 18 months, it had to deal with more than 240 cases of forced marriage and helped with the repatriation of 60 young people (ibid).

Children are also used as “drug mules” for adult drug traffickers. UNICEF (2003) reports that in one case, a 13-year-old girl was used to traffic £1 million worth of heroin into Great Britain from Pakistan. The same report points out that trafficking of drugs by drug swallowing, often by teenage girls, has become one of the most common means of smuggling cocaine into Great Britain.

It must be emphasized that violations of child labour laws do not in themselves turn an occupation into a worst form occupation - it depends on which laws are being violated, what the work entails, the age of the child and what the associated hazards or immoral components are. Laws about minimum working ages and health and safety conditions are often violated in the developed countries, but this is a question of degree compared to the developing countries. One serious drawback even in the developed countries is that there is still a lot of ignorance

regarding the hazards and health consequences of the work children are doing (as well as the laws surrounding it) and a lack of training about how to deal with them. An advantage of the developed countries, however, is that children are older when they start working, so that the hazards will have potentially less serious effects than for the younger children who perform the same work in the developing world.

6. Conclusion

Hazardous work and the unconditional worst forms of child labour occur in every part of the world. Their extent is alarming. More than two-thirds of the total number of child labourers, i.e. one in eight children across the world, or a total of nearly 180 million children, are exploited in the worst forms of work. These are not only the most intrinsically harmful forms of child labour, they are also the ones that are performed by the most vulnerable children.

The elimination of the worst forms of child labour is thus a major and urgent priority for national and international action. The fact that Convention No. 182 has quickly achieved a record rate of ratifications demonstrates that countries throughout the world accept this fact.



QUESTIONS

- ➔ Read through the activities and associated hazards and health consequences shown in the table 2.1 (next pages). Then look at the photos and identify the occupation and tasks involved. Note down the hazards and possible health consequences which could be associated with each activity.
- ➔ What hazards and health consequences might be associated with other occupations mentioned in the chapter?

			
Occupation			
Tasks			
Hazards			
Health consequences			

- ➔ *Choose one of the occupations from the table and compile information on it (the countries where it is carried out, the conditions in which children work, etc.).*
- ➔ *Find out whether your country has ratified the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182 or not. To what extent does your country, or do neighbouring countries, have worst forms “by definition” and “by condition”? What is your country doing to prevent the worst forms of child labour?*



Table 2.1: Some examples of hazardous occupations and their consequences on the health of working children

Enterprise / Industry / Sector	Tasks
Agriculture	Working with sharp tools and power machinery, handling and spraying of agrochemicals; caring for farm animals and herding sheep; crop picking and weeding; collecting fodder; loading.
Carpet-weaving workshops	Yarn preparation; wool sorting, washing, hand spinning and weaving, dyeing, trimming.
Ceramics and glass factory work	Sorting and cutting glass; firing ceramics; colouring glass; drawing molten glass; carrying hot glass.
Abattoirs and meat processing, butcher shops	Slaughter of animals; cutting of carcasses; removing hair and skin of dead animals; cleaning pens; carrying carcasses; use of water-heating vessels.
Deep sea fishing (Muro-ami)	Diving to depths of 60 metres to beat on coral reefs to scare fish into nets.
Street work	Hawking and vending goods; carrying drugs; selling newspapers; polishing shoes; begging; cleaning car windows; red-light performances; delivering goods; being messengers.

Source: Forastieri, V. 2002. *Children at work: Health and safety risks*.

Hazards	Health consequences
<p>Inadequate or unprotected machinery and tools; driving tractors and farm vehicles; motor vehicle accidents; noise and vibration; risk of falls and suffocation in grain elevators and silos; dangerous animals; biological toxic agents; exposure to hazardous chemicals; arduous work; working without personal protective equipment; exposure to extreme temperatures; heavy loads.</p>	<p>Lacerations, cuts, injuries and death, fractures and amputations of fingers, limbs and toes, head injuries or other handicaps caused by equipment and farm machinery mishaps; induced hearing loss; eye injuries; parasitic infections and other infectious diseases; dermatitis; thermal stress; chemical poisoning (chronic and acute).</p>
<p>Inhalation of wool dust contaminated with biological agents; bad working postures (squatting); inadequate lighting / ventilation; poor sanitation; hazardous chemicals; repetitive movements.</p>	<p>Musculo-skeletal disorders; eye strain and defective vision; respiratory diseases; fatigue; chemical poisoning.</p>
<p>Radiant heat and thermal stress; stepping on or handling hot broken glass; inadequate ventilation; hazardous dust; exposure to lead.</p>	<p>Burns; cuts from broken glass; eye injuries; heat stress; respiratory diseases; lead poisoning.</p>
<p>Unsafe machinery and equipment, exposure to biological agents, extreme temperature changes; poor sanitation, exposure to untreated liquid and solid waste; inadequate ventilation.</p>	<p>Injuries from falls; cuts, abrasions from tools and saws; burns and scalds; Q fever; brucellosis; tuberculosis and other infectious diseases; thermal stress; eye injuries from flying bone splinters; physical strain; respiratory diseases.</p>
<p>Exposure to high atmospheric pressure; accidents due to oxygen deficiency (hypoxia); exposure to dangerous and poisonous fish (needlefish, sharks, barracuda snakes); overcrowded and unsanitary conditions; long hours.</p>	<p>Decompression illness; death or injury from hypoxia; gastro-intestinal diseases; emphysema and cardiac disorders.</p>
<p>Exposure to drugs, violence and criminal activities and prostitution; exposure to traffic accidents, danger to health and morals, long hours.</p>	<p>Motor vehicle injuries; drug addiction; branded as social outcasts (reconvicted criminals); fatigue, malnutrition; AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; psychosocial disorders; unwanted pregnancy.</p>

Suggestions for further study

- ☰ ILO. International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. 2003. *Wounded childhood: The use of children in armed conflict in central Africa*, (Geneva)
- ☰ ILO. 2002. *A future without child labour. Global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, (Geneva)
- ☰ ILO. International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour. 2002. *Every child counts: New global estimates on child labour*, (Geneva)
- ☰ ILO. International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour. 2001 and later. *Rapid assessment studies*, (Geneva)
- ☰ ILO. International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour. 2002. *Unbearable to the human heart: Child trafficking and action to eliminate it*, (Geneva)
- ☰ Forastieri, V. 2002. *Children at work: Health and safety risks*, 2nd ed., (Geneva, ILO)
- ☰ Boonpala, P. and Kane, J. 2001. *Trafficking of children: The problem and responses worldwide*. (Geneva, ILO-IPEC)
- ☰ Human Rights Watch. 1996. *The small hands of slavery: Bonded child labor in India*, (New York)
- ☰ Estes, R. J. and Weiner, N.A 2001. *The commercial sexual exploitation of children in the U.S., Canada and Mexico*, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania)
- ☰ Seabrook, J. 2000. *No hiding place: Child sex tourism and the role of extraterritorial legislation*, (London, ECPAT Europe Law Enforcement Group, Zed Books)
- ☰ UNICEF and UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE-ODIHR). 2002. *Trafficking in human beings in Southeastern Europe: Current situation and responses to trafficking in human beings in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova and Romania*, (Belgrade)
- ☰ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2001. *Child soldiers global report 2001*, (London)

- ▣ Estes, R. 2001. *The sexual exploitation of children: A working guide to the empirical literature*, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, School of Social Work)
- ▣ Lim, L. L. 1998. *The sex sector: The economic and social bases of prostitution in Southeast Asia*, (Geneva, ILO)
- ▣ UNICEF. 2002. *Adult wars, child soldiers*, (New York)
- ▣ International Organization for Migration (IOM). 1999. Paths of exploitation: *Studies on the trafficking of women and children between Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam*, (Geneva)

OPTIONAL READING

Worst forms in Nepal, El Salvador and Estonia

The following passages are adapted from the ILO-IPEC rapid assessments “Nepal: Trafficking in girls with special reference to prostitution”, “El Salvador: Trabajo infantil en la caña de azúcar”, and “Estonia: Children and adolescents involved in drug use and trafficking”. (For more information on rapid assessments, see Chapter 6.)

I. Trafficking and prostitution in Nepal

Targeted populations

The populations targeted for investigation in a research study in Nepal were vulnerable girls, and girls and women who had been trafficked for sexual exploitation, as well as girls engaged in prostitution in Nepal and trafficked girls living in rehabilitation centres or who have been reintegrated into their families, communities, and/or society, referred to as returnees. The researchers discovered that the world of trafficking is characterized by fear and by vested political and economic interests. The findings below illustrate this point repeatedly.

Who is being trafficked?

The study findings estimate that 12,000 children are trafficked every year from Nepal. The local history implies that trafficking has long been associated with poverty, social exclusion, and ignorance, as well as with the practice of slavery and the bonded labour system. Trafficking crosses many caste/ethnic groups of Nepal, but most at risk are members of

the hill ethnic group and lower castes. Trafficking of girls seldom takes place before the onset of puberty, about age thirteen; about one quarter of the study sample was trafficked when under the age of 14, and more than half were under 16.

How are they being trafficked?

The complex process of trafficking can be explained by two models (as developed by John Fredericks), “hard” and “soft”. The former is conducted through force and false promises. It spreads from one district to another and has largely shifted from rural to urban areas.

The distinction between soft and hard trafficking refers to coercion and/or complicity of members of a nuclear family and/or extended family in the entry of a person into forced or under-aged prostitution. It does not refer to pattern of movement or to roles played. In soft trafficking, nuclear and/or extended family members can play roles besides “seller”, including transporter and purchaser (if the person is sent to work in a family-owned establishment).

The majority of the parents of the sample gave silent consent or were somehow involved in the trafficking of their daughters. The girls are frequently seen as family commodities who, like property, can be bought and sold. Participation in rural-urban migration increases the risk of being trafficked for many girls. They are either sent from rural areas to cities to work under the arrangements of a broker/

recruiter, or they willingly migrate in search of employment. Either way, the girls find themselves without a support network of family, relatives, or friends, making them more vulnerable to being pulled from their new and uncertain circumstances to the world of trafficking, and subsequently sexual exploitation.

The rapid assessment fieldwork found that it can be difficult to distinguish between traffickers, outside brokers, relatives, “fake husbands” and other middle men. Adding to this complexity, trafficking is not a mechanical process of transportation from a place of origin to a specific destination, rather it occurs through multiple routes and modes of transportation. Many traffickers make transport arrangements with long distance truck drivers. These trucks stop infrequently at public places such as bus stops and cities, and are not always strictly searched by police.

The majority of respondents in the survey were pulled by the lure of promises of good employment, and with hopes of economic improvement. Girls are sold at prices ranging from Indian Rs. 50,000 to 70,000 (US \$1,000 to \$1,500). Once sold, they belong to the brothel owner until they can pay back the amount paid for them. The majority of girls in the study were forced into prostitution within one day of their arrival. The average duration of stay at a brothel was 24 months, and the younger the age when trafficked, the longer the period of exploitation.

Lifestyle of the victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation

The study found that girls trafficked for sexual exploitation were provided with a small portion of food and a small sum of their earnings as pocket money. The brothel owners were reported to take 90 to

95 percent of the earnings. The mean number of hours engaged in prostitution per day was 13, ranging from three to 24 hours per day. On average girls were forced to serve 14 clients per day, with a minimum of three and a maximum of 40 persons. A substantial number of trafficked girls reported that they did not get enough food in the brothels, and three-fifths of the respondents reported that their clients used condoms sometimes, rarely, or not at all, putting the girls at high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and of becoming pregnant. Furthermore, a substantial number of girls reported that they had been sold from one brothel to another.

Adapted from: Bal Kumar KC et al. 2001. Nepal: *Trafficking in girls with special reference to prostitution - A rapid assessment* (Geneva, ILO-IPEC).

II. Hazardous work in sugarcane production in El Salvador

Statistics concerning child labour in sugarcane cultivation

According to studies carried out by the Salvadorian Sugar Foundation [Fundación Salvadoreña del Azúcar de El Salvador, FUNDAZUCAR] and by Radda Barnen, a Norwegian NGO, 47.1 per cent of the 233,700 boys and 185,000 girls who worked in 1999 were employed in the agricultural sector. The data compiled for this assessment indicate that an estimated 5,000 boys and girls participate directly in the sugarcane harvest, or *zafra*. According to the sugarcane producers interviewed, children account for between 27 and 30 of every 100 workers in a team, or *cuadrilla*. It is believed that some 25,000 children are indirectly involved in sugarcane cultivation, most often accompanying their parents or relatives and helping them carry out the various tasks related to harvesting.



Characteristics of the sugar-producing sector

Sugarcane is one of three traditional export crops that generate a significant percentage of foreign currency and jobs. Currently, there are about 7,000 sugarcane producers who cultivate a total of approximately 100,000 manzanas [one manzana is roughly equivalent to $1\frac{3}{4}$ acres or 0.71 hectares]. Of these, 40 per cent are independent producers and 60 per cent are partners in one of the 473 cooperatives in the sector or in other partnerships. The cane is processed at 10 mills.

Children's working environment

Sugarcane plantations typically offer little shade, since the crop needs plenty of sun. This situation is exacerbated by the practice of burning the cane in order to facilitate the task of cutting and to remove the down from the leaves, or *ajuate*, which is a skin irritant. The mills generally provide very little infrastructure for workers to rest, although some cooperatives do have recreational facilities for the partners' children and there are streams near some of the plantations where children can wash off the sap, sweat and dust clinging to them after a day's work.

Work conditions

Boys' participation in sugarcane cultivation is higher than that of girls, since men traditionally work in the fields. Of the girls and boys interviewed, 92.7 per cent work near their homes, with the exception of those who travel to San Miguel from other districts and who use the public transportation before five o'clock in the morning.

Of the boys and girls interviewed, 68.5 per cent were between the ages of 7 and 14. Boys made up 86.9 per cent of this age group. The age at which 58 per cent of the

children began working was between 7 and 10 years old. Ninety-eight per cent of the children get up at five o'clock in the morning and begin their work by helping with household chores. The working day at the plantations starts at six and ends between noon and four o'clock in the afternoon. Girls work an average of six hours per day and boys work an average of five hours. The average number of days worked is 6 days per week for 47.3 per cent of the children, 7 days for 32.7 per cent, and 5 days for 17.9 per cent.

In general, children go to work in the fields with their parents. Some 85.1 per cent of these children receive wages ranging from US \$3.20 to \$3.26 per day. Children who help others, but who are not paid directly by the producer, earn between US \$0.57 and \$2.57 per week. They receive this money from the older children whom they help. Children under age 12 do not receive pay from the owners; however, their parents usually give them some money. Non-remunerated work is considered to be "help". In addition to the sugarcane harvest, some children perform other types of work the rest of the year. When at home, boys and girls carry out differing domestic chores. The majority (68.5 per cent) of the boys and girls reported that they gave their earnings to their parents. There were only a few cases in which the child's income constituted the family's sole source of sustenance; in most cases, it was only part of the household income.

Work in the plantations is broken down according to gender. The girls sow, pick up the ends of cane that have been cut without burning, stack the cut cane into neat piles for later transportation in tilt-bed trailers, and haul cane. A number of the older girls (36.4 per cent) cut cane. Cutting the cane is facilitated by a technique involving a hook-shaped stick that



the children fashion for themselves; they then separate the cane to be cut and fasten it securely before striking so as to deliver a well-aimed blow. The majority of the boys (65.5 per cent) cut cane. The rest (35.5 per cent) chop the cane into small pieces for various uses, gather and stack cane, and make handles for carrying it to where it will be collected. They also pick up the ends of the cane, comb, fertilize and, in one case, fumigate. The smallest children also sow—although this is considered to be exclusively a girl’s job. Cultural patterns dictate that it is unacceptable for boys to perform less dangerous jobs, such as sowing cane, as this detracts from their masculinity.

The tools used include: *cumas* (a type of curved knife), machetes, hoes, shovels, hooks, rakes, fumigation pumps and files. These tools are dangerous, given their sharp edges, as well as being heavy, since they are made of iron and have wooden handles. Some employers disapprove of children working, owing to the dangers inherent in the job; 66 per cent feel it is very dangerous and that it requires a high degree of responsibility. Nevertheless, they cannot prevent parents from bringing their children, as the latter must become familiar with the work and learn it well in order to minimize risks.

Health

The exhausting workdays under the sun, the use of sharp tools, exposure to insects, uncomfortable positions, excessive loads to carry, and other factors jeopardize the health of boys and girls. The most frequent afflictions are headaches, back problems, cuts and skin irritations. These problems are treated in 51.4 per cent of the cases at health clinics, and in the remaining cases through private medical consultation, or through an acquaintance, pharmacist, folk healer (or

curandero), social worker, or cooperative clinic.

The children’s inadequate clothing exposes them to wounds from the cane leaves and to skin irritations from the down released by the plants. Given that many children do not wear shoes, they risk stepping on splinters on the ground, or on glass or tin cans, which can cause infections or tetanus. Scars from wounds caused by tools, as well as blisters and calluses were noted on the boys. Other dangers to which children are exposed include: harmful sun rays, since the children do not use any form of protection; dust and ash produced by the burning cane, which can cause respiratory problems and allergies; and, a large number of insects that bother the children at work when their bodies become covered with molasses.

Adapted from: Quesada Lino, J.E. and Vargas Aguilar, A. 2002. *El Salvador: Trabajo infantil en la caña de azúcar - Una Evaluación Rápida* (Geneva, ILO-IPEC).

III. Drug Trafficking in Estonia

Characteristics and conditions of children involved in drug trafficking

The majority of children involved in drug trafficking, who were investigated in a study in Estonia, are drug users themselves. Although some of them are not addicted to drugs when they start pushing drugs, at some point they tend to experiment with the products they are selling, which leads them to drug addiction.

The social background of children involved in drug trafficking varies. Although there is a high rate of school dropouts amongst children in drug trafficking, all of them are literate. Based on the findings of this study, more boys than girls are involved in drug trafficking,



whereas more girls than boys are involved in prostitution, which often goes hand in hand with drug trafficking. Though some of them live on the streets, most of them have permanent places of residence and live with one or both parents, or other relatives. The family's financial status varies from wealthy to very poor, which, on the basis of this study, allows for the statement that the family's financial status does not substantially influence child's involvement in drug trafficking and prostitution in the targeted communities.

It is somewhat problematic to state the average age of a child involved in drug dealing. The current study shows that typically children start trafficking drugs between the ages of 13 and 16, at the same time they start using drugs. Once the child gets involved in drug distribution or prostitution, s/he may stay connected until s/he reaches adulthood and beyond.

Intravenous drug users (IDUs) constitute the group most at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases due to the use of infected needles and practicing unsafe sex. Being involved in drug trafficking, they also face the dangers of becoming a victim of violence, being caught by police, imprisonment and other risks that accompany this type of criminal activity.

According to this research there are no fixed times and places for drug trafficking to take place. These factors largely depend on the child's lifestyle, whether he or she attends school or has other jobs and where he or she likes to spend free time. Drugs may be trafficked in bars, discos, on the street, at concerts, amongst friends, in school or sold out of cars or by phone. IDUs tend to traffic such drugs as cannabis, heroin and amphetamine. Children who traffic drugs in order to receive a free dose, usually traffic the same type

of drugs that they use. The money earned by IDUs through drug trafficking and prostitution is usually spent on drugs. In general, children do not accumulate wealth by this means, but rather spend their earnings on a daily basis. Still, some of the children may get involved in drug trafficking in order to become rich or to help their family financially.

Pathways to drug trafficking and prostitution

The most widespread reasons for children getting involved in drug trafficking are the influence of close friend and peers who are already involved, the desire to become rich, the lack of other income and the need for free drugs. Drug trafficking is sometimes seen by children as a means of gaining control over their peers. At the same time it can be stated that children who use drugs do not always need a reason to get involved in drug trafficking. When an older dealer exploits a child by making an offer to start pushing drugs - promising money and free doses - youngsters often find no reason to refuse such an offer. They are vulnerable to such circumstances.

Children who inject drugs may engage in prostitution for such reasons as lack of any other source of income and need for drugs. Since prostitution, including the prostitution of minors, is not illegal in Estonia, it is sometimes considered to be a safer source of income than drug trafficking as the latter constitutes a criminal activity. Children are also forced into prostitution by adults, but the current survey was not expansive enough to be able to provide facts that would allow discussing this in more than very broad terms.

Adapted from: Kalikova, N., Kurbatova, A. and Talu, A. 2002. *Estonia: Children and adolescents involved in drug use and trafficking - A rapid assessment* (Geneva, ILO-IPEC).

Child Labour • A textbook for university students

PART II: CAUSES AND ISSUES

Introduction to Part II

Child labour is a complex problem and numerous factors influence whether or not children work. A comprehensive understanding of child labour requires a deeper knowledge of several key factors.

One of the most influential aspects concerns the children's immediate environment, which is largely based on their family structure. Most children start to work within their families, often within agricultural settings. Family poverty plays a significant role in whether a child will work. Other family-related factors, including family dysfunction and cultural influences, prove important in distinguishing the causes of child labour. It is also important to consider the demand side of child labour, which can significantly impact a child's likelihood of working.

Another important issue is the relationship between child labour and education. Children often find themselves forced to drop out of school in favour of working in order to help supplement family income or simply to support themselves. In other situations, the family simply cannot afford to send the child to school and the child, left with few options, may turn to labour. Therefore, special attention has to be given to the question of how to make education attractive and affordable for all children.

Looking at child labour issues through a gender perspective uncovers distinct differences in both the type and severity of problems faced by boys and girls. Further, because "gender" is a social category whose meaning varies from one society to another, it is imperative to explore the gender perspective in order to paint a more comprehensive picture of child labour in any given situation. For example, girls in particular, are increasingly drawn into some of the worst forms of child labour, such as sexual exploitation.

The three subsequent chapters further explore these and other concepts in an attempt to help clarify how children become entrapped in child labour.

Chapter 3

Causes of Child Labour



Photo ILO/F. Moleres



1. Introduction

In order to combat child labour we must understand the forces that give rise to it. In this chapter, we will consider a wide range of factors whose importance may vary from one situation to the next. Our main interest will be on the role of families and economic pressures, although other aspects will be considered as well. Additional causes will be addressed in the next two chapters.

We can draw on sociology and economics to help organize the list of factors we are about to examine. Sociologists like to distinguish between “internal” and “external” forces. Internal forces are those acting within a family to produce particular outcomes such as child labour. An example would be the health or child-rearing practices of a parent. External forces are those working on families from the outside, and are therefore likely to affect many families simultaneously. An example of this would be a national economic crisis.

Economists prefer to sort factors according to whether they operate on the “supply side” or “demand side” of markets. A market is an institution which brings buyers and sellers together to determine what will be exchanged at what prices. In the case of child labour, the market includes those who provide child labour, such as the households the children live in, and those who utilize it. So demand-side factors refer to those things that make households more or less willing to offer children’s labour, while the supply side is influenced by employers of this labour. Of course, when the child is employed within the household the two sets of individuals will be the same, but the factors can still be distinguished.

These distinctions are similar but not identical. In this chapter we will use the internal/external approach when discussing sociological factors and supply/demand side when discussing economics.

2. The family context

In most societies, the family is both the child's immediate emotional influence and its introduction to living in society, and then its first avenue of contact with the outside world. Most children start work by helping their families, before they go out to work for others. They do so partly because of poverty but also, in many societies, because cultural values and expectations view this as a natural and "right" way to introduce a child to the roles and responsibilities linked to being a member of a family and to growing up. This occurs throughout the world in millions of agricultural families. If the family owns land or works on the land of others, the child will start by spending the day in the fields alongside its parent, doing very easy jobs at first and then progressively more demanding ones. Where exactly to draw the line between acceptable work for children and work that is child labour - work that is harmful and/or interferes with the ability to benefit from education - is not always easy. Often, it is necessary to know the specific circumstances of a case before one can do so.

In some societies, as many as three quarters of all economically active children under the age of 18 are unpaid family workers, assisting in both agricultural and non-agricultural enterprises. These are not always children from the very poorest strata of their societies. In fact, there is some evidence that points to an even greater need for the children's help if the farm family is more well-to-do - there is more land and there are more farm animals to take care of.

Agriculture initiates children into work earlier than other kinds of economic activities, and it often does so within the protective environment of their family. It would be wrong to exaggerate the protective and "nurturing" aspect of this picture, however, and to forget that farm children are subject to myriad hazards - the dangers of using agrochemicals and farm machinery, among others, as discussed in Chapter 2 - and that working on a farm, even a family farm, is not as harmless an activity as it might at first appear.

The pattern of children helping parents is common in many societies. Children assist their parents in small shops and commercial activities, or in small home-based businesses. In societies in which rural home work predominates (families making things in their homes for others, usually piecework), children participate as part of the household during the hours they are not at school,

or else they stay at home to work rather than go to school at all. For example, in some southern European countries, home work involving children has expanded over the years and children work for the textile and shoe industries in their own homes. In other rural family-based activities such as small-scale mining, children also have an economic role to play which increases as they grow bigger and stronger.

Working children in rural Thailand

In rural areas of Thailand, traditionally a child as young as seven would contribute his or her labour to the family by looking after younger siblings or tending buffaloes. As fifth or sixth graders, many boys would work in the rice fields. Once they completed the compulsory sixth grade they were regarded as adults in terms of their ability to work. They could be employed to do rice cultivation, receiving the same daily wage as adults. They could even work in place of their parents. When they were fifteen or sixteen, they were no longer seen as boys and girls but as men and women. Many girls got married and had children. As a consequence, the migration for work of 15 to 17 year olds is now not regarded as child labour exploitation. These children are considered of working age and the bread winners of their families. The younger a child can work and earn money, the more praise he or she receives from others, while children who do not help their parents to work and earn money are branded as lazy, and nobody wants them as a son- or daughter-in-law. Thus, the pressure to earn money from work after the child has completed the highest education level available in the village (either sixth or ninth grade) is prevalent among households that cannot afford to have their children go on to higher levels of education. Nevertheless, jobs are not easily available for these children and some of them in turn have to do odd jobs in their villages.

Source: Phlainoi, 2002:
*Thailand: Child
Domestic Workers:
A Rapid Assessment*

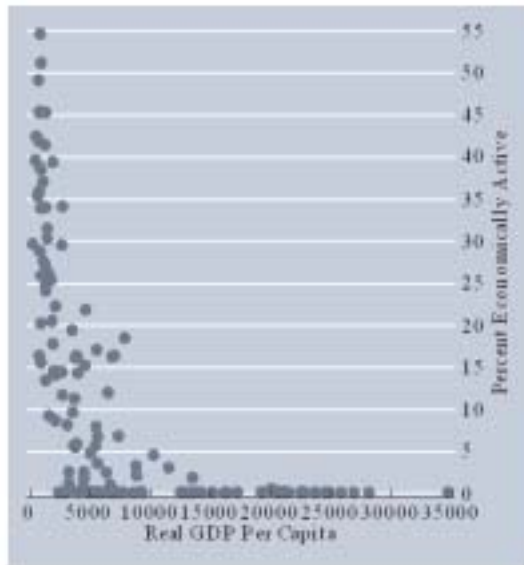
There is much less of a tendency for children to help their parents or share their parents' workload and workday when the parents work in urban or institutional settings such as factories or offices. In this case, if a child goes to work, it will probably be in some setting where the family is not present.

Working children's families tend to be larger families - larger than the average for the area where they live -, and the child who most often goes out to work is the eldest, or the second oldest. It is quite common for the economic burdens of the family to fall on the oldest children first. Apparently, this is not only due to traditional values but also to the fact that as younger children grow up and start doing some of the household work, the older children can be sent out to earn wages. Sometimes, this means migrating to urban centres to work, even at a young age, and sending remittances (earned money) back to the family. Sometimes the family is in debt. Indeed, indebtedness seems to be a significant factor in contributing to family vulnerability, and the child may be sent out to work in order to pay the debt off (this is one cause of debt bondage, a form of forced labour).

3. The role of poverty

It should come as no surprise that the prevalence of child labour is strongly correlated with the average level of income in a society. This is borne out by Figure 3.1, although care should be taken regarding the numbers on the vertical axis: clearly these data do not incorporate much of the illegal or hidden child labour that characterizes even some of the wealthiest countries. The link between poverty and child labour dominates much of the debate on this topic. Does poverty "cause" child labour, or does child labour "cause" poverty, or both? If poverty is the culprit, does it make sense to pursue other policies, like national legislation, as long as poverty persists? Do the poor need child labour to make ends meet?

Figure 3.1: Child labour and poverty - the cross-country picture in 1995



Source: ILO (1999) and Heston et al. (2002). GDP per capita is in 1995 US\$.

There is no general answer to questions such as these, because the questions are not posed carefully enough. The key distinction that needs to be made is between poor countries (or communities) and poor households. The role of child labour differs dramatically between these two levels, as this section should make clear.

Poverty at a country level is indeed both a cause and a consequence of child labour. In Chapter 4 on education, we will discuss its role as a cause; here we are interested in it as a consequence. There are two broad reasons why lower-income countries are likely to have more child labour. Firstly, they are likely to have more households in extreme poverty, a condition which is conducive to child labour in all its forms. Secondly, it is likely to display the sort of social and economic patterns that are known to result in higher rates of child labour. What are some of these patterns?

- Widespread expectations in favour of child labour. With relatively few opportunities open to children with more education, parents are likely to share a cultural norm in which labour is seen as the most productive use of a child's time.

- Lower productivity work systems. Countries with low income per head have low productivity per head, and low productivity tasks are often viewed as being suitable for children.
- Lower quality or less accessible education systems. The provision of high-quality education to all children is expensive, and poorer countries are often unable to afford it. This means that there is less incentive or feasibility for parents to direct their children's time toward school attendance and study.

There are many reasons to support the effort of low-income countries to develop and acquire more resources, but these are particularly important for the struggle against child labour. On the other hand, economic growth does not necessarily address the causes of child labour at the household level.

One of the principal anomalies in the research on child labour is the finding, observed in all parts of the world, that while national income per capita is strongly related to the prevalence of child labour, household income is not. When other factors are equal, analysts usually find that there is no overall tendency for a household's level of income to be related to its supply of child labour. Many reasons have been suggested for this.

- What is typically measured in the existing surveys is not the supply of child labour but its incidence, and this also depends on demand. If poorer households have less access to potential employers, their children may not be working even though they (or their families) want this. This shows up in some surveys in a tendency for such children to be "idle", neither working nor in school. A new frontier of research is identifying such child "unemployment", although it is important to remember that the solution is not the same as in the adult case. Unemployed adults need work; unemployed children need to not have to work.
- Most children, as we have seen, are put to work within the household. But the ability of the household to make use of this work depends on its resources. A farming household with more land or animals, for example, may have more need of child labour than one with less. Since income and assets are related, this may also serve to reduce the poverty/child labour linkage. In some studies researchers have been able to isolate this asset effect, finding it is indeed significant, but not all such assets can be measured.

- Social norms regarding the proper activities for children can cut across or differ among income groups, and, insofar as they differ, not necessarily in the direction of greater work for those with less income. In particular, attitudes toward girls' proper roles may lead to either no difference in their work participation across income strata or even less work among some of the poorest sectors.

In order to understand more clearly the relationship between poverty and child labour, we need to shift the focus from simple numerical comparisons (how many children work in each income group) to a consideration of why and how the child labour decision differs when subsistence is at stake. For a household whose basic needs are met, economists would argue that decisions regarding child labour and schooling would be influenced by perceptions of the costs and benefits of each option. Households would look at the earnings or productivity of the children working alongside the potential benefits of schooling, play or other activities. Depending on the balance of these costs and benefits, they would make their choice. Households whose survival is at issue - those whose poverty is so extreme that basic needs may not be met - will likely devote all available resources to production. Indeed, the lower the earnings children receive, the more work they will do, since it takes more work to provide for the necessities of life. Thus, one way to differentiate the child labour of the very poor and the less- or non-poor is by their responses to the demand side of the market. It is evident that the poorest households may be caught in what we might call a survival trap: as employment options deteriorate, they offer ever more child labour to meet their needs, but the simultaneous decision throughout a community can flood the labour market, leading to even lower earnings and more children offering their work. The following example describes the problem of child labour under extreme poverty in Pakistan.

Sonia Bhalotra (2001) studied the results of a 1991 survey in Pakistan, separating out the rural respondents. The questionnaire provided information on work activity for children ages 10-14, along with a wide assortment of household and demographic data. In this sample, 12 per cent of the girls in this age bracket work for wages, compared to 6 per cent of the boys, while school attendance is 73 per cent for boys and only 31 per cent for girls. Part of this latter discrepancy is explained by the percentages reporting "no activity"- neither work nor schooling - 42 per cent for girls compared to 14 per cent for

boys. Bhalotra used a variety of methods to test for the relationship between poverty, wages and hours spent in wage labour. What she found was that, for boys, lower wages meant more hours of work, exactly as predicted under conditions of severe poverty, whereas this effect did not apply to girls. On the other hand, more household income had the effect of noticeably lowering the working hours of girls but had much less effect on boys. In this example we can see the interaction of general economic pressures, the role of extreme poverty and cultural norms.

4. Additional household factors that influence children to work

Below are some of the family-related factors that influence why a child might work. As discussed above, they are grouped according to whether they are “internal” to the family or have to do with the interaction between the family and society at large - although sometimes this may be a difficult and somewhat risky distinction to make, as in practice many of these factors are related. It is also apparent that some of them are closely related to family poverty; they will be discussed further below. “Internal” and “external” are in quotation marks to indicate that the distinction is somewhat artificial.

“Internal” factors	“External” factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Difficult family situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Single-parent families – Family illness or incapacity to work – Dysfunctional families – Unsupportive or unprotective families ■ Poor family values ■ Low level of education (of the child or the parents) ■ Low parental skill level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Belonging to a minority population (racial or ethnic) and suffering social exclusion ■ Strong peer group and external influences, with material values ■ Socio-economic dislocation (economic crisis, political and social transition) ■ The effects of HIV/AIDS ■ The special situation of girls - this subject will be addressed in Chapter 5

Internal factors

This phrase refers to a number of “misfortunes” that can befall a family. These can be the death or desertion of a family member, leaving the other (if still alive) - often with few or no skills and many debts - to support a number of children. Illness can impoverish a family, and if the breadwinner falls ill, the family can end up destitute. The parents may be permanently unable to work for health or mental health reasons. A dysfunctional family is one plagued by alcohol or drug abuse, violence, or sexual abuse. The remarriage of a parent often gives rise to friction, as the stepparent is sometimes unsympathetic to the children, if not abusive. All these factors can result in unsupportive and unprotective families for children, and can tend to push the children into early (or earlier) work, and perhaps abandonment of the household as well.

Difficult family situations have been found to “push” children into the labour market in a number of studies. In a study of street children in three Turkish cities, 28 of the 65 families interviewed included members who were seriously ill and had no health insurance or social security. The existence of health problems along with poverty created a sense of hopelessness among these families, which resulted in economically, socially and psychologically insecure environments for the children (Bahattin et al., 2001).

“Poor family values” refers variously to values relating to work, education, the respect owed to women and children, alcohol or drug consumption, the sexual boundaries between family members, the relation between the family and the community, family pride, religious beliefs and affiliation, and so on. These are communicated from parents to children over a period of years, and influence the parents’ behaviour regarding their children and the choices they (or the children) make, even regarding child labour.

Family disorganization or dysfunction can be precipitated by the family’s continuing poor socio-economic status over a period of years with no hope of improvement, but this can become a vicious circle and itself contribute to the perpetuation of low economic returns and low status. One frequent result is that the child can be encouraged to work by the family, even obliged to do so, or can choose to work as a way of contributing to the family’s survival. The following excerpt from a rapid assessment shows how family destitution pushes some children living in Bucharest, the capital of Romania, to leave school and beg:

“ The children’s parents, after coming to Bucharest during the communist period, first lost their jobs and then their homes. Most do not have a steady job and, as a consequence they do not have a steady income source. The parents’ occupation underscores the economic difficulties these families are going through, as well as the impossibility of providing their children with a decent living. In this context, sending their children to beg becomes an attractive alternative. They are encouraged to continue to do so by the lack of serious sanctions [on the part of the government or the police]. Children themselves think that there is no other way, and that they have to contribute to the family’s expenses. The children’s income is an important resource for the family, and 54.7 per cent of the children working in the streets who were interviewed said that they gave their family all their earnings. However, only 23.3 per cent of them said they were forced by others to work, the rest reporting that they started working on their own initiative. Their financial contribution is vital for the family’s survival, as most of the families live below the poverty line. Both parents and children think that the child should make a financial contribution to the family income. 27.9 per cent of the families interviewed thought that child labour was a positive thing and that a child should work. Of the 75 children who declared that they have stopped going to school in order to work, 50 had quit school because of the family’s extreme poverty and their need to contribute to the family’s income. ”

(Alexandrescu, 2002)

In 18 per cent of the families interviewed for this study, there was only one parent, and the child became the *de facto* breadwinner (to the point where the burden became too great and some simply left home altogether to live on the streets). But even when there are two parents, the study found evidence of dysfunctional behaviour in the form of alcohol consumption, gambling and violence. Moreover, most parents got used to being supported by their children over time, and eventually their children’s work became the only source of income in the family. Punishments and abuse - particularly by the father - ensued if the child did not bring any money home: the children were subjected to sleep- or food-deprivation as well as beatings. Studies from a number of countries report punishments by the parents if working children fail to come home with money, even when the child is not the family’s only income earner.

The study of Turkish street-working children referred to above found that many children are looking after the whole family, which is extremely poor; the fathers work at very low-paying jobs in the informal sector, if they are employed at all. One or

two male children from each family works on a daily basis. In Adana, one of the young people interviewed, aged 17, who had been working since the age of six, explained the situation with the words: “We work for our families when we are young; but when we get older, then our children will start looking after us! This is the way that life goes on here.” Thus children will start working in the streets between the ages of five and seven, begging or selling things. There seemed to be some pride in helping to provide for the family.

(Bahattin et al., 2001)

Another study, of children in prostitution in Sri Lanka, showed that female respondents in the “very poor” class entered into prostitution at a somewhat younger age than females in the other social classes. Poor children were found to be a high risk group, with factors such as parental negligence and poor cultural values about sexuality contributing to the high prevalence of prostitution. Evidence from studies in the Philippines and Viet Nam also indicates the propensity of children to enter into commercial sexual exploitation when the family fails them, whether due to violence among family members or the abandonment of the home by one of the parents, or some other form of family dysfunction. If the mother is a commercial sex worker, this is often a high risk factor for a girl child.

(Amarasinghe, 2002)

The low level of education and skills of the parents also has negative effects on the children and their future. If the parents have received little education, it means their children are exposed to limited family education at home and to low aspirations to obtain it. Thus, learning and school may not be highly valued or prized - an attitude that may not just pervade individual families but also poor communities. (This is not always the case, however, as there are often conflicting attitudes toward school and much also depends on the quality of schools in the vicinity, on their cost, on society at large and how education is viewed.) Similarly, if the parents have never obtained any specialized training or skills they may not perceive any need for their children to do so. On the other hand, there are many parents who give their young children (especially boys) in apprenticeship or as unpaid workers to craftsmen in the hope that they will learn a trade and therefore be able to lead a better life.

External factors: The influence of society

In some countries, many of the families who send their children to work belong to minority populations, often ethnic or religious

minorities but perhaps also racially diverse populations, and they may have been socially marginalized and denigrated by the surrounding population for generations. Other minority populations are migrants who have established themselves in a new country and are “assigned” a similar low status. Often, poverty is especially acute among such groups. In general, the fate of their children and young people in the labour market reflects this low social position, and children from socially excluded groups may find themselves at the very bottom of the pile. In Europe, for example, child labourers are likely to be of African or Turkish origin. Among some European minorities, such as the Roma, poverty and lack of education seem to be widespread, which may explain their more positive attitude toward working children. In Canada, working children tend to be of Asian descent, and in Brazil, they come from indigenous groups. In Southeast Asia and India, they come from the ethnic or tribal minorities living in isolated hill areas, or from ethnically distinct and more impoverished populations living in the rural backwaters of neighbouring countries.

More and more studies of children and work mention a sometimes insidious “pull” factor - the desire for material goods and the need for the money with which to buy them: consumerism. This desire functions on two levels, that of the whole family and that of the children themselves. In countries and regions across the world, families want the refrigerators and TVs that make life easier - or at least make their poverty more bearable. Sending children to work is a way to augment family income and make some of these purchases possible. For their part, many children work in order to be able to buy themselves the good clothing and high tech electronics now advertised everywhere. The children who can give in to these seductions are already the more fortunate ones: their families can do without the income they earn (or are obliged to earn) and it is theirs to spend on themselves. There is some evidence that boys are generally more prone than girls to directly consuming the products of their labour rather than turning it over to their families.

But to earn this income, the work that some children do may be a “worst form” (as described in Chapter 2), and school may often be foregone in order to do it. Thus, the children are jeopardizing their futures for the immediate gratification of material desires - or because they are forced to do so. Often they have been offered no longer-term life plan or educational perspective by their families - or perhaps there is no money available to make such a

way of thinking appear rational anyway. Going to school, even a state-supported school, is not free: it involves immediate costs (materials, transport, perhaps a uniform) as well as the “opportunity cost” of foregoing earnings from work.

A source of encouragement for succumbing to the accumulation of material possessions comes from the peer group, for whom these purchases become a “necessity” and a symbol of belonging and status. In this case, the peer group replaces (or seconds) the family in encouraging the young person to abandon or forego school and go to work. The peer group also often selects or reinforces the kind of work the child takes up, since children often follow their friends into the labour force. In drug trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, the peer group is instrumental in selecting and encouraging an illicit, immoral and dangerous activity. If the family is already involved in the drug world, as was the case in one Brazilian study, peer group association and the high earnings the activity produces (giving rise to high levels of consumption) combine to consolidate its hold over the young person and his or her future.

Another source (and result) of the desire for material possessions is the rapid change sweeping through some societies, where a desire for increased consumption or a better, more comfortable life motivates adults and children to leave rural areas where incomes are low, in the hope of finding more rewarding opportunities in the cities. Children are part of this movement and urban-based child labour is often a result. In some societies, however, the young people make the decision themselves, leaving their families and migrating alone or with friends, living at high risk in the cities and leaving younger siblings at home with the parents in the countryside. Little is known about how young people arrive at these decisions, but they are making them more and more often on their own account.

Another category of “external” factor on the list above is socio-economic dislocation, meaning economic crisis, and political and social transition. Later in this chapter we will address economic shocks in more detail; here we will consider only massive, nationwide disruptions that dramatically alter living and working patterns. Among the most vivid of these in recent memory have been the events in what are called the “transitional” countries.

Countries in political and social transition are all those that implemented communist strategies of centralized political and economic management of their economies during the Soviet era.

Such strategies often included guaranteed employment and subsidized housing, universal free schooling, and family allowances. With the end of this era and the dismantling of these benefits, starting around 1990 in the ex-USSR and Eastern Europe, many families found themselves without the armament - either material or ideological - to negotiate their way in a market-based economy where more competitive rules prevail. Although the level of general education in some of these countries had been high for decades, families found themselves without a sufficient economic, social or ideological base for beginning anew in a more demanding, less protected and protective economic system. A severe shortage of jobs occurred at the same time as a withdrawal of state support, even support for the schools which thus made them less desirable to attend. Many transitional countries have recently seen the emergence of child labour on a previously unknown scale. Especially affected have been the most vulnerable families - those with many children, single-parent families, and those from socially excluded groups (such as the large Roma populations found throughout Eastern Europe).

This collapse of incomes and living standards has had serious social and psychological consequences on families, engendering feelings of shame, confusion and marginalization and leading to social problems such as substance abuse. Romania, where some parents now expect the children to support them by begging, is one of these transitional societies. The author of one study writes: "The economic decline that Romania has witnessed since 1989 has had a devastating impact at the micro social level. The increased rate of unemployment and of the number of families with many children living under the poverty line, the inflation rate, the reduced income of the population and the rather symbolic child allowances are the main causes of child labour" (Alexandrescu, 2002).

Many ex-communist countries have, therefore, seen an increase in poverty, family disintegration, migration and population displacement, the erosion of social safety nets, a deterioration in health and education services, and increases in delinquency and drug use among young people. At the same time, opportunities for children to work, especially in the expanding informal (and often illegal) economy, have emerged. Pressures on them to contribute to family income or to provide for themselves have increased, and many children also leave home at an early age. Government institutions have either limited or no experience in

dealing with child labour and are ill-equipped to devise effective responses.

Finally, a shock that is neither economic nor political but is deeply destabilizing is the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It has deprived many millions of children, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, of their parents, older siblings, and relatives in a long wasting disease that has taken its toll before their eyes. HIV/AIDS is emerging as a key factor now affecting children and the pattern of child labour across the world, through its direct impact on so many children and their families and its indirect impact on their societies. HIV/AIDS is especially dramatic because it deprives families of adults in their most productive years, and the children must step into the breach. There are an estimated (and increasing) 13 million AIDS orphans under the age of 15, many now living in child-headed households. Children burdened in this way are obliged to abandon their schooling in order to maintain the household, work the family's land or seek out other income-producing opportunities. Many migrate to the cities to work in the informal sector, and thousands become drawn into commercial sexual exploitation with its easier earnings but its risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. In Zambia, for example, it has been estimated that HIV/AIDS has added as many as 23 to 30 per cent to the child labour force (Mushingeh et al., 2003).

See also page 108 at the end of this chapter.

HIV/AIDS also affects pupil and teacher populations and therefore the schools. The child of an AIDS victim may have sporadic school attendance because of the need to care for the sick parent at home, or may drop out because of a lack of money for school fees. The teacher population in epidemic-ravaged countries has been decimated, including graduates from teacher training colleges; and healthy teachers are often absent from the classroom in order to care for sick relatives. Discouraging factors such as these make parents and their children doubt the efficacy of pursuing education, and the child may drop out - thus increasing his or her chance of becoming a child labourer rather than adding to the future supply of skilled workers, including teachers.

When children see their parents, siblings, relatives, friends, teachers and others in the community die, this cannot but lead to an increased feeling of vulnerability and hopelessness and a greater sense of financial need, which are instrumental in increasing the risk of children entering into - or being lured into - exploitative child labour, such as hazardous work or prostitution.

5. Economic shocks

It is not just the level of household income that matters for child labour, but also its fluctuations. Over the course of a year or several years, a household may have an adequate income overall, but there may be periods of distress. This is particularly the case with small-scale agriculture, when market income depends on a single crop, which may be subject to weather or pest disturbances, changing prices, or other unforeseeable events. However, no household is truly insulated from shocks to its well-being. Accidents or disease may strike, a wage earner may lose his or her job, or a storm may damage the house or other assets. At times such as these, the pressure to put all hands to work increases. Indeed, evidence derived from many countries shows that economic shocks are a significant contributor to the rate of child labour. Yet, while the household emergency may be temporary, the consequences may be permanent, since research also shows that children who leave school to work full-time often fail to return.

There are two key issues concerning shocks: how to prevent them, and how to mitigate them. As for the first, no set of policies can ever eliminate shocks altogether, but the law of large numbers is worth bearing in mind: while each individual household's well-being is virtually unpredictable, many common shocks have a statistical regularity at the community level. This makes it possible to take preventive action, even before we know who the specific beneficiaries will be. A much publicized example concerns HIV/AIDS. When adults are struck down by this disease, children are typically forced to bear an extra burden. They must provide additional caring labour at home to tend for the dying parent or sibling, and then they must look for work to make up the missing income. Thus measures to contain the AIDS epidemic are equally measures to reduce child labour. The same can be said for programmes to improve safety and health in the workplace and public health in general.

Other sources of shocks can also be addressed at the level of the community or nation. Agricultural policies can strive to minimize short-term commodity price fluctuations. Prudent macro-economic policies can minimize the likelihood of currency disruptions. Policies that pool the resources of small producers, such as the formation of cooperatives or mutual aid groups, can have a similar effect. In all these cases, the sign of success is not economic growth or poverty reduction in any

general sense - although these are of course desirable - but a smoothing out of household income over time.

When it comes to the mitigation of shocks, there are two main sets of programmes, insurance and credit. Insurance programmes are based on the risk-pooling principle: a group of people, not knowing who will ultimately succumb to the risk, agree to each make a small payment, with the proceeds going to indemnify the costs for those affected. Thus, each makes a small, predictable sacrifice rather than undergoing the risk of a large, unpredictable one. Such insurance programmes can either be private or public. In principle, there should be little cost, since, if the information on which the programme is based is correct, the payments made by the community (either in the form of premiums or taxes) should finance the payouts. (If the risk affects the whole community at once, like a major storm, for instance, this may not be the case.) Thus, the provision of insurance to mitigate the most important risks - ill-health, loss of employment, localized crop failures - can be an important instrument in the struggle against child labour.

The second way households can be protected from shocks is through the availability of credit. In this case, a household in a temporary emergency can borrow money with the promise of repayment once the emergency lifts. (Obviously, this is only feasible if the emergency really is temporary; it will not apply to permanent shocks like an unexpected death.) Logically, a household with such an option is less likely to resort to child labour than one which has no other way to augment its current income. Research bears this out: access to credit is one factor that explains why some low-income households supply child labour and others do not. Unfortunately, it is often difficult to expand the availability of credit, since poor households are typically unable to provide the collateral that lenders require. This leads to two further problems.

- Unable to convince lenders that they are creditworthy, or unable to find more than one lender to borrow from, households may sometimes pay usurious interest rates. This can lead to a downward spiral in which ever more resources must be funnelled into debt payments, so that extreme poverty is unavoidable. Worst forms of child labour, driven by desperation, can result.
- In some cases, the main form of collateral available to parents is their own children. If the family is unable to repay a loan, its children become the property of the lender. This is the

process at the heart of bonded labour, a worst form discussed in Chapter 2. Here the solution (credit) is the problem.

Economic statistics typically summarize the average situation of households over the course of the year. There is little information on the peaks and valleys they pass through during this period, but such fluctuations can have a significant effect on the extent of a country's child labour problem. We need to pay more attention to this issue, and to the types of programmes that can prevent child labour from becoming the insurance of last resort.

6. More about parents and their working children

Some of the examples above indicate that in poorer countries where the child's income is needed, it is most often the parents who make the decision between work and school for their children. Parents' expectations that children will provide for them in their old age may lead to their having larger numbers of children and, where household incomes are limited, there may be a lower level of investment in each child, including in education. Parents may genuinely believe that they are doing what is best for their children by allowing or encouraging them to work. It is at this critical point that the choice may be made about whether to send a boy or a girl to school or to work. Issues such as the status of girls and women, and their marriage and work prospects, also play a role in such decisions.

Parents in the developing world sometimes arrange for their children's employment. This can occur in various ways. Mention has already been made of children working to pay off their parents' debts (debts incurred for reasons usually having nothing to do with the child). This is a contractual obligation, always illegal, in which the child's labour becomes an integral part of a financial relationship. The child's consent is not sought.

Parents often arrange for their child's work even when debt bondage is not at issue. They contract others to take their children on as workers, with the pay usually going directly to the parents. This is especially frequent when the children are going into domestic service. In Ethiopia, for example, many children start domestic service for others in a very informal way in their neighbourhood or a small distance from their parents' house

when they are very young. Then, as they develop physically, their relatives or acquaintances of their parents bring them to the capital Addis Ababa at the parents' request, and they are placed in service far from home. In Thailand and Nepal, the parents and sometimes relatives play a part in enrolling children as domestic workers. Parents will rarely use a broker to do this. Brokers or agents are used in situations where large distances must be travelled or where the parents have no connections in the city or town where the child will be employed.

In many cases, parents and their children are not at all aware of the hazards of the work involved, even when quite visible, or of the reality that lies in store if the child is turned over to an agent or relative. Children obey out of a sense of duty and obligation to the family, or because they are offered no alternative. Once a child is "placed" far from home, the parents usually have no way of assuring themselves that their child is well fed and cared for and not being physically maltreated or sexually abused. They do not know if their offspring has later been trafficked or recruited into something much more dangerous than the domestic labour that was arranged. Once the child leaves the family home, the family may not even know his or her whereabouts. A study of child domestic labour in Thailand found that many parents expect economic gains from their children, even despite the knowledge that the children may suffer physically and psychologically from hard work and abuse. The parents' assumption is that they should be able to tolerate such conditions. Some parents want their children to become domestic workers because they (the parents) can save up more money due to the static nature of the work and its lack of freedom of movement; the child will not be tempted into expenditures on frivolities, and will be closely watched (Phlainoi, 2002).

A certain sense of confidence may perhaps come from arranging for the child's placement through a relative, but sometimes it may be that this very relative subsequently recruits the child into exploitative sexual activities. Other parents sell their children outright, and the child leaves home in the company of a broker. In Viet Nam, it is documented that some mothers sell their daughters' virginity, arranging the sale themselves and collecting a fee of up to US \$1,000, a sum that can go a long way toward expunging family debt. Girls who have been "victimised" in this way by their own mothers are frequently destined for a life of commercial sexual exploitation, a life that parents sometimes encourage. In fact, some parents force, cajole or even deceive their daughters into this, claiming it is their "duty" to help the family (Le Bach, 2002).

The attitude of the family regarding the commercial sexual exploitation of its children can vary greatly from place to place and family to family. If a daughter is trafficked, the family may be unaware of her whereabouts or activities but perhaps continue to yearn for contact. There are stories of fathers selling the family's only farm animal to pay for travel to the city to try to recover a daughter from brothel owners, without success because the brothel owner has paid an agent or trafficker for the girl and refuses to return her until he is repaid by her labour - and the father most often cannot afford to repay this sum. In the case of boys' commercial sexual activity, some families (but not all) remain in denial that their sons are engaged in sexual encounters with men. They think they are just "friends", and sometimes if the men are foreign tourists, the contact may actually be regarded favourably.

The attitude of the exploited child toward his or her family differs, as well. Children who have been given into illegal debt bondage, maltreated and later rescued and returned to their families may have a hard time coming to terms with their family's earlier behaviour toward them. Some NGOs carrying out rescue operations do not try to unite such children with their families at all, or only do so after a period of rehabilitation. Children working in sexually exploitative activities usually try to hide their source of income from their families even if they are giving the family money; they invent an alibi. Girls more than boys will try to retain their close connection with their family, and tend more to send remittances home. Boys who have moved away remain in less frequent contact and share their earnings less.

In many places the impoverished family, caught between competing values and unrelenting economic imperatives, has not been able to give its young the appropriate foundation and necessary tools for negotiating the adult modern world; it has itself been ill-supplied with the knowledge or the means to do so. Thus, young people who move away from home find themselves at the mercy of a larger society that provides no guidance or support for them, indeed some members of which have found increasingly varied pretexts for conveying them into "worst forms" kinds of jobs. Trafficking can easily start with promises of hotel work or training opportunities and end up in commercial sexual exploitation or forced domestic labour, and the child who lives on the streets or is on his or her own risks falling prey to a much broader range of unhealthy and dangerous work and lifestyles.

7. Demand-side factors in child labour

Earlier we introduced the terminology of economics, in which the supply side of the market in child labour consists of all the forces leading households to offer their children's labour, while the demand side refers to the factors that induce employers to engage children as workers. Together, the supply and demand sides influence the amount of child labour, its productivity, and the amount of compensation the child will receive. The more pressure is exerted on the supply side (i.e. the more households offer child labour), the less productive and remunerated this labour will tend to be. The more pressure is exerted on the demand side (i.e. the more uses for child labour are generated), the more productive and remunerated it will be. Both sorts of pressures will tend to increase the overall amount of this labour being performed.

As we have seen, the bulk of the research has focused on the supply side. The entire question of poverty, for example, is concerned with the role that lack of income plays in convincing households to put their children to work. Similarly, the analysis of family structure is intended to explain which children from which households will be instructed or encouraged to work. Nevertheless, demand side factors should not be slighted. The manner in which a society's production is organized can have a profound effect on the prospects of its children.

An initial question to be asked is whether the tasks assigned to children are similar to those performed by adults, or whether there are few opportunities to substitute the labour of one for the other. This is of great importance, since only if the potential for substitutability is high, will it be relatively easy to phase out child labour. Moreover, in such situations the presence of children in the workplace can have a depressing effect on the demand for adults - even their own parents. Thus, the costs of child labour are greater and the barriers to eliminating it are less. But if children perform specialized tasks, there may be less impact on adult labour markets, and the withdrawal of child labour may result in economic disruption.

The general response to this question is, not surprisingly, that the answer depends on the context. Much research into the employment of children in the carpet industry, for instance, has found that child and adult labour is largely interchangeable, and that there is no particular advantage (and of course much social dis-

advantage) to assigning the work to children. This appears to be the case, in fact, in most manufacturing employments. On the other hand, children often perform simple, low-productivity but nonetheless necessary tasks in household agriculture, such as routine feeding of farm animals, hulling grain, and so on. It might be impractical for adult labour, which may already be fully occupied with more demanding tasks, to be further stretched so as to replace children. In addition, many small-scale enterprises, such as in services and construction, are organized to take advantage of the availability of children, relying on them for “helping” activities.

A useful perspective on the demand side of child labour can be drawn from the writings of Michael Piore (1990), a long-time student of substandard work arrangements. In his view, the sort of labour conditions associated with sweatshops are to a large extent the consequence of ineffective management. In these enterprises, workers are given tasks that make few demands on them other than pure effort, and aggressive supervision is used to ensure that this effort is forthcoming. Transforming this sort of work requires more than just the enforcement of laws; it also demands the cultivation of new, more productive work systems based on the active participation of the workforce. The parallel to the use of child labour is clear. The presence of large numbers of children in the workforce is a sign that work has been organized on the basis of elementary skills. Greater attention to work organization and better access to capital should result in fewer working children, even with no change on the supply side, provided that additional adult labour is available. Even in household production, more sophisticated agricultural methods, for example, may reduce the need for large amounts of child labour.

A further insight into this issue was provided by Sylvain Dessy and Stéphane Pallage. They point out that there is a potential link between the work organization decisions of enterprises and the schooling decisions of households. Enterprises may be reluctant to design work systems in favour of more skilled labour if they suspect that there will not be enough skilled workers to do the job. Households may be reluctant to invest in the education of their children if they fear that there will not be suitable economic opportunities awaiting them. Social mobilization is required, in this story, to link the two sets of decisions, so that both the supply and demand sides shift toward investment in skills (Dessy and Pallage, 2000).

8. Conclusion

No single factor can fully explain the persistence and, in some cases, the increase of child labour. The way in which different causes, at different levels, interact with each other ultimately determines whether or not an individual child becomes a child labourer. More research is required to explain the fact that not all poor households with similar levels of income - even low income - resort to the use of child labour. We need to learn more about what keeps these children out of the work force or the labour market. Conversely, child labour is sometimes found in households whose incomes lie above the poverty line, and we need to learn more about why. We know that factors beyond the need for additional family income are at play in determining child labour outcomes, but we need to understand better which factors tend to predominate in which environments.

What is striking about all this material is how many of the causes and factors concern the family, or the family under the impact of processes at work in the larger society. These processes may be economic, social, or political, and may be preceded or accompanied by changes in values. Even in more traditional settings, decisions about whether or not a particular child works depend on a mixture of need (whether the family or child actually requires the income) and opportunity (whether work is available for children). Values (about children and about the relative importance of boys and girls now and in the future, about education, and about consumption and material possessions) also play a role. Perceptions (about whether the child or family has images of a better material life, one that can be secured by the child working, or about whether attending school or combining school with work is a more productive way for children to spend their days) are also important, whether they are well-grounded in reality or based on a partial and limited understanding of possibilities.



QUESTIONS

- *When parents work in urban settings there is less of a tendency for children to help their parents than in rural areas. Discuss what factors you think might contribute to this.*
- *What family values are prevalent in your society? Have they changed since your parents' generation? If so, how? To what extent do you think these values affect the incidence of child labour?*
- *What measures can be taken to prevent children from leaving school and entering the workforce to pursue material ends? Think about measures that could be universal and those which might be of a more local or regional nature.*
- *Does your country have a social safety net? What elements would you consider to be fundamental to a social safety net in your society?*
- *What measures have already been adopted in your country to prevent and mitigate shocks? Which further measures could be taken to improve the situation?*

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OPTIONAL READING

Reasons for child labour in South Africa

The following excerpt from an ILO-IPEC study in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, discusses some of the factors associated with child labour in this area.

1. Poverty

Poverty is the main reason why children work in KwaZulu-Natal, where 59.3 per cent of children live in poor households. Working children reported needing an income, whether monetary or otherwise, for a variety of reasons.

Supplementing the family income. Many said they had to work to supplement an otherwise inadequate family income.

I do not have any reason but we do not get food. So we go to the Workshop [a small shopping mall in Durban] to help people with their parcels and, in turn, they give us money. Trolley attendant

My father just disappeared, and we are a big family of nine members. My mother's income is not enough for all our needs. I work so as to buy food and clothes. Child engaged in prostitution

Sometimes we do not have food at home, so we find casual jobs to help our parents. Girl engaged as a domestic worker

I am assisting my mother because my step-father is unemployed. All he does is drink alcohol. My mother is doing casual jobs in the suburbs. Trolley attendant

Self-support/caring for siblings. Other children have to work because there is no one to support them. These children are in a difficult situation because some of them also have to care for their younger siblings. Some are head of their households, which means that they have to assume serious responsibilities at a young age. Their parents have died, disappeared, or for some other reason are not there to look after them, and no member of the extended family will care for these children.

I was poor and do not have parents. I don't know their whereabouts. I decided to come to the streets to make money [for survival]. 17-year-old girl engaged in prostitution

My mother does not live with us, so there is no one to support us. Boy working as a hawker

I am an orphan just released from a home. I have to support myself. 15-year-old girl engaged in prostitution

I am trying to support my family. Our mother died and there is no one to support us. 15-year-old boy working as a street vendor

Mother and father passed away.

We are so many in the family. I am working to support myself and also save for school fees. 15-year-old girl working on a farm



In some situations only one parent has died but the remaining parent is no longer able to take care of the family. In other cases, parents disassociate themselves from the family altogether. Some children have reported that their father is alive, but he does not provide support for his children because he does not live with them. In these cases, after remarrying the father establishes another family and ignores the first family. Life for children from the old family becomes difficult, forcing them to look for work.

My mother has died. My father is alive but he is living somewhere else. 14-year-old girl selling things on the street

I am working to support my family because my father is dead. My mother has TB and is unemployed. Boy working as a hawker

My father is dead. My mother is retired. I therefore live in the street and support myself. 15-year-old boy working as a trolley attendant

A number of children reported leaving home because of push factors which they could not resist. These ranged from family illness to situations where both parents were alive but not earning enough to support the family. These children turned to the streets to look for a job. In most cases, they sent back part of their income to support the family.

My father and mother are not working. I need money to support [our] family. 13-year-old boy working on the streets

Mother has cancer so I don't want to be around and see her suffer. 17-year-old girl engaged in prostitution

Need to provide for own schooling. Some children, whose parents or guardians cannot provide for them, work to pay for their own schooling.

I need money so that I can afford school fees, because there is no one at home who is employed. I want to make money so that I can go back to school next year. Boy hawker

Father does not support us. The family income is not enough so everybody helps by buying his/her own clothes and paying school fees. 17-year-old girl engaged in prostitution

I am working to raise transport fares and sometimes money to buy food. I work part-time as still in school. 13-year-boy selling clothes

Need to provide for schooling of siblings. A few children living in rural areas and small towns were working in order to raise school fees for their siblings.

I assist my mother, as we are a big family, and then I pay school fees for my brothers and sisters. Girl farm worker

I want to help my sisters who are still at school. Girl farm worker

Escaping abuse at home. Some children run away to look for a job because of mistreatment at home. This often happens when a child moves in with a member of the extended family. But cases were also reported where biological and step-parents mistreated their children. The story below was told by a girl who was sad because she was forced to run away from home and live on the streets because her biological mother mistreated her.

I had a problem at home. I had two step-fathers, and both of them were having sex with me. When I told my mother, she used to say that I wanted to take her husband. I therefore decided to leave home because my mother was not treating us well. She used to beat us even for a minor problem. She was also not providing us with school needs. 17-year-old girl engaged in prostitution

Photo ILO/F.Molerers



In another case, a boy ran away from home because he could not cope with staying with his stepmother.

My mother is dead but my father is alive. He has married another woman. I did not have a good relationship with my stepmother, so I decided to come stay here and work. Boy working as a car guard

Deception/encouragement from peers.

Other children were caught up in unfortunate circumstances that left them helpless on the streets. One girl was tricked by a friend who was running away from home and wanted company. She found herself with no choice other than to engage in prostitution for survival.

What brought me here is that my mother disappeared in 1999. I was coming from church at Nongoma. My friends and I got a lift from a white man who was coming here [to Durban]. I realized later that my friend had set me up, because she was also not staying in her home. She was running away from home, and wanted to take me with her dirty tricks. We went as if we were going to church, and the white man bought nice things for us on the way. I later realized that we were in Durban.

When I ask my friend what was going on, she started to behave badly. I lived on the street for about a year and I saw other girls who were doing this job. A certain gentleman who was called Rosta told me to do this job too. I did the job for one day and I left it because I did not like it. I decided to sit down and thought about this job. After two months I joined it because I needed money ... It is very dangerous here - sometimes the boys try to rape us on the streets and try to take our money. Girl engaged in prostitution, Stamford Hill, Durban

Other motives. Other reasons that the children gave for working include these:

- having children outside of marriage and having to find ways to support them; and
- working for the family business (most of these children were working part-time).

A few children did not give any good reason for working, other than that they enjoyed it or that they wanted to have money and do what they wanted with it.



2. Parents' survival status

One hypothesis tested in this study suggests that an increase in the number of AIDS orphans in KwaZulu-Natal has led to more child labour. Interview questions thus had to first determine the survival status of parents and then establish the cause of death among those who were dead. The children could not be expected to report the cause of death of their parents accurately. Nevertheless, their accounts of the illness suffered by parent(s) prior to death helped researchers to say, with some degree of probability, whether a given death was AIDS related. The results presented in this section, therefore, only point to the magnitude of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its relation to child labour.

Associating parental deaths and HIV/AIDS

The following quotes are by working children who helped to associate the death of their parent(s) with HIV/AIDS.

They bewitched her [the mother]; we were not allowed to see her when she was sick. 13-year-old boy selling things on the street

My mother and sister passed away. I did not know the cause of death, but later I heard that they died of AIDS. Boy selling things on the street

My father passed away. He used to be sick, get better, and then get sick again. Then he became thin and he ended up dying. Girl in domestic work

Of the 218 working children included in the study, 82 (37.6 per cent) had lost at least one of their parents. About 85 per cent of these children, according to our working definition, were AIDS orphans. This data makes sense, given that most of

these parents died in their prime - between the ages of 30 and 50. Before the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Kwa Zulu-Natal, deaths of people, especially women, in this age bracket were rare. But the HIV/AIDS epidemic has changed the situation. Nine of the children interviewed reported that at least one of their parents was very sick. Again, most of these parents were suffering from AIDS-related illnesses.

These results support the hypothesis that the HIV/AIDS epidemic has exacerbated the problem of child labour in KwaZulu-Natal, and perhaps in South Africa as a whole.

3. Family relations

The family circumstances of working children differ. The study found that those staying in rural areas and small towns had stronger family ties than those who lived in the city.

A few working children stayed with both parents at home. Many said they were living with only one parent, usually the mother. In most cases, the other parent was either dead or staying somewhere else, i.e. working elsewhere as a migrant labourer or looking after another family. Most of these children were supported by their parent(s).

Life is terrible. I stay with my mother and four other children in a small shack. 15-year-old boy

My mother supports us, and we are a family of five. Life at home is not right; this is why I am working. 15-year-old girl

We are a family of seven, and my father is working as a policeman. He earns little money. I can say my mother is the one supporting us because she earns some money from the farm. 14-year-old girl

Some working children reported that they lived with members of their extended families. These families sometimes included one or both parents, but in most cases they did not. Often both parents were either dead or one parent was dead and the other one had established another family elsewhere. Traditionally, the extended family system in Africa was supposed to take responsibility for children in difficult circumstances. Some children who took part in this study, however, reported that the extended family system does not seem to work very well. Some orphans could not cope staying with members of their extended family because they were abused or ignored. The following are typical quotes by working children:

I do not get everything I need since my father passed away. I live with my grandmother, who is unemployed, and sometimes we sleep without a meal. 10-year-old boy working on the street

My parents passed away, and I was left with my grandmother who also passed away. I was then left with my uncle and aunt, who are not helping me. 16-year-old girl engaged in prostitution

I stay with my sister, who has a baby. We live with another sister who is now pregnant, and she treats me badly and sometimes does not want to buy food. 13-year-old trolley attendant

live with their grandparents after the death of one parent but before the death of the other:

I live at Ntseleni with my mother and grandmother. My mother is sick, and can't do anything, so my grandmother assists her. I don't know my father. 13-year-old girl working on the streets

Adapted from: Mturi, Akim J., and Nompumelelo Nzimande, 2003. *HIV/AIDS and child labour in South Africa: A rapid assessment.* (Geneva, ILO-IPEC)



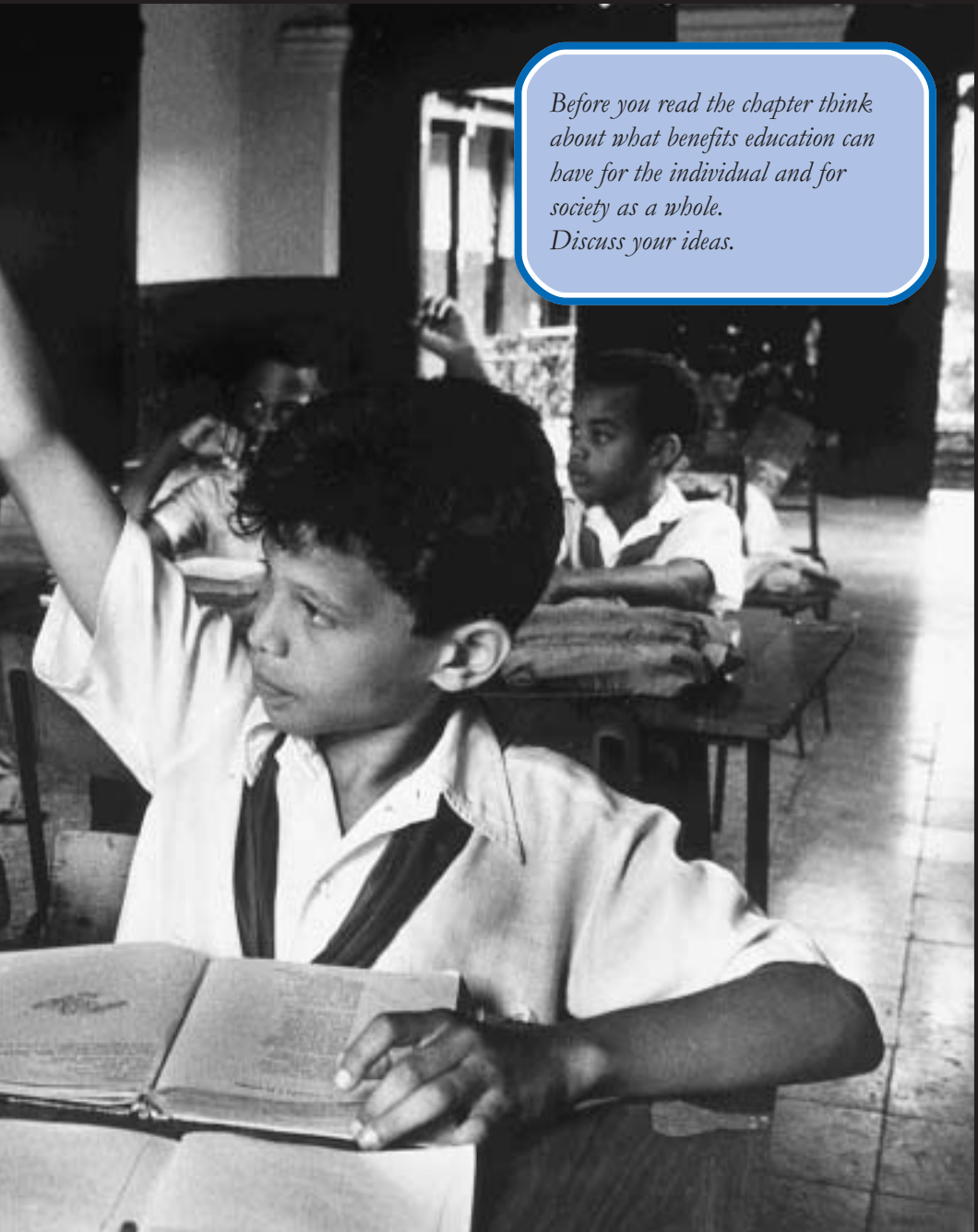
The extended family structure appears in a variety of forms. The simplest version occurs when a child moves in with an elder sibling, perhaps a sister. Another increasingly common type of extended structure is one in which grandparents care for grandchildren, omitting a whole family generation that has probably died of AIDS. Sometimes the children go to

Chapter 4

Education and Child Labour



Photo ILO/F. Moleris



Before you read the chapter think about what benefits education can have for the individual and for society as a whole. Discuss your ideas.

1. Introduction

While education in and of itself is clearly significant for the development of an individual and for the well being of society, it may be less obvious why education is important in the context of child labour. How are the two linked? Does child labour have an impact on children's school attendance? Can education play a role in combating child labour? If so, how can it be improved? These questions will be dealt with in this chapter.

2. The links between child labour and education

Attending school in the morning and studying at home in the afternoon require time - and so does working. Depending on the circumstances, it may be difficult for a child to find enough hours during the day to combine the two. If legislation makes it obligatory for parents to send their children to school, will this then “automatically” eliminate child labour?

A child's work can also compete with schooling in terms of money. While child labour is often a much needed contribution to the income of the family, education may be so costly that the decision whether to send a child to school or to work will be difficult for many poor parents.

In this section, we will look at these mechanisms in more detail, as well as the particular problems faced by former child workers when they try to (re-) enter school.

Will compulsory education eliminate child labour?

Some people have argued that compulsory and universal education for all children would effectively eliminate child labour. Proponents of this view cite history: they claim that the link between child labour and education was established in the 19th century when child labour laws in industrialized countries made it compulsory for children to complete basic education up to a specified age and established it as a requirement for employment. Myron Weiner and others who hold this view have argued that the universal extension of state-funded education in Europe, North America and Japan has been the most powerful instrument for the abolition of child labour: “No country has

*See pages 137-139
for a historic case
study on compulsory
education in Japan.*

successfully ended child labour without first making education compulsory. As long as children need not attend school, they will enter the labour force.” Policy makers in most countries believe that mandatory education is a prerequisite for the eventual abolition of all forms of child labour (Weiner, 1990).

Those who hold this view reason that where compulsory education is effectively implemented, children will be less available for full-time work at least during school hours, parents will be encouraged to keep their children in school, and employers will be dissuaded from hiring children.

However, many experts argue that compulsory schooling alone cannot overcome all the social and economic obstacles that combine to keep children out of school and in the labour force. In their view, compulsory education is a necessary but not the sole condition for the elimination of child labour. The following sections mention some of the other issues that need to be addressed in order to replace work with schooling.

The household’s “school versus work” decision

In the absence of effective measures to enforce compulsory education, the decision to enrol a child in school is the result of a household’s evaluation of the costs and benefits associated with schooling. The expected returns to education (i.e. the benefits relative to the cost of education) are therefore an important factor in the parents’ considerations. For example, the reduction of child labour in Vietnam between 1992 and 1998 can be attributed in part to the increase in returns to education that occurred over the period considered (Cigno/Rosati, 2001). However, the true benefits of schooling, such as increased future wages, may often not be known to families, and even if they are, weighing up value against private costs is not an easy task.

Even if parents are aware that the returns to education could be significant, the cost of schooling can be so high that children are removed from school and pushed into work. While particularly in developing countries only a very small percentage of parents can easily afford high-quality schools with amenities ranging from state of the art computers to fully equipped laboratories, and even extracurricular activities like art, music or riding, for millions of families around the world even the state-sponsored schools are out of reach. These so-called “free schools” have hidden costs which make them unaffordable for many people.

“How do you spend the money that you earn from weaving rugs?” - “Buying stationery for my school bag and paying family expenses.”

(Raihana, 9, Afghan refugee, Pakistan)

“I lost my place at school because of money. But if somebody came up with the money to register me at school I could go. My dream - it is to become something like a director one day.”

(Alberto, 13, Mozambique)

Even though there is no charge for tuition itself, there are often charges for school supplies and materials, uniforms, transportation and extra-curricular activities. Many families have to survive on only US\$1 per day, and these costs are simply beyond their means.

Thao, a working girl in Vietnam

Thao lives with her grandparents and five uncles and aunts in a commercial area of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. She dropped out of school after finishing her third year of primary school because she couldn't afford to continue. Instead, she has a piecemeal job, working all day threading yarn through incense spirals with a needle.

"I don't go to school - I just stay home and make incense for a living. I get up at around six or seven in the morning, brush my teeth, do the washing up, and clean the house. Then I ask my grandmother for 1,000 Dong (6.7 cents) to buy breakfast. After breakfast I go to the workshop and take home about ten boxes of incense to thread. They give me the raw incense in boxes, and for each one I thread I get 250 Dong (1.7 cents). I can't finish all the boxes in one day - only about five - because it takes time! I finish work at about seven or eight in the evening. I usually feel exhausted, have a headache and sore arms and shoulders.

Source:
<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk>

The move away from schooling and towards work in poor households is compounded by a so called "Principal-Agent" interaction problem linked to the costs and benefits of education. In the Principal-Agent situation, the "Principal" wants to induce the "Agent" to take some action that is costly to the agent. In the school versus work context, this means that the child wants the parent to invest in the child's education, and this is expensive for the parent. The benefits of going to school are mostly long-term, and will mainly affect the child, rather than the parent. On the other hand, the costs have to be borne by the parent, and these costs are due in the short term. This situation might cause parents not to send their children to school, or to withdraw them from school.

A twelve-year-old boy in Tajikistan

"I get up at 5:30am and go with my mother to milk the goats. We come back and make breakfast for the younger children and my father. I then prepare lunch and at 7:30am I leave the house to walk to school, which is five kilometres away. I used to catch the bus, but now we cannot afford the fare - and in any case, it often doesn't come. I get home from school mid-afternoon and help prepare the meal or do the laundry. After tea I milk the goats again, clean the kitchen and go to bed. I want to be an engineer, but I'll probably have to leave school soon and help on the farm."

Source: Martin, Günther and Caglar, 2003: *Child labour in Europe and Central Asia*

A comparative study of child labour and schooling in Africa found that one way to reduce child labour and increase incentives to keep the children in the educational system is to improve access to credit, which the family can pay back later (see Canagarajah/Nielsen, 1999). Alternatively, the government can put in place "income transfer programmes" in order to stimulate demand. Through these programmes, money is given to poor families to compensate for the cost of sending their children to school rather than to work. This is happening in Brazil (see box), Mexico and Bangladesh, for example.

Combating child labour through education and income support in Brazil

The Brazilian Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (PETI) aims to offset the direct and indirect costs of schooling. The programme provides poor families with a monthly allowance per child enrolled in and attending school. Wherever possible, the allowance is paid to the mother or another female adult responsible for the children. Parents and older relatives of the beneficiaries are also targeted for activities in the areas of skills development, alternative income generation and micro-credit, carried out in partnership with other government programmes and agencies. As of September 2002, 186,000 families had enrolled in these programmes and 810,000 children had benefited. All 27 Brazilian states took part and almost half the 5,561 municipalities were involved in the programme. Community-based committees monitor the implementation of the programme in order to generate local ownership and ensure sustainability.

Child labour and school achievement

When children work full-time, school dropout and repetition rates tend to increase, with the result that older children find themselves in classrooms with younger ones. Children are less motivated to do good schoolwork (sometimes because they are just too tired), and school failure is often the result.

Christopher Heady carried out research in Ghana (2000), which analysed the effects of child labour on learning achievement. His study reveals that the children's maths and writing scores were low. He also found that regular class attendance was a more important requirement for learning maths than for writing achievement. Heady suggests that for those children who both attended school and worked, learning achievement was lower than it should have been, possibly because of exhaustion, or because the children's attention was focused elsewhere. However, he does allow for the fact that some of the working children were simply not keen on maths and writing. This possibility would need further investigation, because perhaps it is a lack of motivation that affects achievement, and this might be a psychological spill over or effect of work.

Heady's Ghana study also showed that those who worked in their homes did slightly better than those who worked outside their homes, and, as was to be expected, those who worked more achieved lower scores on tests. Girls did worse than boys in all tests, and in fact they tended to work more than boys in the sample group tested.

Other studies in different regions of the world have also found evidence of the adverse consequences of child labour on school achievement. For example, Stern (1997) reported that working more than 15 hours per week while in secondary school in the USA led to lower grades, less time spent on homework, increased likelihood of dropout and a lower likelihood of entering post-secondary education. Sanchez et al. (2003), using information on pupils in the 3rd and 4th years in Latin America found that in all ten countries tested, performance in mathematics and language tests was lower when the child worked outside the home, and the impact became more pronounced when the child reported working more than a few hours.

More research is needed to better understand the impact of child work on children's learning achievement.

Schooling and the age and experience of child workers

The initial school experience is difficult for many child workers because they often start school at an older age. This has been documented extensively for children who work on the streets, for example, in Brazil, the Philippines and India. They may have access to schools but they have tremendous difficulty in staying in them because of their age of entry or re-entry. Schooling can quickly become a negative experience for them: there is a mismatch between the educational content and approaches used and their ages and corresponding intellectual, social and emotional needs. This heightens their sense of inadequacy - they know they are older than their classmates, yet they may be unable to meet the expectations of formal schooling and may have learning problems. This may be enough to discourage them from continuing with school.

In particular, street children living on their own manage their own lives and consider themselves free to decide what to do and how to survive on the streets. It is very difficult for them to submit to an authority figure and live within the structured discipline of formal schools. All too often the oppressive and dangerous conditions of work on the streets or elsewhere may appear preferable to attending school.



Photo ILO/F. Moleres



Photo ILO/J. Maillard

Over-aged children

Less than 60 per cent of children who enter the first year do so at the correct age, and the average age of entry is ten years. Children who do not go to school have either never entered school or entered and dropped out early. Although the entry into school of over-age children is still common in many parts of the world, in most countries it can be reasonably assumed that if a child has not entered the first year of primary school by the age of 11, then he or she is unlikely to ever enter school.

Source: UNESCO,
1995: *World Education
Report*

The problem of over-aged children was emphasized by authors R. Anker and H. Melkas in an ILO publication in 1996. They noted that formal school systems are usually not designed to be responsive to the diverse needs of over-age children who enter school late, whose schooling was disrupted or who have to repeat a grade, often because of work. School curricula are structured in terms of age and grade levels, and flexibility has seldom been a typical feature of mass public education systems. For example, in Bangladesh, many of the children aged 10 to 12 who were summarily released from work due to international pressure could not easily enter formal schools because school authorities refused to admit them since they were over-age.

International Commitments to Education and the Elimination of Child Labour

Currently, there are three important and complementary international agreements that provide a cohesive framework for policy and progress in linking education to the elimination of child labour.

The ILO Minimum Age Convention 138 and Recommendations 146 (1973)* was the first of the agreements which linked education and children's work by:

- Recognizing the link between the age of primary school completion and the minimum age for employment;
- Obliging member states to ensure that no child is employed in full-time work below the age of compulsory schooling, which mostly varies from 12-14 years;
- Calling on States to raise the minimum age of employment to 16 years.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 was the first comprehensive human rights treaty for children; having achieved virtually universal ratification, it is also the most widely ratified human rights treaty. Several articles directly address the issue of children's work and their education by:

- Guaranteeing children the right to be protected from economic exploitation;
- Obliging governments to regulate and enforce minimum age, hours, and conditions of employment;
- Guaranteeing the child's right to free primary education;
- Directing the child's education to a wide range of skills and knowledge beyond basic numeracy and literacy.

The UNESCO World Declaration on Education for All (1990) created a framework for providing education to all children by:

- Constituting a global recognition of education as a fundamental right and necessity for overall human and national development;
- Ensuring a commitment to meeting the basic learning needs of all children, youth, and adults;
- Serving as a platform for launching a new and expanded vision of basic education including skills, knowledge, competencies, and attitudes recognizing that basic education extends far beyond schooling and can occur in the family, the community, and the workplace.

** See Appendix 1 for the full text of the Convention*

3. Making education work for children

What are the key factors that ensure that education can contribute to the elimination of child labour? They involve access to education, quality issues, education that takes place outside of the formal school system and helps children make a transition back to school, and “vocational education” that is geared towards learning practical, work-related skills.

Increasing access to education

Many countries need to expand their public education systems to accommodate the numbers of children who still do not have access to school. This means that:

- More schools need to be built, teachers need to be recruited and trained, and educational materials need to be made available so that schools can provide complete basic education for children;
- Alternative approaches need to be developed to provide for educating children when the community’s or family’s lifestyle involves frequent relocation;
- The formal education systems (i.e. schools) and non-formal education systems (i.e. out-of-school programmes) need to be linked in a more systematic manner so that the transition from the non-formal to the formal system is easier, and both systems need to be improved and upgraded in many countries;
- Schools should facilitate the entry or re-entry of children who worked or have worked, by providing alternative options and independent learning approaches. Over-age children should receive special guidance and support in order to fit back into the school system

A substantial increase in the availability of public education in rural areas at the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels will diminish the pressure and existing congestion in schools in the urban centres where poor families migrate in search of both jobs and educational opportunities for their children.

Improving the quality of formal and non-formal education

What can be done to enhance the quality of both formal and non-formal education programmes? We will look at four areas below. The content of the curriculum can be improved, teaching approaches can be changed, learning materials can be improved, and educational programmes can be redesigned and restructured.

(a) Curriculum development

Good curricula are essential for delivering quality education. They must be coherent, paced and properly sequenced. They should not only stress subject learning but also cognitive and psycho-social development and applied learning, including reasoning, problem solving, assessing information and making choices, and considering ethical questions in the light of individual and social value systems. Holistic learning is essential.

In many countries, the content and approaches must be made more relevant, interesting and challenging so as to reflect the country's cultural diversity and local communities' cultural heritages. Relevance means that children and parents must see that children can apply their newly-gained skills in everyday life; the curriculum must be adapted to the environment in which children live and take familiar situations as a starting point for further learning. Children must be helped to appreciate their own culture and their nation's history and socio-economic reality, while at the same time learning about other societies and cultures.

Social studies and health and human rights education are recognized as being essential in school systems throughout the world. Improving understanding about the way of life in their own communities is a powerful and practical means of educating children about child labour and children's rights. Family life education must also be included in the school curriculum from the primary level onwards, including relationships and the reproductive rights of adults - subjects which are considered taboo in many societies. The lack of education on these subjects, along with the breakdown of traditional family values and the deterioration of the social environment in which many young people grow up, shown in so many recent studies, means that problems such as drug addiction, prostitution and HIV/AIDS now dangerously affect children's social milieu. Children need to be educated to safeguard their lives and become responsible adults.

Family Life Education Programme - Ministry of Education, Tanzania

The high drop-out rate of girls due to pregnancy and the subsequent drifting of girls into premature employment was a matter of concern in Tanzania. Many of these girls have no other choice than to engage in unskilled labour in the informal sector in order to earn a living for themselves and their children. Usually, they start relying on their own labour from an early age.

The Tanzanian Parliament decided that family life education should be incorporated into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools in the late 1980s, and in 1987 the Ministry of Education initiated the Family Life Education Programme to address the problem. A team of family life educators was trained to teach the students in the state schools about their health, the physical, social and emotional changes they could expect to go through in adolescence, the responsibilities of family life, the problems of early parenting, and the disadvantages that result from dropping out of school because of early pregnancies.

Source: Haspels et al., 1999: *Action against child labour: Strategies in education*

Science teaching is another “grey” area in school. The content is often too theoretical, and frequently the experiments require equipment and materials unavailable in schools in poor areas. Mathematics learning has been found to be weak in most countries and the absence of textbooks aggravates the situation. Mathematics teaching must be made more concrete, so that it is no longer a main cause for class repetition and failure.



Learning English in the Kibagare school. Kenya.

Photo ILO/P. Lissac

A curriculum improvement project in India

The Eklavya programme was established by a small group of highly educated people who believe that education is critical for social change and should be available to all. Instead of setting up an alternative system, parallel to the state schools, they chose to work through them to help make education more dynamic and meaningful. The programme initially focused on the improvement of the science education programme in middle school classes in urban and rural communities. From 16 classes in one district in 1972 the programme has now expanded to 14 districts covering 450 schools and 50,000 students.

Science education was improved through the introduction of more active, experiential learning methods and learning-by-doing techniques such as experiments, field trips and group discussions. Eklavya trained teachers to be facilitators in their work with children, to unlearn teaching methods that emphasize passive rote learning with a heavy reliance on textbooks, and to shift to more cooperative forms of working in small groups, encouraging questions and discussions. Children, teachers and other resource persons participated in the development of the curriculum. Eklavya was able to help teachers and children relate the content of science education to the children's own lives and environment.

From the initial focus on science education, Eklavya expanded to other curriculum content areas such as the social sciences. They introduced an integrated approach to organize the curriculum by thematic units of study which linked different content areas. Emphasis was given to developing children's self-expression and critical thinking. After-school activities were introduced such as activity centres and libraries, production of a children's magazine called "Chakmak", a children's club, children's fairs, contests and exhibitions. These are now considered to be integral parts of the educational programme.

Source: Haspels et al.,
1999: *Action against
child labour: Strategies
in education*

(b) Changing approaches to teaching

In order to bring about improved education, the most important steps are to limit the class size and to change the processes that take place in the classroom. Class size must be small enough to permit active learning and free, participatory interaction. The learning process needs to be “democratized”. Practices such as the emphasis on passive rote-learning, memorization through repetition, excessive top-down approaches and reliance on punishments should be replaced with active, learner-centred approaches. Children must be encouraged to “learn how to learn”, i.e. to initiate their own learning and be taught how to direct it, at their own pace. The issue of pace is particularly important for (ex-) working children who have acquired skills at work. Teachers in multi-age and multi-grade classes in particular need to recognize the wide variations among individuals, and to restructure the classroom by putting children into more homogeneous learning groups.

There should be a more imaginative use of the home and community environment and of community involvement. Drama, music and art must find a regular place in the classroom not because they are set aside for “fun”, but because these activities are important educational inputs for developing personalities and lead to better creative outputs from students in the more academic subjects.

(c) Improving learning materials

Sufficient and well-adapted learning materials are necessary in any quality education system. They should provide a “coherent, appropriately paced and sequenced instructional programme for the subjects taught” (Lockheed/Verspoor 1991). However, in many developing countries learning materials are scarce, or if available they suffer from factual inaccuracies, inappropriate illustrations and a poor choice of text and language. Good materials will encourage children’s curiosity and critical thinking, and should go beyond textbooks. If the school is characterized by multi-grade classes with a single teacher, then there is a need for more diverse learning materials. Materials such as multi-level activity cards combined with peer teaching can improve classroom management for the teacher and enliven child-child and teacher-child interaction.

One issue that has been much discussed is whether there should be a different curriculum for rural and for urban children. By and large, however, the consensus seems to be that a broad spectrum of essential curriculum content (concepts, information and skills) should be given to both categories. The learning materials and experiences should be developed based on familiar, local situations that mirror the children's own environment.

(d) Redesigning educational programmes

The ways in which educational services are provided to children and the extent to which these are adapted to the children's living conditions also determines the choice between school and work. Schools and educational centres need to provide basic amenities for learning, such as shelter from the elements, adequate space, tables and benches or chairs if they can be obtained, and reading and writing materials (blackboards, chalk, pens or pencils and paper). This may seem self-evident, but the shortage of these elementary requirements in many parts of the world is a serious drawback to teaching and learning.

The way time is organized on a daily, weekly and yearly basis is also important. Teaching schedules need to take into account whether children can actually participate in classes - at what time they need to leave their homes if schools are located far away, how much time is needed to produce optimum teaching and learning conditions in school, how much work, including household chores, is expected of children and whether this is seasonal, and finally how much additional study time is needed to be able to meet school requirements outside of school hours.

Non-formal education and working children

Many initiatives have been undertaken to make educational systems more suited to the needs of child workers, especially that of providing quality non-formal, "transitional" education outside of the formal school system in order to create a bridge between work and school. It is often not possible to put (ex-) working children directly into formal school, as has already been pointed out, because they are older and are not used to the school environment. The mandate of transitional education is to provide (ex-) working children with a "second chance". Most of the working children who enter non-formal schools are over-age and illiterate but by no means "unknowing". That is why these students must be allowed to learn at their own pace and in ways

that build upon the experience they have acquired while working. Transitional education can help (ex-)child workers to “catch up” with their peers who began their schooling at the appropriate age.

Non-formal education in Andhra Pradesh, India

The Bhagavatulu Charitable Trust (BCT) has been operating as a service organization in integrated rural development since 1976. In 1993 it began addressing child labour problems by setting up non-formal education centres, in cooperation with 25 NGOs. More than 160 centres are now preparing children for re-entry into the formal school system. BCT started with two-hour evening classes lasting 280 or 300 days a year; the children continued to work while attending them. The BCT curriculum takes two and a half years to complete and is organized in five stages of six months each.

Six of the non-formal education centres were converted to full-time schools so that the children would not also go to work. The curriculum lasts from 18 months to two years, at the end of which time the children can join Class 5 of the formal school. By 1996, 160 full-time schools were operating and more children were enrolling in these day schools than in the evening programmes. After children are mainstreamed into the formal school, BCT moves on to another location where there are more children who work and do not attend school.

In cooperation with the Rishi Valley Rural Education Programme, BCT upgraded and redesigned the curriculum. It introduced more active “learning by doing” approaches which were successful in motivating children to stay in school until their parents became accustomed to not relying on the income that they brought to the family. Ninety per cent of the children have moved on to the formal schools. Village committees have since built more schools, which 2,000 children attend.

Source: Haspels et al.,
1999: *Action against child
labour: Strategies in
education*

Programmes which combine basic functional literacy content areas (language, mathematics and science) and the social sciences with practical life and work skills can meet the needs of (ex-) child workers. These children will later be able to re-enter the labour market at an appropriate age with the skills that will allow them to access and hold onto better jobs and with more knowledge about their rights as workers.

The Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF) in India aims to eliminate child labour through the extension of quality education. The effort began by organizing evening classes for working children but soon developed an innovative strategy for removing children from work and enrolling them into formal schools. During the first phase, literate youth from the area carry out surveys to identify the numbers of children at work and out of school and to motivate the parents to enrol their children into non-formal education activities. During the second phase, summer camps are organized for the children for three months in schools during the regular formal school summer holidays. The children start to learn the “3 Rs” (reading, writing and arithmetic) in a creative learning environment. They also form committees and become responsible for running several camp activities. The third phase involves the transition from the camp to a hostel and full-time formal education, utilizing the existing government facilities for children from disadvantaged and poor classes. MVF teachers and volunteers are attached to the hostels to guide the children in the transition to formal schools. The MVF model has been very effective in removing children from work and mainstreaming them into formal schools. Over 10,000 children, have so far benefited from this programme.

There should remain a strong link between the formal school system and non-formal rehabilitation programmes because basic education is key to sustaining the success of educational interventions over the long-term. The most effective strategy is one that links interventions for rehabilitation and interventions for prevention as closely as possible.

Often, working children or ex-working children have a keen interest in pursuing their education. They may want to take an equivalency test to acquire a primary school or a secondary school certificate or diploma. Older children who have completed primary schooling can often be best supported through a secondary-level programme offering both vocational training and academic subjects. In this way, they leave their options open to obtain additional schooling, even though they have to combine secondary schooling with part-time work or have to start working right after completing the equivalent of a secondary education.

Vocational education

Combining vocational training with basic education has always been a popular idea, especially in the context of educating disadvantaged children who are unlikely to pursue further education. Unfortunately, this use of vocational training leads to a view of technical education as being “second class”. Vocational training should be given a higher status than is often the case today. Some argue that the academic nature of learning in most schools today produces young people who are trained to seek employment in “white collar jobs”, which are few and usually beyond their reach. Vocational education could be seen as a way to “right the balance” of an educational system that creates greater unemployment because it is tailor-made to the well-to-do urban elite and has little significance for rural or urban disadvantaged learners.

Others feel that vocational training creates a new kind of class system whereby the children of the poor are given skills training for manual labour while the children of the privileged are given an academic education. In his study on India, Weiner comments: “Some further maintain that the children of the lower classes should learn to work with their hands rather than their heads - skills, they say, that are more readily acquired by early entry into the labour force than by attending school” (Weiner, 1991).

Many parents favour vocational training above a more academic education, preferring their children to learn a trade. However, it has been found difficult to give meaningful vocational training to children lacking in basic literacy and numeracy skills. But in some cases the skills training given is in some cases repetitive and actually physically harmful, and in others of such a low standard that students do not really learn or develop a foundation to become skilled workers in the future.

An ILO (1998) report reached important conclusions concerning the relationship between education and vocational training. It is not appropriate to conceive of practical skills training and basic education in “either-or” terms because they are actually closely related. Functional literacy and numeracy skills are pre-requisites to any form of education or vocational training in later childhood. At the same time, practical skills training - which requires the concrete manipulation of materials and objects in the environment - is a pre-requisite to reading, writing and mathematics. “Learning by doing” is often applied in the most progressive schools in developing as well as industrialized countries. Children’s active involvement in experiments and practical learning experiences - such as arts and

crafts, constructing models and structures or familiarization with agriculture, forestry or woodwork - are successful teaching-learning methods in primary schools. It is increasingly being recognized that they are not only interesting and enjoyable for young children but are effective teaching methods, as they involve all the senses and the practical application of knowledge and skills.

Concerning vocational skills training for older children which aims to prepare them to enter skilled jobs, the distinction must be made between formal trades training, which is usually longer-term and systematically linked to apprenticeship programmes, and shorter, non-formal pre-vocational training. Most of the formal training programmes require close adult supervision, as well as a proper workshop with tools and machinery. However, the openings available for students in almost all countries are very limited because this type of training is expensive.

Very often, some type of pre-vocational training is given to (ex-) working children in combination with or after functional literacy training. These courses are usually short and provide specific skills such as silk-screen printing, handicraft production, poultry-raising or growing vegetables. This type of practical skills training can successfully teach children skills that can provide immediate economic alternatives and the necessary incentive to make education more attractive. But this should not be the ultimate goal of these programmes. They should be viewed as being transitional, to facilitate the child's entry into further education or vocational training.

Pre-vocational training is sometimes combined with "learn and earn" opportunities, in particular when children's families rely on their income for survival. In such cases, it is important to ensure that these opportunities are managed as learning centres for children rather than as disguised employment and recruitment centres. This will depend upon the sensitivity and commitment of the educators and administrators. When these learning centres function as "sheltered workshops" for children, a concern for children's rights and their best interests must prevail.

Innovative educational strategies for working children – The Department of Education, Culture and Sport, Lapu-Lapu City, Philippines

The administrators and teachers of the Public Schools Division of Lapu-Lapu City, in the Southern Province of Cebu, decided that they could not ignore the problems of child labourers from the primary school classes in the state schools located in the poorest barangays (villages). These schools registered the highest drop-out rates for the province. Most of the children were in the years four to six - usually ten to 12 years old - and worked as stone cutters, vendors, as helpers on tourist boats and in hotels, as gardeners and dishwashers. A significant number were involved in pyrotechnics production.

The school administrators and teachers decided to conduct a household survey on the living and working conditions of the children to fully assess their needs and raise the parents' awareness about the children's problems. A series of community meetings were held by the school administrators and local government officials, including the Mayor and the city planning officer, social workers, health officers and parents. Plans for specific interventions were developed during these meetings, funding requirements were identified and government funds were allocated both from the national level and the local school board. The local school board also provided honoraria to teachers who did additional work for the programme.

Since it was clear that the families needed the income earned by the children, one of the programme activities consisted of providing time after classes on the school premises to enable the children to work under the supervision of teachers and NGO partners. For example, the children who worked as stone cutters were now involved in the production of fashion accessories made of indigenous materials such as shells, fish scales, stones or paper. In this way, the children earned money through light work for a few hours per day. They did not drop out of school and were no longer late or absent from school.

In addition, community-based livelihood projects and literacy classes for the parents were organized through 30 schools in the area. Parents responded positively to these programmes. They became conscious of the need to send their children to schools regularly, and to assist their children with homework. They also cooperated with school officials in a savings scheme for their children wherein 20 per cent of the children's earnings from their participation in "school-based" income-generating activities were deposited in a savings account for the children. These savings would be important for their continuing education.

Source: Haspels et al.,
1999: *Action against
child labour: Strategies
in education*

Children should not be trained in one trade only at the pre-vocational training level. Certain basic skills that are needed in many kinds of work, such as carpentry, masonry, bricklaying or weaving, could be made the “core” curriculum. Students can then later specialize in a particular skill. In this way, they would develop a familiarity with the skills and knowledge needed in a wider variety of trades.

Very often, vocational programmes do not take the demand or the changing needs of the local labour market into sufficient account. A labour market survey in consultation with employers should determine the type of skills needed in the local job market and then the curriculum can be structured; i.e. the curricula should be more flexible.

There is also a tendency to encourage the participation of boys rather than girls in vocational skills training, because the marked gender segregation in the labour market means that girls would probably not use the skills acquired. Efforts must be made to counteract this, and girls should be given vocational training which prepares them for marketable skills and, hopefully, well-paid jobs.

More in-depth information is needed and more experience needs to be gained on how to create links between a more academic education and vocational training, and how to provide exit points into formal vocational training for young people who have completed basic education.



Students at the centre for apprenticeship of young women, A.P. Women's, in the district of Hyderabad. The goal of this programme, sponsored by the ILO and designed for the rehabilitation and integration of working children, is to promote and implement the education of young women and to eliminate child labour.

Photo ILO/M. Crozet

Combining non-formal education with vocational training in Indonesia

The local branch of one of the oldest Muslim-based community service organizations, Muhammadiyah, in West Java, Indonesia, has long made effective use of evening prayers as an important forum in which to introduce ideas for development in the community. In 1992, it started to address child labour and motivate the community against it by implementing an educational programme for working children in which vocational training plays an important role. The programme runs for five days a week with three hours of instruction each day. The course content, which combines vocational training and academic subjects at the junior secondary level, is primarily based on learning packages developed by the Department of Non-formal Education for children who have had no access to any education or have dropped out of school.

The project was considered unusually successful by the community local government and evaluators. The high quality and marketability of the skills provided was very important to this success. But what also made a difference was cooperating with important partners from the start. High-level contacts with the Municipal Office of the Department of Manpower made it possible for the programme to gain official recognition for their pre-vocational training and Department certificates for its “graduates”. Partnerships were also established and maintained with the Department of Education for the non-formal education programme. Local leaders at various levels were regularly informed about progress, and volunteer workers and trainers were recruited from within the community. Partnerships were developed with the private sector to obtain raw material for the vocational training activities. The project was selected by the Education Department as one of the best basic education and vocational training equivalency programmes.

Source: Haspels et al.,
1999: *Action against
child labour: Strategies
in education*

4. Financing education

While the previous section has shown that education has a large contribution to make in combating child labour, it is clear that education requires considerable resources. The question remains whether the above prescriptions are realistic, given the great economic and financial constraints many countries face. Is quality education actually affordable on a global basis?

A recent study estimates that worldwide an additional US\$16 billion per year would be required to achieve universal primary education of decent quality by 2015 (Matz, 2003). While this may appear a huge amount of money, the following table puts this figure into perspective by giving data on annual expenditure for various items during the 1990s:

Table 4.1: Annual expenditure on basic education and other items

The World's Priorities? (annual expenditure)	
Basic education	\$6 bn
Ice cream in Europe	\$11bn
Perfumes in Europe and USA	\$12 bn
Pet foods in Europe and USA	\$17 bn
Business entertainment in Japan	\$35 bn
Cigarettes in Europe	\$50 bn
Alcoholic drinks in Europe	\$105 bn
Narcotic drugs in the world	\$400 bn
Military spending in the world	\$780 bn

Source:
UNDP,
*Human
Development
Report 1998*

This table indicates that the world can surely afford to invest more money in the well-being of its children. However, while universal access to education is affordable in global terms, there are many countries, particularly in Africa, for which the costs of financing the types of education programmes described in this chapter are too high. These countries must rely on increased donor assistance from the developed countries to meet the present educational challenges.

5. Conclusion

The international community's efforts to achieve education for all children and the progressive elimination of child labour are very closely linked. On one hand, education of good quality is a key element in the prevention of child labour. Children with no access to education have little alternative than to enter the labour market. On the other hand, child labour is one of the main obstacles to education for all, since children who are working full-time cannot go to school. The academic achievement of children who combine work and school often suffers, and there is a strong tendency for these children to drop out of school and enter into full-time employment.

When education is compulsory and attractive, it can help to reduce child labour. There is a need to develop an integrated policy and programme of action to provide quality free and universal education that is relevant and accessible to children in poor families such as those to which the majority of child workers belong. Child labour concerns should be explicitly addressed and integrated into such a policy and programme of action; a holistic approach to education is necessary. Quality education should be provided for children at least up to 15 years of age to stem the flow of children into the labour market and to provide working children and former working children with educational opportunities.



Informal school for children sewing foot-balls

Photo ILO/M. Shapira



QUESTIONS

- *What costs to the family are associated with schooling in your country? What kind of government programmes are available (if any) to help people cover these costs?*
- *Find out about school attendance rates in your country. What percentage of children drop out at an early age and how many stay on to gain some kind of qualification?*
- *How long do you think compulsory education should last? What key subjects should be covered by the curriculum (e.g. practical skills versus theoretical knowledge)?*
- *How relevant was the curriculum to your everyday life when you were at school? What changes would you make to it?*
- *What changes should be made to the education system in your country to prevent children from engaging in child labour?*
- *“Equal opportunities in education are essential for the democracy development of society.” To what extent do you agree with this statement?*

Suggestions for further study

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OPTIONAL READING

Compulsory education and the elimination of child labour in Japan

The following case study of the role of compulsory education in the elimination of child labour in Japan is taken from Myron Weiner's influential book "The child and the state in India" (1990), which is mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The role played by the Japanese state in the establishment of compulsory universal education is an effective refutation of the argument that state intervention is only possible after parents no longer need to send their children into the labour force and employers no longer require low-wage child workers. Japan was well on the way toward universal literacy by the end of the Tokugawa era, prior to Japan's opening to the West, prior to the Meiji restoration, and prior to Japan's industrialization. By 1868 the majority of town dwellers with a settled occupation and a good proportion of farmers of middling status were literate.¹ While Tokugawa Japan had no organized national educational system, there were thousands of small private schools. Some catered to samurai children and were financed by the governments of the fiefs, but most were unsubsidized, fee-charging private schools for the children of commoners (known as *terakoya* or parishioner schools). By 1870- perhaps half the male population of Japan could read and write simple Japanese, keep accounts, and read public documents and newspapers.

Samurai children attending fief-run schools were educated in the Confucian

classics and studied both Chinese and Japanese. It was an elite education, "learning appropriate to the world of rulers," as one Japanese official said in the 1870s explaining why the system was no longer relevant.² A striking feature of the fief school was that the emphasis was on the training of men who would acquire administrative and technical skills and attitudes of loyalty that would make them useful to the fief. But both in the private, commoner schools and in the fief-run schools the emphasis was on moral education and on virtue, not usefulness, as the chief goal of study. Vocational education was important, but not to the neglect of moral education with its emphasis on the virtues of filial piety, loyalty, justice, courage, benevolence, bravery, and, of course, respect for teachers.

Tokugawa schools, like those of nineteenth-century England, sustained status divisions. Commoners were excluded from the fief-supported samurai schools, while the sons of the daimyos (feudal barons) were educated at home by private tutors. In time, the status divisions within the educational system were undermined as the principle of merit increasingly entered into the Japanese economic and administrative system. The Chinese emphasis on promotion to office by examinations (in contrast with the Japanese emphasis on hereditary rank) made inroads into the Tokugawa educational system as teachers awarded recognition to achievement in school. By the middle of



the nineteenth century the principle of ascription was being undermined both in the bureaucracies of the fiefs and in the schools.

The most important educational developments in Tokugawa Japan were the sheer quantity of schools that were opened, the numbers of children 'who attended, and the extent to which literacy became so widespread. Tokugawa leaders believed that education would make the masses more moral and obedient. The Meiji leadership was even more enthusiastic about mass education, believing that education was essential if Japan was to become a modern country with a strong military. "Hence-forth, throughout the land," began a famous school regulation of 1872, "without distinctions of class and sex, in no village shall there be a house without learning, in no house an ignorant individual. Every guardian, acting in accordance with this, shall bring up his children with tender care, never failing to have them attend school."³

The promotion of mass education was thus a central objective of the Meiji regime. Between 1880 and 1900 the Japanese government increased the primary-school attendance from 41 percent of the six-to-thirteen age group to 82 percent. In 1910, 98 percent of the age group was attending school.⁴ The Tokugawa emphasis on education suited to one's status was ended. What was retained was the Tokugawa concern for moral education, now redefined to emphasize loyalty to the emperor and to the nation rather than to the fief. The Imperial Rescript on Education, promulgated in 1890, emphasized the importance of inculcating in school the virtues of patriotism, respect for the laws, dedication to the emperor, and filial piety. Political indoctrination was a central objective of educational policy. An official

ideology was developed that stressed the unique character of the "family-state" descended from a common ancestor. Filial piety was held up as a model for the relationship between the citizen and the state.⁵ All elementary-school children were to take a morals course intended to foster a "national spirit" and to develop a love and reverence for the emperor, who embodied in his person the unity of the state and the people. Every school child was required to memorize and recite sections from the Imperial Rescript on Education.⁶

To ensure the inculcation of notions of national morality, the educational system was highly centralized. Prefectural schools were placed under the control of the Ministry of Education and textbooks for primary schools were prescribed by the ministry. The system proved to be efficient, both with respect to its capacity to inculcate political loyalty and submission and to create a remarkably educated population of workers and farmers.

Since the central government was not in a financial position to provide educational subsidies even for primary education, the central government ordered local governments to collect the revenues to support compulsory education. In the late 1880s the central government began to subsidize compulsory education, with the result that elementary-school enrolments soared, from 1.3 million in 1873 to 3.3 million in 1893 to 5 million in 1903.

With universal primary education and universal conscription, Japan developed both an educated army and an educated electorate. Universal manhood suffrage was established in 1925. Since the Japanese government emphasized state rather than private education at the primary school level, Japanese children of all social classes shared the same kind of



schooling for the first six years of school, reading the same textbooks, learning the same poems, acquiring the same values. The educational system also facilitated high rates of intergenerational social mobility, and thereby weakened class divisions: While social mobility would not have been possible had Japan not simultaneously experienced a high rate of economic growth, the high growth rate was itself made possible by the expansion of education, including the growth of technical and vocational education in the upper elementary schools.

There are some striking parallels between the Japanese experience with mass education and that of the countries of Europe. In Protestant Europe and in Japan the spread of mass education began prior to industrialization and in some countries, such as Sweden, even without formal schools. Countries like Japan, Germany, and Austria that initiated compulsory education early in their industrialization process had less of a child labour problem than countries like England, which deferred making education compulsory until later.

Theology was an important force for compulsory education in many Protestant countries. In Japan theology was less important in the spread of mass education, but its equivalent - a concern for moral education as a means of preserving social order and political loyalty - played a significant role in shaping the state-run education system. So too did the recognition by the Japanese ruling elite of the need for mass education to build a modern state and a modern country capable of competing with the West.

Footnotes:

1. R. P. Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), p. 3.
2. R. P. Dore, *Japan in Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow, eds., Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 179.
3. The last sentence of this much-cited statement is more subtly translated by Passin as follows: "While advanced education is left to the ability and means of the individual, a guardian who fails to send a young child, whether a boy or a girl, to primary school shall be deemed negligent of his duty," Herbert Passin, *Society and Education in Japan* (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1965), p. 211.
4. Dore, "Japan," p. 189.
5. Herbert Passin, "Japan" in James S. Coleman, ed., *Education and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 307.
6. William K. Cummings, *Education and Equality in Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 19.

Taken from: Weiner, M. 1990. *The child and the state in India*.

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Chapter 5

Girls and Child Labour



Photo ILO/E. Gianortis



1. Introduction

In all societies, boys and girls are assigned different societal roles and experience different perspectives of life as a result of their being male or female. Such differences have an immense impact on their lives and need to be appreciated and documented by all those involved in a better understanding of child labour.

The aim of this chapter is to show the importance of the gender perspective in understanding the complexity of child labour. Gender, as opposed to sex, refers to the social differences and relations between boys and girls that are learned and vary widely within and between cultures and change over time. Sex refers to the biological differences between boys and girls, men and women. They are universal and do not change.

More information on the World Conference can be found at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/confer/>.

See Appendix 1 for the texts of the Convention and the Recommendation.

For many years, policies, studies and programmes dealing with child labour have focused on boys, under the assumption that their needs and perspectives were identical to that of girls. As a result, girl child labourers were often made invisible whereas they represent a very large proportion of working children. It is only recently that working girls have received increased attention from many quarters, ranging from community-level organizations to international development agencies. This has been largely due to the historic Convention on the Rights of the Child, the commitments adopted during the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), and the recent adoption of ILO Convention No. 182 and Recommendation No. 190.

The issue of gender is now universally regarded as a vital component in addressing child labour.

Although they are exposed to many similar types of labour as boys, girls often endure additional hardships and are more susceptible to exploitation, sometimes as a result of their society's view of the role women and girls should play. Of particular concern is the fact that girls often constitute a large proportion of the children involved in some of the worst forms of child labour, namely commercial sexual exploitation. This chapter will describe these conditions and discuss the importance of instituting a gender-sensitive approach to combating child labour.

A modern approach to researching child labour calls for the analysis of data by sex and age group in order to better understand the situation of the subjects (see Chapter 6). Recent

studies analyse data on the different nature of girls' and boys' work, confirming that girls are working in almost every sector, beginning at very early ages. In the past, studies and interventions have focused on boys working in typically male oriented industries, for example involving heavy work, and girls in such work as domestic labour, considered typically girl-oriented. It is vital for the efficiency of interventions that as much information as possible is available about those who the policies, programmes and projects are aiming to assist.

Elements of a gender-sensitive approach

Gender can play an important role in determining a boy's or a girl's probability of being employed and the type of labour in which he or she will engage.

Equality between women and men and between boys and girls refers to the equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and treatment of women and men in employment, and to the link between work and life. Programmes that ignore gender risk failure. The use of a "gender lens" - filtering out misleading assumptions about who does what, why and when - is vital in preventing and solving child labour problems.

Gender is a social category, and refers to a set of learned social differences and expectations regarding girls and boys, women and men. These can vary widely within and across cultures. Here are a few brief examples:

- In some countries, for example, it is appropriate for women and girls to work on road construction, whereas in others only men and boys perform roadwork-related labour.
- In some countries, daughters help their mothers at work, whereas sons are sent to school.
- Women and girls may be preferred as employees in the clothing industry because girls have already learned to sew at home and have developed the manual dexterity and capacity to perform the necessary tasks from an early age.
- Widows may receive more respect and even veneration in some cultures, while in others they may lose all their property to male relatives when their husband dies and find themselves suddenly totally destitute.

2. Different types of girl child labour

This section presents and discusses the types of child labour in which girls are either disproportionately found or especially affected due to their gender.

Trafficking

While most children continue to be trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation, a number of recent studies indicate that children are also trafficked for domestic service, armed conflict, service industries, agricultural and factory work. The trafficking of children is a result of an unmet demand for cheap, malleable labour in general and, in some specific instances, a demand for young children, especially girls, such as in the fast-growing commercial sex sector. Children are an attractive source of labour because they are easier to abuse, are less assertive and less able to claim their rights than adults. They can be made to work longer hours with less food, poorer accommodation and no benefits. Cultural stereotypes that assign them an inferior role in society, worsen this condition for girls in particular, and often result in dangerous working conditions.

Trafficking matches supply with demand, and certain environments are more conducive to it than others. For example, communities stricken by poverty (sometimes destitute poverty) tend to be at high risk. Where there is the desire to earn a living to help support the family, a lack of education or training, political conflicts, natural disasters that devastate local economies, oppressive cultural attitudes towards children (and girls in particular), and inadequate local laws and regulations, there is a danger of trafficking. Other factors such as the demand for under-aged sex partners and the high profitability of relatively low-risk criminal activity also play a role in the expansion of child trafficking. Although boys and adolescent males are also targeted for specific sex markets, poor girls and young women continue to be the major victims. While the situation varies from country to country, demand is mostly from within the same country, and men and male adolescents are often the main exploiters of those trafficked.

In the commercial trafficking of people, gender is highly relevant on both the supply and demand sides. For example, in many Asian societies girls are expected to sacrifice their education and

take on major responsibilities towards parents and other family members, whereas sacrifices are often not expected of their brothers. It is also commonly expected that one day girls will marry and leave home, bringing no money into their parents' household. These factors make girls appear to be a relatively poor "investment", and sending them away to work may seem the more profitable option. They are regarded as expendable and even as burdens on poorer households.

Trafficking results in a number of destructive consequences affecting children and their communities. Trafficked girls, however, face uniquely detrimental effects, given the risk of pregnancy, early motherhood, sexually transmitted diseases, and reproductive illnesses that might affect their ability to have children in later life. In addition, girls who have been sexually exploited are often shamed by their earlier exploitation. They are often rejected when they return to their families or communities where it is known what they have been doing to earn a living. They may return with one or more children or with reproductive complications - or worse, with HIV/AIDS. Without family and a recognized place in society, their chances of marriage may be greatly diminished, and in despair they may fall again into the hands of traffickers or return to exploitative situations which they now perceive as the lesser of two evils (when considered against the backdrop of the social rejection they are experiencing). In the worst cases, trafficking can result in a child's disappearance or death, or permanent damage to physical and mental health.

The following two sections, which deal with commercial sexual exploitation and domestic work, describe many of the ills trafficking inflicts on children. Much of this evidence is anecdotal in nature and is extracted from specific studies carried out through 2002.

Commercial sexual exploitation

Children, predominantly girls, are increasingly used for sexual services, prostitution and the entertainment industry. A number of factors lead children into prostitution, some of them already mentioned above. Extended poverty, a lack of employment opportunities or alternative livelihood, and the high costs associated with schooling often leave poor families with few other options. In Ghana, it is common for young girls to exchange sexual activities for gifts or money as a way to help

meet financial obligations. Unfortunately, government social and financial assistance is rare. A similar situation was revealed during a study in the Philippines: parents voiced their disappointment over inadequate government assistance, including basic health services, economic assistance concerning jobs and work alternatives, and educational support services.

Cynthia, aged 11, Ghana

Cynthia is an intelligent 11-year-old girl. She is originally from Krobo-Odumase, Ghana, and has been a child in prostitution for the past nine months at a brothel in Accra. She mostly sleeps during the day and when night falls she transforms herself into another person. She fell out with her parents and was practically driven away from home because she was considered to be a witch and bad luck to the family. She had a friend in Accra who was in prostitution and whose lifestyle she emulated, as she admired her friend's beautiful clothes and "sophistication". Cynthia wants to give up this work and concentrate on a trade such as tie-dye cloth making, but she hasn't earned enough money yet. She often takes drugs such as marijuana and cocaine before she goes out on the streets, and she fears contracting HIV/AIDS and being caught by the police.

Source: Williams, 2003:
*Girl child labour in
commercial sexual
exploitation in Ghana*

Weak family support systems also often lead children to turn to the streets. Furthermore, beliefs, values and practices within families that did not include the notion of a nurtured childhood may actually result in the neglect, abuse and exploitation of children. Studies also show that children who suffered sexual abuse at homes are more prone to engaging in prostitution. A child's need for acceptance and belonging to a peer group often results in her or his willingness to accept the solutions offered by peers. Unfortunately, friends often facilitate their entry into the sex trade.

From the demand side, sex tourism plays an increasingly large role in making prostitution a feasible economic endeavour. Documented cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children indicate the higher incidence of prostitution in areas considered as tourist destinations. Cultural beliefs are also instrumental. For example, in some cultures, many men believe that if they have a younger sex partner they will become young,

and also that their chance of acquiring HIV/AIDS will be lower. All this increases the demand for younger children. Girls in prostitution experience many work-related psychosocial and physical problems, including contempt from their own families, substance abuse, humiliation and insults from the community and society, physical abuse from clients, and constant interaction with the police resulting in detention.

Domestic work

During the past decade, the interest in the issue of children doing domestic labour for others has increased, particularly in relation to the rights of girls. Since domestic labour is usually unregulated, this type of work is often hidden from the public eye. Children, mainly girls, are often exposed to cruel treatment, forced to work excessive hours, and prohibited from attending school. Millions of children worldwide are subject to domestic work - in many circumstances a worst form of child labour. Child domestic workers are constantly on call and deprived of sleep. They may be given inadequate food and may perform hazardous jobs for which they are unprepared and physically unfit. In many cultures, sexual favours are seen as part of the job. Subsequently, girls who drop out of domestic work often run a high risk of ending up in prostitution or other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Young girls from rural areas frequently fall prey to the promises of recruiters to become domestic workers, often viewed as a safe occupation by parents and girls. However, once they have left the parental home, young recruits are often lured directly or subsequently into prostitution, forced to work in factories, or they end up with unknown employers in distant cities.

Recent studies have indicated that the majority of the girls surveyed began working to contribute to the family's income, to pay for their own schooling, and to escape domestic violence. One-third of the child domestic workers surveyed began working in that activity at the urging of a parent. Others began on their own initiative or became involved upon the encouragement of friends, employers or other relatives (Pacis et al., 2003).

Rosalinda, aged 12, Philippines

Rosalinda worked for 11 employers just to be able to go to school. She was employed as a domestic worker as early as 9 years old. When she was 12, she was nearly raped by a 70-year-old man, the father of her employer, who tried to win her with money and food. After leaving her former employer, she moved to work in another household where she slept at the shack located outside the main house. In this household, she was fed with leftover foods; her work entailed doing all the household chores by herself. She was also hit, had her hair pulled, and was slapped not only by her employer but by other members of the household. Her duties included carrying feed uphill to where the pig sty was situated. One of her former employers paid her PHP1 (US\$.02) a day, and at times nothing at all.

Because of her fervent desire to finish her education, she attended night school. After doing backbreaking work during the day, she walked to school daily, and returned home exhausted, facing still another load of household chores that needed to be done. Once, she came home at 6:30 pm because they had some practice in school. However, her employer, unmindful of her excuse, locked Rosalinda out of the house until dawn.

Source: Flores-Oebanda et al. 2002: *Kasambahay: Living experience*.

Child domestic workers suffer many discriminatory practices. In most places, such children are completely under the control of the employer, who does not necessarily advance the child's best interests. Their freedom of movement is also limited, as they are not even allowed to venture beyond the home except when the employer sends them on errands or brings them along when their services are needed. Isolated from family and peers, they rarely leave the job even when they suffer abuse. They are also the lowest paid workers; in the Philippines, research shows that they receive an average of PhP 800 (US\$16) a month - if they are paid at all. Many work under very informal, often merely verbal arrangements (Pacis et al., 2003).

Some child domestic workers are allowed to go to school but have difficulties doing so given their heavy workload and long work hours. In school, most curricula are not well tailored to their special needs, and many working children struggle with their studies. Working hours vary greatly among child domestics: some who live in their employers' homes are on call "24/7" - that is, all the time; others who continue to live at home may

have more limited hours. In Ecuador, one study found that the number of workdays per week varies from girl to girl; the majority of those surveyed work more than five days a week, with some working all seven days (Castelnuovo y Asociados, 2000).

Child domestic workers also endure many forms of inhumane treatment. They suffer daily verbal insults from employers calling them stupid, lazy, careless, illiterate, rude, liars and other derogatory names. Often, girls are sexually molested and are powerless to do anything against such attacks because of their isolation. If they did try to go to the police, they probably would not be believed or taken seriously. Children employed in domestic service are difficult to protect from these kinds of exploitation because the abuse they endure is not publicly visible. In Ecuador, women and girls are most often domestic workers. The girls' ages, their socio-economic and cultural conditions, the absence of parents and the pressure under which they find themselves on the job are all conducive to both labour exploitation and sexual abuse. Additionally, the girls' work hours, workload, and types of tasks performed are left to the employer's discretion, without adequate regulations to safeguard their well-being.

Girls in agriculture

Currently, little research has been done about girls working in agriculture; the data and findings about children in agriculture are generally not disaggregated by sex. The data available show that boys and girls work similar hours but that specific duties are often assigned based upon gender. Boys tend to be assigned to the more dangerous tasks, but girls have the disadvantage that they must combine their work in the field with domestic work.

Throughout the world, the division of labour between men and women and consequently also boys and girls in agriculture varies considerably from region to region. Traditionally, much of women's and girls' work in crop production has consisted of unpaid labour because even when working in the fields they are often producing for the household rather than the market, resulting in their work being unrecorded in any statistics since it is not technically part of paid agricultural labour. Overall, men tend to work on large-scale cash cropping, especially when it is highly mechanized, while women take care of household food production and the small-scale cultivation of cash crops requiring low levels of technology. In most parts of the world rural women and girls play a big role in growing secondary crops, which the family depends on for

their dietary requirement. Home gardens and small-scale aquaculture are frequently considered only within the domestic realm rather than “work in agriculture” even when any surplus production may be sold locally and provide an important source of cash or barter income for the household.

However, these tradition-based gender roles are not static. In many regions of the world there is a rise in the number of female-headed households due to the migration of men elsewhere for work. The absence of males in the agricultural environment results in expanded roles for the women left behind and also an increased reliance on the work of a household’s children. Another factor that has drawn more children into the agricultural labour force is the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the deaths of both women and men in their prime. Some children have the double burden of working the land and caring for their dying parents at the same time.

Tea farming in Tanzania

Most children engaged in tea farming are enrolled in primary schools and work on a seasonal basis, a situation that leads to poor overall school attendance and a high number of dropouts. The children work on the plantations without protective gear against thorns, snakes, extreme cold weather, and agricultural chemicals. They work long hours without rest or food, and carrying heavy loads of tea.

One of the roles of girls and young women in Tanzanian society is the provision and preparation of food. Thus, the majority of the workers are young girls between the ages of 11 and 14, although some girls begin working as early as the age of six or seven. Due to their age, both boys and girls are prone to exploitation by middlemen. The boys and girls do not know their rights and cannot have the union bargain for their rights due to their young age. Girls, in particular, are also prone to sexual harassment.

In the different IPEC studies, it seems that the average workday varies from eight to twelve hours depending upon the exact responsibilities of the boy or girl. Generally, working boys and girls have poor health compared to non-working boys and girls. Due to the heavy workloads, poor conditions, and lack of medical attention, the boys and girls do not grow properly; they are physically stunted and their mental capacity is also affected.

Source: Gonza and Moshi, 2002: Tanzania: *Children working in commercial agriculture - Tea: A rapid assessment*

In the Philippines, the slight differences in tasks between boys and girls were relatively insignificant and were due to immediate circumstances and not to any form of bias or prejudice (de Vries and Sioson, 2003). The researchers found that culture and practice give the young men more strenuous work and responsibilities than the young girls, which results in the latter being paid lower wages being paid. Among the girls, the average daily pay was PHP 77.50 (US\$1.40) while that of the boys was PHP 97.70 (US\$1.75). Although both girls and boys work the same average number of hours per day, it was noticeable that the proportion of girls who actually work longer than the normal eight working hours a day was found to be higher because of the domestic tasks needing to be done upon returning home. Similarly, research in Ghana found that most girls do not have any free time left for leisure activities. After finishing all their household chores and tasks, the time left is used to take care of their other duties, like fetching water and firewood for the household and doing laundry (Research International 2002).

Girls in other occupations

Although boys are more frequently found in soldiering, scavenging in garbage dumps and working in heavy construction, these occupations still deserve mention because girls are increasingly drawn into these types of labour. Girl soldiers are becoming more common, and other girls in armed units are serving as cooks and/or are sexually exploited. There are also other types of labour that tend to involve girls but which may not necessarily be examples of the worst forms. Young girls in Ghana often work as commercial head load carriers (porters), known as *Kayaye*, which they do in order to save up the money to enter into other less arduous and more profitable occupations.

Gender sensitivity: What about boys?

IPEC has been striving to make its work sensitive to the problems that gender roles and stereotypes create, especially in designing and executing its programmes. While it is important to consider the special difficulties encountered by girls in many parts of the world, it is only part of the issue. Gender sensitivity means looking at all aspects of a society's attitudes about gender differences and how they affect child labour. It also means taking care to avoid invalid assumptions about who does what, why, and when.

Some of the findings from IPEC rapid assessments illustrate why a gender-sensitive approach that is inclusive of the needs of both boys and girls is necessary. For instance, boys are more frequently than expected found in sectors where girls are typically highly represented, such as domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation, and they often have a different perception of their situation than girls. In Bacolod City in the Philippines, a rapid assessment on the commercial sexual exploitation of children found among other issues that boys engaged in prostitution seemed to be uninformed or unwilling to acknowledge the serious health hazards of their work. They often declined to comment on health and medical check-up questions. The girls surveyed were better informed or at least able to discuss these issues (de Tana and Romanaquin, 2003). Similarly, in a rapid assessment carried out in Jamaica (Dunn, 2001), boys were found in prostitution, having "sugar mommies". This is a typical case of inversion of the socially accepted gender roles of boys and girls, women and men.

In other sectors normally attributed to women, such as domestic work, we find many boys in extremely exploitative, and often sexually abusive situations. This drama was brought to the public eye by the famous book on the Restavek in Haiti by Jean Cadet (1998).

3. Girls' disadvantages in education

Education is intricately linked to efforts to combat child labour, as discussed in Chapter 4. For girls in particular, there are factors that create a conflict between child labour and education, and they are clearly reflected in the large gender gaps in schooling: sixty per cent of the children around the world who do not go to school are girls.

Girls' education is threatened in many countries by the frequent preference for educating sons, by early marriage, and by inheritance and social security laws that disadvantage women. Other factors that limit girls' educational opportunities range from the distance to schools, which places their security at risk, to the provision of relevant curricula sensitive to their needs and aspirations. In certain cultures, a girl's chances of going to school might depend on the availability of separate school facilities for girls (who cannot for cultural or religious reasons sit in the same schoolrooms with boys) or the presence of a female teacher. These and other problems often deprive millions of girls of an education.

The value of girls' work and the high opportunity cost of foregoing it, poor opportunities for skilled employment after obtaining an education, and the prescribed role of girls who are expected anyway to have a life of domesticity and subservience are all confounding factors. Their education appears as a poor investment for many parents. Often, when faced with limited resources and many financial demands, parents prefer to invest in the education of their sons and not lose their daughters' critical contribution to the household economy. In Rajasthan, workers for the Indian NGO SEWA were told by two hundred women that they did not want to send their daughters to school after the first standard because they needed to train them for working at home (Burra, 1989). Therefore, efforts to increase girls' attendance in school must go hand in hand with efforts to progressively eliminate child labour.

Opportunity cost: The value of the best alternative foreclosed by a course of action. The opportunity cost of eliminating child labour is the contribution the child worker could have made to her household had she continued working.

4. Programmes targeted at girls

A number of programmes have provided insight into the strategies and activities that stand the best chance of addressing the problems of girl child labour. While action against child labour will be presented in more detail in Chapters 6 to 9, it is worthwhile to consider here some of the key aspects of successful initiatives to improve the situation of girls.

Incorporating a gender analysis: Studies or interventions for girl child labour require an assessment of the way in which gender issues, among other factors, can contribute to their exploitation. For example, cultures that force early marriage often cause girls to run away from home, with the result that many of them enter prostitution as the only means of earning enough to survive.

Engaging women: A project on preventing the trafficking of women and children in the Mekong region offers an example of a successful participatory approach where women were given an increased role in decision-making so that activities took into account their special interests and perspectives. Avoiding top-down approaches for project interventions and other actions give girls and women a greater chance of involvement, increasing their participation in activity design.

Promoting capacity building: It is important to help establish the means by which women can network and communicate with each other, to enable them to bring about social change. An activity that emerged within a project against trafficking in Southeast Asia was intended to keep the trafficking of women and children on the agenda in villages in Yunnan Province in China, a source area for trafficked women. The establishment of women's homes or centres provides a forum for women to voice their concerns about potential safe jobs outside their homes and to establish communication networks.

Involving the community: The programmes introduced will only be as effective as the communities in which they exist help them to be. Community involvement provides insights that will help the programmes become tailored to the areas concerned, which can ultimately increase their effectiveness. This encourages a clearer focus on socio-cultural perceptions concerning the relative value of daughters and sons and on gender differences regarding investments in children.

Gender-sensitive education: Child labour has an impact on different cultures and individuals in a variety of ways. Education concerning child labour should be both comprehensive and tailored to reach a variety of target audiences. For example, Rau (2002) emphasizes the importance of targeting young boys and men in relation to male attitudes, gender identities, sexual norms and discriminatory behaviour towards girls to combat HIV/AIDS and child labour in Sub-Saharan Africa.

5. Conclusion

Although gender perspectives continue to appear more frequently in analyses of child labour, there is still a lot of work to be done in grasping the role gender plays in determining the various forms and the extent of child labour. This chapter shed light on some of the issues facing girls and what types of actions are being taken to combat this problem.

There is no denying the fact that both girls and boys engage in the worst forms of child labour. However, it is important to realize that due to certain societal expectations, duties and responsibilities placed on girls, they are often more vulnerable to exploitation. Thus, the different expectations that society places on girls, as well as the differences in their situations and conditions must be taken into account before taking protective action. It is vital to understand the culture and environment in which child labour occurs in order to address all of the root causes of child labour, including gender bias.



QUESTIONS

- *How are girls viewed in your society - to what extent do they enjoy the same rights and status as boys? What factors influence the way they are treated?*
- *What aspects, if any, should be changed in your opinion? Think about what steps could be taken to improve the situation (e.g. legislation, education within the community, etc.).*
- *If girls are given equal opportunities in your country, find out when this came about and what steps were taken to achieve this.*
- *Many organizations and groups fighting for girls' rights have put together different "Bills of Rights". Gather examples and then design your own bill.*
- *To what extent do girls in your country have the same educational opportunities as boys?*
- *Which of the activities mentioned in this chapter affect girls in your society. Find out whether any studies have been carried out and see what statistics you can find.*
- *What action programmes and organizations exist in your country to protect girls' rights? Find out about the steps they have taken and how successful they have been to date.*

Suggestions for further study

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OPTIONAL READING

Cross-cutting gender issues in fighting commercial sexual exploitation

The following is an excerpt from “Good practices: Gender mainstreaming in actions against child labour” by Una Murray, a collection and analysis of successful action related to gender mainstreaming, undertaken by ILO-IPEC.

Description of the gender issue and the good practice

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is a gross violation of the victims’ rights. In addition to demand factors in Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, supply causes of the commercial sexual exploitation of children include widespread poverty, lack of access to education and training for children and lack of viable employment opportunities.

The vast majority of children trapped in commercial sexual exploitation are girls. Overall, traditional gender roles and stereotypes do not favour girls. They often lack access to education and other services that can enhance their employment possibilities in life. As a result, girls are often left with few job opportunities.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that an increasing number of boys are also falling victim to commercial sexual exploitation. Boys in the sex trade remain relatively “invisible”, and one reason is that their clients are predominantly homosexual. Related social taboos are powerful in East Africa, the region covered by this good practice, and the consequent invisibility of homosexuality leads many segments of East African society to deny the existence

of commercial sexual exploitation of boy children, exacerbating the vulnerability of boy prostitutes.

Based on field studies of interventions launched to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, the ILO/IPEC developed a Good practice interventions report. The studies and analysis for the report were conducted during the first half of 2002. Approaches that had worked in each target country were described. Here, we highlight some of the most important gender-related elements that emerged from the report. (The full Good practice interventions report should, however, be read to fully understand the approaches that have worked in these countries.)

Why the “Good practice interventions report” is a good practice in gender mainstreaming

The analysis contained in the Good practice interventions report is included as a good practice in gender mainstreaming for two reasons:

- It highlighted the gender roles perpetuating female poverty that can ultimately lead to the commercial sexual exploitation of disadvantaged girls; and
- It showed that boys can also be sexually exploited, but, for cultural reasons, such abuse is even less visible



than that of girls in the region under study.

Both these findings contributed to a gender analysis of the situation:

- revealing the root causes of both female and male poverty; and
- discovering exactly who was being sexually exploited for commercial purposes, when this was occurring, and where.

The findings of this good practice can contribute to the reshaping of mainstream approaches to planning activities that combat the commercial sexual exploitation of boys and girls, rather than merely adding activities at the margin of interventions. In what follows, we will elaborate on each of these gender-related elements.

Relevance of gender analysis in identifying the links between girls, poverty and access to education

The majority of children exploited in the commercial sex trade in the four countries studied were girls. The Good practice interventions report identified specific good practice approaches for direct action, prevention, withdrawal, rehabilitation and reintegration in combating the commercial sexual exploitation of these girls. The report advised that a community-based approach - one with strong links to local government - would work well in preventing the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the countries studied. In addition, the report recommended that it is good practice, when working with children and their immediate caretakers, to adopt an individual-based approach, thus ensuring that the entire life situation of the child is

taken into consideration. This encourages a clearer focus on socio-cultural perceptions concerning the relative value of daughters and sons, and on gender differences regarding investments in children.

In tackling the root causes of this problem, the Good practice interventions report recommended that Governments, communities and other stakeholders address poverty in all its dimensions, including access to employment and stable income, food security and basic services, education and healthcare. More specifically, a deliberate effort is required to change the gender roles and perceptions that perpetuate female poverty and the disadvantaged position of girls.

Although this is a tall order, where female poverty has in fact been tackled, commercial sexual exploitation of children has been reduced. Access to education or vocational training for girls is considered critical, both as a preventive strategy and for rehabilitation.

The Good practice interventions report also outlined how support for capacity building at all levels - local, national and regional - is an effective strategy for scaling up and replicating interventions. Gender-related issues must be taken into account in capacity building among the partners. Activities that attempted to sensitise potential exploiters, aiming to generate new attitudes, were shown to be good practices. For example:

- One innovative approach, conducted through the Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE), applied outreach and sensitization work among business executives and midlevel managers in member companies. Sensitization took the form of presentations, video screenings and group discussions in



the workplace, and built on a general consensus in the ZFE that managers had a moral duty to show the way forward and behave in socially responsible ways. Although the project was fairly new, interviews indicated that the message was well received in workplaces.

Similarly, outreach work was conducted through the Tanzanian Kiota Women's Health and Development Organization (KIWOHEDE). KIWOHEDE worked with middlemen/women such as bar owners, and reported interesting spin-off effects. KIWOHEDE worked to sensitize these groups as well as older women in prostitution, who subsequently talked to and even influenced others. Encouraging bar owners not to use young girls to attract customers to their premises was given as a positive example.

The analysis contained in the report shows that incorporating a gender analysis in studies or interventions that deal with the commercial sexual exploitation of children requires an assessment of the way in which gender issues (among other factors) can contribute to girls or boys becoming exploited. One factor that can lead girls into prostitution, for example, is forced early marriage, which often causes girls to run away from home. They may then become involved in prostitution as the only means of earning enough money to survive. The parallel factors that lead boys into commercial sexual exploitation are not currently as well researched as those affecting girls, although factors such as poverty, homelessness and orphan status (e.g. due to AIDS) are probably common to both sexes.

Impact of the study of the Good practice interventions report

Because the Good practice interventions report was only published in 2002, it is not yet possible to determine its overall impact. In the future, the impact may be measured, in these countries, in terms of changing policy regarding the implementation of the ILO Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) or other interventions to eliminate this worst form of child labour, in particular new ways of tackling poverty. Whether further studies on the sexual exploitation of boys are undertaken or not will indicate whether the study has actually made an impact in documenting the gender-related differences that force both girls and boys into commercial sexual exploitation in the East African region.

Taken from: Murray, U. 2003. *Good practices: Gender mainstreaming in actions against child labour* (Geneva, ILO-IPEC).



**PART III:
ACTION
AGAINST
CHILD
LABOUR**

Child Labour • A textbook for university students

Introduction to Part III

Child labour is a very stubborn problem. Even if it is overcome in certain places or sectors, it sometimes reappears in new and often unanticipated ways. The challenge of combating child labour requires the concerted effort of a number of key players listed below. In the most successful instances, these “actors” collaborate together in designing and/or carrying out sustained, long-term and comprehensive approaches to combating the problem.

- Government institutions
- International organizations such as the ILO (International Labour Office), UNICEF (the United Nations Children’s Fund), the World Bank and others
- Employers’ organizations
- Trade unions
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Save the Children, Global March Against Child Labour, Casa Alianza and others
- The communities where child labour occurs, which must carry out awareness-raising and anti-poverty activities among the families and in the settings where the children live
- Children and their parents
- Individuals

The first step to eliminate child labour is to determine the nature and extent of the problem in a country or region. This must be done through well-designed and competent research, in order to provide the necessary understanding that will enable us to shape and target the appropriate interventions (Chapter 6). Once this has been accomplished and the need to eliminate these instances of child labour has been recognized, as many of the above forces as possible must be mobilized to find the most effective way to change the situation for the better.

As discussed in Part II of this book, child labour is part of a wider economic and social reality at local, national and international levels. Action taken to respond to such a problem must be based firmly on the reality of a given national and local context. It must occur within the framework of a country's overall economic development, and include policies and actions to curb both the supply of and demand for child labour.

Experience shows that a combination of different factors can bring about a significant reduction in child labour. These include legislation and respect for labour standards, the introduction of good universal education and social protection measures for children and families, and the social mobilization of families and communities, together with a better understanding of the needs and rights of children. The four chapters that follow describe some of the ways in which this can be achieved.

Chapter 6

Researching Child Labour



Photo ILO/E. Gianottis



1. Introduction

Action against child labour must be based on a sound knowledge of the incidence and the causes of the problem in a given context. In order to be able to design strategies of intervention so as to improve the lives of working children, or to get them out of work altogether, we need to know more about many aspects of their work and lives. We must learn more about their environment and why they are working, so that preventive measures can be taken to keep future children from engaging in this kind of work, if that is a desirable goal. To gain such insight, we rely on competent and thorough research.

This chapter will present the essential elements of successful research on child labour.

2. Basic considerations

Quantitative data: *sample surveys that are based on probability sampling and allow for statistical inferences about larger populations.*

Qualitative data: *information gathered from key informants, observation, semi-structured questionnaires, in depth-interviews and focus group discussions. Qualitative information cannot be generalized.*

What do policymakers and planners need most - quantitative data (i.e. statistics), or qualitative information about children's work and lives? These two kinds of data complement each other, and in many cases both are needed. Policy makers and programme planners cannot do without numbers. This is because large numbers of children working in particularly difficult circumstances can more easily justify the expenditure for projects and programmes to benefit them.

Child labour research is usually undertaken by a multidisciplinary team of individuals with specialized expertise, with at least one social scientist. They must conduct the research in an organized and rational manner, especially since research funds are often in short supply and research capabilities may also be limited. The choice of method will be determined by a wide range of factors and assumptions.

In an effort to learn as much as they can, researchers usually begin by carefully assembling and digesting all the existing information about the working children they intend to research, to gain a broad overview.

This information might come from national statistical surveys, reports, newspaper and media reports, books, the reports of social research institutes, graduate student research and university

departments, NGOs, national government ministries of health and education and regional administrations, different UN organizations' country offices, and so on. They also need to know about the context - the society in which the children live and work, as well as the economic and political situation. They need to understand the standards and legislation of the country concerned (e.g. legislation on the minimum age for work, child welfare acts, or employment acts), not just the international standards of the ILO or the UN such as Conventions 138 and 182 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They must find out whether the national and international legal standards are being observed and implemented in the area, and if so, how, and if not, why. Researchers must also inform themselves about the institutions related to child labour working in the country.

From this starting point, researchers can then determine what they still need to learn about child labour in the area or region, and they can also make some educated guesses about what kind of findings will be most useful afterwards. Putting these together, researchers can then formulate a work plan to collect the kind of data that they consider both necessary and useful. Thus, a framework is required for analysis, which must be based on clear definitions of child labour and particularly the worst forms and takes into account. The researchers must define the terms and focus of their work. Are they interested in all kinds of child work, only certain occupations, or specifically the “worst forms”? How do they define the terms “work” and “child” for their research purposes? In what age group are they interested?

3. The quantitative approach: searching for numbers

Through the quantitative approach researchers ask questions about “how many” and “how much”. Researchers, particularly statisticians, try to estimate the numbers of children involved in child labour. They employ both traditional and innovative survey methodologies to gather statistical data. National population censuses and labour force surveys, as traditional survey methodologies, are not usually devised with child labour as their focus. These surveys are not suitable for capturing the work of school-

age children (and certainly not those whose activities may be “invisible” or “hidden”), but they do provide basic age and sex data to indicate the number of children there are, by region and even for smaller areas like cities and towns. This is essential information for measuring the numbers of working children as a proportion of all children in the population.

The ILO has developed a special methodology to count working children called the National Child Labour Survey. It has been carried out in many different countries to generate countrywide data on the economic activities of children between the ages of 5 and 17. Known simply as household-based surveys, they use representative samples of households in a selected area to make predictions about the behaviour of households in that area or in the country as a whole. The respondents are parents or guardians and the children living in the same household. These questionnaires are sometimes carried out as stand-alone surveys, or they are attached as “modules” (additional questions) to other national household-based surveys, such as a national labour force questionnaire. The basic approach is to administer the questions to a sample of households that is as representative of all households as possible. The final size and shape of the sample should be determined by, and reflect, the total “universe” - that is, the total number of households in the country.

These household-based surveys gather information at a country level on household characteristics (e.g. availability of water and electricity), migration status, the parents’ educational background, income, housekeeping activities of children, housing conditions, and schooling activities. Detailed questions are asked about the children’s work - their working conditions, employers, pay, and so on. There are questions about hazards, about parental attitudes and perceptions, and about whether the children regularly attend school. Children who live away from home are also covered by the questionnaire, since the families give answers that apply to them. In this way, interviewers can gain information concerning how many children are working elsewhere.

One source of error, however, is that parents do not always know what work their children are doing, and the children may not tell the interviewer in their presence. This is the case with some kinds of child commercial sexual exploitation, of which the parents may be unaware even though the children are living at home. Another potential source of error is that the parents may not want to admit that their children are working, especially when they know that this is illegal.

A slum study in Bangladesh

One household-based survey in a slum in the city of Dhaka, Bangladesh, led to the identification of what work the children were actually doing, so that interviewers knew what occupations to study and where these occupations were being carried out in the local environment. The research started with a study of poor urban families living in the slum. The purpose was to find out about family composition, work and income, and generally how children grow up in a poor urban environment. The slum study provided a good introduction to categories of children who were followed in subsequent studies. These included street children, child beggars and children assisting adult beggars, market porters, waste pickers, male and female children engaged in prostitution, adopted and sold children and domestic servants. The slum study provided useful background information as well as insights into a large number of issues. The contrast as well as the economic interdependence between the urban middle class and the poor slum dwellers became quite clear. The impact of urban migration on families and children in particular was observed, as well as the fragility and the resilience of bustee communities, some of whose children turn to the street.

Source: Blanchet,
1996: *Lost innocence,
stolen childhoods*

There are other kinds of surveys that also provide valuable information from various settings where children are found. One of these is a survey aimed at street children, who are not counted in the household-based survey. The street children-based survey relies on randomly interviewing children and, if feasible, their employers and/or clients, using the kinds of questions posed in national surveys. In addition, researchers use these surveys to seek information on the migration status of the children, their relationships with their families and why they left home, and their plans for the future. The data collection approach depends on the category of street children. The first category consists of children working on streets and residing with their parents or a guardian. In this case the approach consists of a survey conducted in the households. The second category consists of children who live and work on the streets and have no other place of residence. For this category, random interviews with children and surveys of informal operators employing children are applied.

Another is a survey aimed at employers, called an establishment-based survey. The employers are drawn from a list of establishments (businesses) which have been identified by the children themselves in the household-based survey as places where children are employed. A questionnaire asks employers about working conditions, wages, hours, benefits, injuries, and illnesses. It also seeks information on the reasons why employers hire children and the recruitment methods used. Establishment-based surveys rely to a large extent on payrolls and business records. The main shortcomings are that the survey is confined to large establishments, covers paid workers and particular branches such as manufacturing, construction and mining. These are drawbacks since in many countries child labour is concentrated in the informal sector.

Yet another survey is a school-based survey, which collects information on working children who also attend school. It asks teachers and administrators about their perception of child labour and the performance of working children, about absenteeism, promotion rates and other variables in order to make comparisons with other children who attend school but who do not work. By interviewing the children, it also attempts to assess some of the school-related factors that may influence a child to work, such as high school fees and the children's perception of the relevance of school attendance. School-based surveys aim to determine the impact of work on school performance and the general attitude of working children towards schooling. It must be stressed that these surveys include also non-working children as a control group. This allows the researchers to put the data into perspective.

Partly based on these kinds of surveys, a list of "indicators" of child labour has been devised to provide a common set of measures and terms to sort out the information collected, putting it into various categories. The use of indicators makes it possible to compare the different situations of working children in different parts of the world, or even in different parts of the same country or region, using a number of common criteria to do so. The five core sets of indicators based on key variables are the following:

1. Incidence and characteristics of child work (e.g. time of the day, industry occupation, intensity of work, etc)
2. Incidence and characteristics of child labour (e.g. child labour by age group and sex, intensity of work and school attendance, industry, location, etc)

3. Correlates and causes of child labour (family size and dependency, household structure, parents' education level, economic shocks, reasons for working, savings, and contribution to the household income)
4. Health (e.g. hazardous conditions, injuries/illnesses, household well-being)
5. Education (e.g. school attendance, intensity of work and school, literacy, and reasons for non-attendance).

4. The qualitative approach: searching for in-depth information

The qualitative approach generates a deeper understanding of the conditions in which children live and work. It enables us to learn more about the impact of variables such as the socio-economic and cultural context, the situation at work and outside it, the children's welfare, and - one of the most important questions - why children work. There are a number of research techniques used to collect qualitative information, ranging from anthropological fieldwork (sometimes called "participant observation"), which is very intensive and time consuming, to "rapid assessment" research, which should last no more than six months.

The variety of techniques used by both approaches includes observation, interviews, focus groups and the collection of children's life stories. The rapid assessment method, which has only recently been employed on a large scale for child labour research, also uses other tools. *Examples of rapid assessments can be found on pages 70-74 and 187-193.*

The qualitative approach does have limitations. This approach generally does not produce statistical data, except on a limited local or provincial level. Besides, it does not provide the national and regional magnitudes and overviews that national planners often need. That is why quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other. They provide different kinds of information, and when both are applied to the same child labour situation, a more complete picture of child labour in an industry, region or even a whole country can emerge. By using both approaches, for example, it is possible to research a single child occupation in a number of locations, both statistically and

through qualitative research, and emerge with a substantially accurate picture of how extensive this occupation is, what it consists of, what its hazards or health risks are and how many children have already been affected by them, what its criminal risks and dangers are (if any) and how children perceive them, how children enter this kind of work, and what populations of children constitute future recruits to it. Recently, a way has been found to attach a quantitative measuring method to a qualitative rapid assessment study, although this is not viable for all child occupations.

For quantitative and qualitative research alike, it is important to take into account the different situations of girls and boys. As discussed in Chapter 5, there are important differences between boys' and girls' contributions, needs, constraints, opportunities, and reasons for being subjected to early work. Statistical work and research have to fully capture the gender dimension of child labour in order to provide the basis for effective and well-targeted interventions.

5. Interviews as a research technique

Researchers want to locate and interview those people who are most knowledgeable about child workers. In most settings and areas where children work, some people will be familiar with what they do and may know a lot about their working and living conditions. They may also have some idea about magnitudes - about how many children are doing what. These informants might be teachers, local officials, community leaders, members of trade unions or employers' organizations, or the leaders of local non-governmental social work or voluntary organizations.

These people can be interviewed individually if they consent. Another way to interview them is to invite them to participate in "focus groups", which are discussion groups organized around a certain subject or issue. These groups can save time and be quite productive, and the researchers get to hear a number of different perspectives and viewpoints. A good facilitator or leader can create the kind of atmosphere that encourages people to speak out with confidence in a focus group setting, even more than many of them would do in individual interviews. Sometimes focus groups can also be composed of some of the working children who are the objects of the research.

Focus group discussions in Senegal

In Senegal, one non-governmental organization conducted a research project with young women domestic workers, using focus group discussions. Each group discussion was treated as a social event - a "tea debate". Around 50 participants attended. They were mainly girl domestics, but the gatherings also included some of their "aunties" and some older women domestics. The facilitators found that the young girls were constrained and would not speak up freely, as the older women saw it as their role to dominate proceedings and act as a controlling influence. The facilitators therefore divided the groups up, and put the youngest domestics together. In a position of peer solidarity they could bring out their intimate problems, including sexual abuse by employers, and the fact that they felt forced into prostitution because their wages were so low. As a result of these findings, a programme against sexually transmitted diseases was launched. Group solidarity also developed, and many of the young domestics became members of a movement campaigning on behalf of the rights of young workers.

Source:
Haspels/Jankanish,
2000: *Action against
child labour*

Other people to interview are those directly involved with the working children, i.e. the children's employers and their parents. Sometimes the children work directly for their families, for example on family farms or in handicraft or home work operations, but if not they will probably have outside employers unless they are working independently on the streets. Interviewers try to get access to the children and to their employers. They also try to interview the parents, not just through the kind of rapid interviews associated with household-based surveys, but also through in-depth interviews asking detailed questions about the child, the family, and the child's work and school history.

The difficulties involved in carrying out interviews can be substantial. Firstly, there may be a communication problem, if the interviewer does not speak the same language as the interviewee, which can occur in many countries. The best researchers are those who speak the local language or dialect and who are familiar with the general situation in the local area.

Secondly, interviewers might be of a different sex, caste or ethnic group than the interviewee, which might create a barrier to communication in some societies.

Thirdly, all countries have laws against some forms of child labour, and many of the children who work are doing so illegally. Depending on their ages, the time of day, the kind of work they do, and the working conditions, the children may be illegal workers. Thus, they do not want to “advertise” that fact to any outside interviewer for fear of losing their jobs, and their parents will often not reveal this either. The employers will also not want to say that they hire children, for they are afraid they will be fined by the government labour inspector. For these reasons and others, child labour is sometimes “concealed”, a fact that hampers interviewing (and also counting). In some societies where people know it is illegal for children to work, few people may be willing to talk about the child labour that exists.

Furthermore, a great number of children perform work that is invisible to the public eye, for example, if they work as child domestics. They work behind closed doors and interviewers may have trouble getting to them for interviews, as they only emerge to run errands for their employers. One recent study (Sharma et al. 2001) in Nepal, where child domestic work is quite widespread, addressed this problem in a rather original way: two interviewers went to the home at the same time, and while one researcher interviewed the home owner, the other interviewed the child worker in another room. In this way the interviewers gained access to children who they would not otherwise have been able to interview and they were able to carry out private interviews directly in the employer’s home. Perhaps this new technique will also prove successful elsewhere in researching child domestic work.

In general, researchers have a formidable task before them: to explore all the avenues for accessing the working children and gathering information about them from those in their immediate environment. And the more illegal or dangerous the work, the harder and sometimes also the more risky this task is. But it is not the case that all forms of child labour are so hard to research. Across the developing world and in many countries in transition, myriads of working street children are offering their services, such as shoeshine, windshield washing, or working in small shops, quite openly, or working in the markets or as delivery boys and porters, as well as many other occupations, and therefore can be approached directly for interviews.

The kinds of questions interviewers ask depend on the people they intend to interview, the circumstances under which the interview will occur, and what the researchers hope to find out.

Formal questionnaires can take an hour or more to administer and they cannot be easily used with children, especially younger children, whose attention will begin to stray (or if they have worked a long day they may fall asleep). If questionnaires are used, they need to be pilot-tested in order to find out whether they are effective in obtaining the information needed. If no questionnaires are used, the researcher tries to gently guide the conversation to the topics about which he or she needs to gather information. Some researchers, including some of those doing rapid assessment research, prefer having in-depth conversations with informants as opposed to using questionnaires, especially if they are interviewing children.

Researchers may choose to opt for what are called “participatory approaches”. The principle of these approaches is that the people whose lives are being studied should help the researchers to define the research questions and take an active part in both collecting and analysing the data. Thus, respondents are strongly encouraged to play a role in solving their problems. Respondents are not viewed, in this technique, only as sources of information but as “actors” who become committed to the research process. Participatory approaches can be used with children in some settings and provide an opportunity to explore child labour issues in collaboration with the children themselves. In this case, research is conducted according to the prevailing guidelines concerning children’s rights, meaning that it allows children to express themselves as subjects and to reflect on their conditions. These types of approaches improve the quality of data because the child workers contribute their own knowledge about their situations.

6. Problems in interviewing children

Interviewing children, a mainstay of child labour research, has its own rules and recommendations. Children may not always consent willingly to interviews, and it is ethically wrong to force them to participate. Nor should they ever be placed in a situation where they will risk punishment from an employer or from their parents for having been interviewed. Imagine the situation of a researcher who is looking into children’s illicit participation in the drug trade in one or more communities. In an interview, a child drug runner might unwittingly provide a lot of information

which the child's superiors or employers do not want revealed, and the child may be punished. The same goes for many other situations where children are working in secretive or illegal activities, e.g. child soldiers.

Children can tend to get bored during interviews, or might talk about things the interviewer does not need to know about, while being reluctant to talk about their work. It is sometimes easier if the interviewer or researcher "breaks the ice" first by showing friendliness, perhaps by playing games, showing an interest in their music or their pastimes, and so on. Drawing, painting, acting out, story telling and sometimes participating in free time activities with them are useful methods of eliciting information and gaining their confidence, especially in cultural settings where people are not used to interviewers coming around asking questions.

Interviewing domestic workers in Bangladesh

Here is a technique that was successfully used to access and interview children in a "hidden" occupation in Bangladesh. An NGO called Shoishab persuaded employers in certain vicinities of Dhaka - such as a large apartment block or a street network - to permit their young domestic workers to attend an educational class several times a week. During the course of learning to read and write, opportunities were used to encourage the child domestics to talk about their situations. Drawing and story telling were used for self expression. When confidence had been built up, in-depth interviews could be conducted.

Source :
Haspels/Jankanish,
2000: *Action against
child labour*

*Parts of the UN
Convention on the
Rights of the Child
can be found in
Appendix 1.*

All in all, approaching child workers requires special skills and care. They must be approached gently, and their confidence must be gained before they will be willing to discuss their lives. Reaching out to a child worker and engaging him or her in a discussion of life, work and family and how she or he feels about it all is not just an academic exercise; it involves a great deal of sensitivity on the part of the researcher. The child has certain rights, and these rights are not just morally sanctioned but also legally recognized by a UN Convention; chief among them is the child's right to be treated with respect. Children must also be assured that no information they give will be disclosed to anyone else, including their parents, and that their identities will never be made public. In other words, children require the same assurances that are given to adult informants.

Some of the material that children reveal in interviews can be quite painful for them, especially for the children who work in some of the worst forms of child labour, where they may have been trafficked away from their families, or work in situations where they are maltreated. Therefore interviews and conversations with researchers may be very stressful. Ideally, a researcher ought to be prepared to provide a distressed child with psychological counselling if needed. However, this is not always possible, so at least the child should be provided with a list of NGOs that could assist him/her. In addition if a child is discovered in the course of an interview to be in real physical danger at the workplace, a way must be found to remove him or her from that environment immediately. This is usually done with the help of local organizations and qualified professionals.

7. Checking the research findings for accuracy

After obtaining the information they need, researchers have to ascertain that it is accurate and reliable. They cross-check the information they obtained from different sources to ensure it is not contradictory. This involves comparing the statements of different informants to see whether they agree about the facts, or comparing informants' statements with the researchers' own observations. If what the informants said contradicts the observations, the researchers must try to discover the reasons for the discrepancy. Does the informant have some motive for distorting information? Is the informant's grasp of the reality of the situation only partial? Is the information received old, so that things may be changed, and if so, how and why? If it is outdated, more recent information must be obtained.

The information given by children during interviews and conversations must also be cross-checked. Children may tell an interviewer what they would like to believe or what they think the interviewer should believe, rather than what is actually true. The researcher must recognize the distortion. Or the children may unintentionally give biased statements because their standards and perceptions lead them to do so. Sometimes, they may intentionally distort the testimony about their working conditions and environment because they hope that if they portray them as worse than they are, some outside agency will

step in and bring them money and relief from their work. There may also be gaps in the information children provide, and it is often up to the researcher to obtain the missing information elsewhere. The researcher interviewing children must continuously be on guard to weigh all of these possibilities before using the material collected.

8. Analysing, presenting, and using the findings

Because different methods and procedures have both advantages and disadvantages, researchers combine them in order to collect comprehensive and reliable data: background research, observation, focus groups, interviews with knowledgeable individuals, interviews with children, with parents, the use of small scale surveys and questionnaires, and the use of larger scale statistical surveys.

Once the data collection and fieldwork is completed, the researchers need to code all the information and analyse it. The results make it possible to see what kinds of patterns emerge, or else to confirm patterns that were known or suspected to exist. These patterns permit them to arrive at fairly reliable conclusions concerning the types of child labour in the area, their nature and characteristics, their health and safety components and risks, the family attitudes toward them, potential gender disparities, the migration history, the ethnic status and economic condition of the children and their families as well as the prevailing levels of education and literacy of children and families, and many other features. Ideally, at this point we have a reasonable analysis of the causes of the specific kinds of child labour being studied, how harmful it is (especially whether it is one of the worst forms or not), and how urgently something needs to be done about it.

The following example from Jamaica illustrates the significance of analysing data in to uncover patterns. The researchers classified children engaged in prostitution according to nine categories. This helped to identify the needs and vulnerabilities of each group by sex and type of activity.

1. Children living and working on the street - mostly boys from 6 years and boys from 12 years engaged in sexual activity.
2. Children engaged in formal prostitution - mainly girls from as young as 10 years, but also boys in homosexual relationships.
3. Children in seasonal prostitution - girls between 15 and 18 years.
4. Go-go dancers - girls aged between 12 and 18 years, some operating full-time at specific clubs, others migrants moving to various locations around Jamaica.
5. Massage parlour workers - all girls, usually with a secondary school education, from 15 years upwards.
6. “Sugar daddy girls” - mostly girls below 12 years who were pressured into sexual relations with adult males (also some male children with sugar daddies).
7. “Chapses” - teenage schoolboys having sexual relations with “sugar mummies” in exchange for economic support.
8. Children used in pornographic productions - mainly young girls.
9. Children used in sacrificial sex - this category included girls (identified but not verified) used for ritualistic sex associated with devil workshops, satanic rites and cleansing men with sexually transmitted diseases.

Taken from: Murray,
2003: *Gender
mainstreaming in action
against child labour*

A comprehensive report is written up based on the findings, with details of all the information collected, often presented in the form of tables, and the conclusions are clearly listed. If the report is well done, it will contain both statistical and qualitative data, presenting a relatively complete picture of a complex reality. The research team may draw upon its knowledge and professional expertise, and all the findings it has now accumulated, to make a series of recommendations to various levels of government, concerned organizations, communities, etc. The findings and the recommendations will all be referred to the sponsoring body, which may be a government agency or an international donor. The first few pages of the report summarize the approach, findings and recommendations so that officials and private individuals alike will know its contents even without reading the details.

9. Transforming information into action

The information collected, and its subsequent analysis, can pave the way for awareness-raising activities with the public and legislative solutions with policy makers. There may be a formal presentation of the research results, and many influential individuals will be invited to discuss the findings and the report in a public forum. Some of the children interviewed may also participate in these fora, presenting their own stories. Whether this takes place depends on a number of factors including what kind of child labour is at issue, on the findings, on who sponsored the research and on its purpose it had.

On a larger level, the results are added to the store of global knowledge about child labour. Comparisons can be made between the child labour studied by this team and similar child labour researched in other places, in a search for general patterns that can enhance our understanding of all the forces that converge to send children into the labour market and into certain kinds of work. One important subject of research is explaining the differences from one area to another or from one seemingly similar population to another. A focus on differences can offer significant insights into why children work in one place but not in another where they are equally poor, why in one place they combine work with school but in another they do not, and so on. Thus, there is a use of “natural” control groups in some research to explain the differences.

Understanding Children's Work

"Understanding Children's Work" (UCW) is a UN interagency project coordinated from the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre in Florence, Italy. Launched in December 2000, this joint initiative of the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank aims to improve child labour research, data collection and analysis, to enhance local and national capacity for research and to improve the evaluation of interventions. It is assessing existing information so as to identify major gaps and ways of filling them.

The UCW website (www.ucw-project.org) contains the range of information stemming from UCW activities and drawing from the range of existing information in the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank. Visitors are invited to access the child labour data sets, country statistics for detailed information on indicators of child labour and status of children for over 50 countries. The project database provides information on the agency interventions designed to promote child protection and combat child labour. Reports and analysis stemming from these statistics and other research activities can also be found here.

Once the research has been completed and presented, decisions can take place at the national policy-making level, where measures can be taken and funds to be allocated. If desired, funding could be allocated for further research in another part of the region or country, if desired, to see just how extensive the child labour is and whether its "push" factors are the same in different places. Is it a national or regional problem? On what level should it be combated, if at all? Policy makers can use the research conclusions to design programmes. Resources can be allocated to projects to help children already working, or for preventive measures targeted at potential child workers so that they do not follow in the footsteps of those already working. A decision could be made to set up or strengthen the support system to families so that their children do not go to work, or to reinforce the effectiveness of the police, community organizations and the school system in raising awareness about the relative value of work and school.

The actual outcome not only depends on what programmes are needed, but also on the political will and the openness of the society to tackle the problem. For example, in the Philippines, the 1995 Survey of Working Children had a tremendous impact on raising awareness about the problem of child labour. Through a series of national, regional and sector specific campaign activities, society was mobilized, with the result that many action programmes against child labour were developed.

10. Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated that having access to accurate data on child labour is a crucial first step in taking action. There are various options and methodologies available to researchers for studying child labour, both with the goal of obtaining quantitative information, as well as qualitative approaches that provide better insight into the dynamics of a given child labour occupation. Often, these two types of research are complementary, and both are necessary in order to determine the most appropriate action to be taken. But not only is research important to determine the shape and content of policy and action measures; in and of itself, more accurate information on child labour may provide the basis for changed perceptions and attitudes. In this way, research also contributes to changing the national environment to make it more conducive to combating child labour.



QUESTIONS

- *What statistics have been put together regarding children in your country (population censuses, labour force surveys, etc.) To what extent do they also include data reflecting child labour? Find out about the methodologies used, and how current the information is.*
- *Find about other kinds of surveys that have been implemented in your country. Has a National Child Labour Survey been carried out, or is one being planned?*
- *Go to the web site <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/simpoc/index.htm>. In groups, select a country and find out what data is presented regarding the situation of working children. Read through the data and write a short presentation which you can share with the other students. Compare your findings, discussing whether any information surprises you.*
- *If an interviewer was going to approach employers, children and parents in your region, what advice would you have as to how to best approach the subject. Consider cultural, religious and other aspects.*
- *Design a questionnaire for child workers in a particular industry or worst form in your country.*

Suggestions for further study

- ☰ ILO-IPEC 2002. *Every child counts: New global estimates on child labour*, (Geneva)
- ☰ ILO-IPEC. 2001 and later. *Rapid assessment studies*, (Geneva)
- ☰ ILO-IPEC and UNICEF. 2000. *Investigating child labour: Guide for rapid assessment: Field manual*, (Geneva) Revised version forthcoming
- ☰ Boyden, J. and Ennew, J. 1997. *Children in focus: A manual for participatory research with children*, (Stockholm, Radda Barnen)
- ☰ Regional Working Group on Child Labour in Asia (RWG-CL). 2002. *Handbook for action-oriented research on the worst forms of child labour including trafficking of children*. Bangkok
- ☰ Ashagrie, Kebebew: “Current progress in implementing new methods and conducting innovative surveys for measuring exploitation of children”, in *Statistical Journal of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe*, Vol. 18, No. 2/3, 2001, pp. 187-203
- ☰ Grimsrud, B. 2001. *A comparison of survey instruments for collecting data on child labour*, (Florence, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre)

OPTIONAL READING

Rapid Assessments in Nepal and Jamaica

The following excerpts are adapted from two ILO-IPEC rapid assessments, “Nepal: The situation of domestic child labourers in Kathmandu” and “Jamaica: Situation of children in prostitution”.

I. Child Domestic Workers in Nepal

1. Introduction to the Methodology

Rapid Assessment (RA) is a methodology developed by ILO/UNICEF (2000) to bring out an understanding of a particular social phenomenon and its context, usually for the purpose of designing an intervention strategy. The methodology is a combination of a broad range of qualitative and quantitative survey tools, which allow for adaptation to local conditions required when researching the often hidden and invisible aspects of the worst forms of child labour.

In short, the Rapid Assessment is a sequenced research process, with one set of information generated by a particular research component leading into the next step of the process. The specific research components employed in the present Rapid Assessment include Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Key Informant interviews, observation, and a door-to-door survey of 2,237 households in eight sub-wards of Kathmandu. The Rapid Assessment was completed in three months, and the fieldwork took place in three wards of Kathmandu from December 2000 to January 2001.

Despite some reservations as to whether the worst forms of child labour may be adequately understood through the use of household-based surveys and by filling in questionnaires on a door-to-door basis, the sample survey was a major part of the overall research process. Based on previous experiences of researching domestic child labour in other urban areas of Nepal, the household-based survey proved to be a powerful tool in generating reliable data within a short period of time, especially when combined with other RA tools.

The use of the survey sample further minimized the problems of purposive sampling, as all domestic child labourers (DCL) within a given area were targeted for interviews. Finally, the idea of conducting a household-based survey on domestic child labour proved relatively easy to promote amongst local community leaders, thus ensuring their co-operation and support.

2. Household survey

The capital of the Kingdom of Nepal, Kathmandu has 117,375 households that are divided into 35 wards for administrative/political purposes. Wards have been grouped in core urban, urban and semi-urban categories based on consultation with municipal authorities, which took into account factors such as commercial centres, population density and degree of urbanization (Table A).



Table 6.1: Estimated Number of Households by Category in Kathmandu

Area	Number of wards	Estimated no. of households
Core Urban	14	29,333
Urban	10	41,363
Semi Urban	11	46,679
Total	35	117,375

For the purposes of the survey, one ward from each category was randomly selected: Ward 25 was chosen to represent the Core Urban category, ward 32 the Urban category and ward 34 the Semi Urban category. Each ward had further been divided into sub-wards by CBS for survey purposes in 1999. Three of these sub-wards from wards numbers 32 and 34 and two sub-wards from ward number 25 were randomly selected for the sample survey.

All households in the selected sub-wards were asked to respond to a brief structured questionnaire to collect information on the use of domestic child labour. The purpose of this initial survey was to help estimate the incidence of child labour in domestic chores among responding households, as an indicator of overall trends in the city. Among the eight sub-wards a total of 2,237 households were visited, in which a total of 420 domestic child labourers were employed.

The DCL thus identified were interviewed using a longer, semi-structured questionnaire.

However, only 378 of the 420 children participated in the survey, the remainder either being absent from the household at the time of the survey or not being allowed by their employers to be interviewed. Fourteen additional participants dropped out of the survey after their employers refused to proceed with the interviews. Each questionnaire took 30 to 45 minutes to be completed.

While interviewing the domestic child labourers, the enumerators noted observations on physical appearance and the responses of the participants. They also recorded their own impressions of the employers' attitude towards the respondent and the enumerator during the survey. Except for cases where an employer would not allow the child to participate in the interview, the employers were, in general, co-operative during the field survey.

The survey teams were comprised of professional researchers and locally hired enumerators (from within the selected wards). The local staff was instrumental in the smooth operation of the door-to-door survey, as their familiarity with the area inspired confidence in the participants and their employers. Two fieldworkers visited the households together; one would survey the employer while the other surveyed the DCL, thereby minimizing chances for intervention or influence during the interviews.

All research team members were trained for one week in Rapid Assessment and survey methodologies and on the purpose of the research, as well as on ethical issues and on methods to win confidence in the households when conducting research with children. During training, pre-tests of the questionnaire and checklists were conducted. The survey instruments were finalised using the pre-test.

3. Focus Group Discussions

Prior to the household surveys, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were held in the three wards and eight sub-wards selected for the study. The FGD were specifically aimed at helping to establish social mapping, and cause and effect information related to domestic child labour, as well as to provide some general information on the incidence and location of child labourers within the ward. Ward representatives, school teachers, social workers, employers and other knowledgeable persons participated in these FGD, making them valuable in securing support from local authorities as well as in building rapport and networks within each ward.

Focus Group Discussions were also held with domestic child labourers, mainly in the state schools some of them attended. Involving the DCL who do not attend school was not possible, as their work did not allow them the free time necessary. The discussions proved to be very useful, not only in gauging the incidence of DCL, but also as a means of learning more about the nature of their work, their workload, and contact with the outside world while working.

4. Key Informant Interviews

Four Key Informant interviews were conducted in each sub-ward. These interviews helped understand the root causes and incidence of DCL, as well as working conditions in the respective sub-wards. Key informants were also asked to provide their opinions on ways and means to humanize and/or eliminate the domestic child labour problem. Furthermore, the interviews with ward authorities helped inspire confidence among locals about the survey and research team.

5. Lessons Learned

- a. The survey was greatly eased by the inclusion of locally hired, gender-balanced field assistants on the survey teams. These local team members had a full grasp of the survey localities and were familiar with the households, which helped the survey teams be cordially accepted.
- b. Door-to-door survey work was easy during holidays and weekends, as both male and female household members were accessible on those days.
- c. Due to limited time, no repeat interaction with the DCL and other stakeholders was possible. Had there been more time, it may have been a good idea to share the draft findings with them and elicit their views.
- d. Similarly, due to lack of time, the parents of DCL could not be met, which would have been useful in getting additional information on the causes of domestic child labour, as well as to verify the information provided during individual interviews.
- e. Rapid Assessment (RA) tools are useful, probably more so when the subject of information collection is difficult to access. In the case of DCL in Kathmandu, the cooperation of the employers minimized the problem of accessibility; therefore the survey placed greater reliance on the questionnaire technique. This confirms the fact that RA techniques should be adapted to the local situation and to the degree of accessibility of research participants.

Adapted from: Sharma, S., Thakurathi M., Sapkota K., Devkota B., Rimal B. 2001. *Nepal: The situation of domestic child labourers in Kathamandu - A rapid assessment*, (Geneva, ILO-IPEC)



II. Children in Prostitution in Jamaica

1. Research objectives

The objectives of the RA were to:

- (i) Produce quantitative and particularly qualitative data related to child prostitution;
- (ii) Describe the magnitude, character, causes and consequences of the involvement of children in prostitution; and
- (iii) Provide recommendations for policy development as well as for improving the methodologies for investigating child prostitution to be applied in subsequent studies and research work.

2. Research Methods

The RA methods used included:

- Semi-structured interviews with children, guidance counsellors, NGOs and other key groups;
- Observations of locations reported;
- Guided focus group discussions with children involved in prostitution, children working on the street, and other key stakeholders. Three workshops were held at strategic points during the RA;
- Documentary reviews.

The sample was selected using convenience techniques, targeting research locations known as sites frequented by children involved in sexual activities. Staff of agencies whose work was considered relevant was also targeted for interviews. Special efforts were made to include a diverse range of children related to: locations, sexual activities, males and

females. The RA process was completed within the three-month timeframe anticipated, though completion of the final report extended beyond this time. Despite time and financial resource constraints, the methodology proved effective for researching the situation of children involved in prostitution in Jamaica.

3. Scope and Limitations

Children in prostitution was the initial focus of the study, but this was quickly expanded to include children involved in various forms of pornography and sexual activities for income or other reasons as these were all considered to be among the worst forms of child labour. The study was therefore able to unravel, and make less invisible, a range of activities that involve children in what Williams (2000) refers to as 'sex work for gain'.

The ages of the children in the study were either given by the children themselves or based on reports from other key informants and were not independently verified. The RA was unable to adequately cover children in middle, upper class and deep rural communities, children with disabilities, children working in sectors such as agriculture and transportation and children who were possibly involved in the international sex trade. A number of data sources were identified for future analysis but time and resources did not allow them to be fully explored. These include newspaper archives in the Gleaner, Observer, Star and X News, the Statistical Units of the Police, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and national poverty studies. These agencies should be encouraged to analyse existing data to contribute to a centralized database on children involved in prostitution and related sexual activities.

4. *Locations Studied*

The study covered six locations: Kingston, Spanish Town, Portmore, Montego Bay, Negril, and Sav-la-Mar, previously identified by the ILO as representing a range of possible interest areas for children involved in prostitution. Montego Bay and Negril represent typical tourist areas, while Kingston, Spanish Town and Portmore represent non-tourist, urban and sub-urban areas. Within these towns and cities, attempts were made to include ‘inner city’ as well as ‘up-town’ communities. Data from three other parishes (St Andrew, St Ann and Hanover) were also collected. Other locations across the island were identified as areas of interest for further investigation.

Observations were conducted in 35 locations in the tourist towns of Montego Bay and Negril, the rural town of Sav-la Mar, and the urban centres of Kingston, Spanish Town and Portmore. Another 45 locations across the island were identified through stakeholders, as areas in which children were involved in sexual activities for income. Together these 80 locations covered thirteen of Jamaica’s fourteen parishes.

A brainstorming session held during the orientation workshop, enabled community representatives from various parishes, to identify specific locations where children were allegedly involved in sex activities. This was an important contribution to the research process as their living and working experience made them very knowledgeable about community problems and issues.

While the majority of go-go clubs visited did employ children under 18 years, a few of them stated that they did not employ children as it was illegal and was described by one club owner as “prison wuk”.

5. *Persons Consulted*

Over 266 persons were consulted across seven parishes through 15 focus group discussions, three workshops and 73 interviews. Of the 266 persons, 128 were children (48.1 per cent), while the other 138 (52 per cent) were key stakeholders.

6. *Research Team*

The Caribbean Child Development Centre of the University of the West Indies, provided an institutional base for the study, as well as conceptual, administrative and logistical support for three workshops.

Data collection was done by a 17- person research team, comprising 13 Field Researchers, a Chief Interviewer, a Focus Group Coordinator and the Research Coordinator.

Two Field Research Teams were formed, one covered Kingston, Portmore and Spanish Town, while the other covered Montego Bay, Negril, Hanover and Sav-la Mar. The combination of technical skills in the combined team and a high level of commitment, enabled data to be collected from various sources simultaneously. The analysis and writing were then done in rapid succession, but took longer than originally anticipated.

7. *Profile of Researchers*

- a) The Interviewer was one of the three researchers for the study of sex workers done by the Centre for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies, Mona Unit. She is the Academic Director for the Jamaica-based programme of the School for International Training, and has wide consulting experience.



- b) The Focus Group Facilitator is a well-known actress, TV personality and child rights activist and social worker. She is also Executive Director of Children First, an NGO based in Spanish Town that works with street and working children. Her public profile and her facilitation skills were distinct advantages for working with the children and she was quickly able to establish rapport with them.
- c) The Field Research Coordinator is a community animator, who has worked extensively with inner city communities and the national poverty eradication programme. She has also trained community animators in participatory research methodologies, including most of the field researchers used in the study. She also coordinated the field research for a CIDA-funded community baseline study.
- d) The Field Researchers were all trained community workers and most were former employees of the Social Development Commission and NGOs. Many live and work in inner city areas, which meant that they had accurate knowledge of locations where children were employed in sex work. This team focused on observations, in-depth interviews and case studies.
- e) The Research Coordinator is an International Development Consultant with extensive research experience and publications in Gender, Child Rights, Labour & Trade issues. She is also a trained group facilitator, with experience in using participatory methodologies. She drafted the work plan, budget, prepared research instruments, assisted with data collection and data analysis and prepared the draft and final reports.

8. Data Collection Instruments

A flexible interview guide was prepared for the interviews and focus group discussions and these were shared at the orientation workshop. Field researchers were provided with notebooks to record their observations and interviews. The main interviewer submitted interview notes electronically, but most of the other reports were submitted in handwritten format. A voice-activated microphone was used to record some of the focus group discussions with the children. Notes were prepared from these but the children's names were changed to protect their identities. Workshop discussions were recorded on flip chart paper and later analysed.

At the outset, the CCDC circulated a letter to key stakeholders who participated in their February workshop, informing them of the project, the date for the stakeholders workshop and requested that they share existing research to guide the project. Unfortunately, this initiative did not result in any documentary information being provided.

Three workshops were held. Workshop 1 provided training and orientation for the research team and was held on 9 June, 2000. It built on the skills of the researchers who had been trained in participatory research methods. Objectives and research questions were outlined, RA techniques explained and guidance given on conducting research with children involved in prostitution and related activities. The workshop also served as a focus group discussion to gather information on related activities in communities. Workshop 2 was held on 26 June, 2000 and served to collect data reports and debrief on findings. It also served as a focus group discussion, to capture additional data from the research team including

challenges associated with conducting the research. Workshop 3 was held on 28 July, 2000 to verify data and refine recommendations. Preliminary findings and recommendations were shared with key stakeholders, who represented a wide cross section of agencies.

9. *Data Analysis*

Field notes from observations, interviews and focus group discussions, flip chart reports from workshops as well as data from secondary sources were thoroughly examined and efforts made to determine emerging patterns or recurring themes and issues. Earlier studies on child prostitution and sex work provided valuable guidance for this process. Data were grouped and tabulated where possible in line with suggestions of the ILO/UNICEF Manual. For example, the types of activities identified were classified in terms of the level of risk for the commercial sex workers. Attempts were then made to analyse data to extract meaning and understanding. The framework used for this analysis was Convention 182 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

10. *Reliability and Validity*

Checks for reliability and validity of data were done by triangulation of research methods. Data from interviews were compared with data from observations, focus group discussions, and secondary sources. This was particularly important for checking the age and education of children involved in prostitution, activities, work patterns, rates and diversity of earnings, as well as the norms and practices of each activity.

Validation of the findings was done using a variety of strategies. A debriefing session with researchers after completion of

the field research helped to clarify some emerging issues and trends. Consultation continued with the Field Researcher, the Focus Group Coordinator and some of the researchers while the data analysis and report writing were in progress, to clarify key issues.

The main findings and draft recommendations were then presented to key stakeholders at a workshop held at the end of July. Feedback from this workshop was used to revise the draft report by early August. The document was then circulated for review by selected institutions and individuals. These included the CCDC Researcher, the ILO/IPEC teams in Trinidad and Geneva, the Focus Group Coordinator who had had the most detailed interviews with and reports on the children, and an academic researcher with extensive research experience on sex tourism. Feedback from these sources was used to prepare the final report.

Adapted from: Leith L D. 2001. *Jamaica: Situation of children in prostitution - A rapid assessment*, (Geneva, ILO-IPEC)



Chapter 7

Actions of Governments and International Organizations



Photo ILO/J. maillard



1. Introduction

National political commitment is the key to the effective abolition of child labour. In the absence of a firm policy commitment by the government, backed up by resources and translated into effective action, the best efforts of other partners in the fight against child labour are likely to result in making little more than a small dent in the problem. Thus, governments carry the obligation to establish, implement and monitor policies and legislation, and to translate international commitments into domestic action.

International cooperation helps to build an environment in which child labour can be abolished in the national context. International organizations provide a forum in which international legal standards are established and refined. They also raise awareness of the problem worldwide, engage national governments and other social actors in a dialogue, and facilitate the availability of resources from wealthier countries to tackle child labour in poor countries.

This chapter will present some of the ways in which national governments and international organizations can contribute to the effective elimination of child labour.

2. The role of government institutions

Governments, parliamentarians, ministries and other public agencies are critical actors in the fight against child labour. Cooperation of national governments and their institutions is essential to ensure that the conventions and recommendations passed by international organizations will be effective instruments at the national level.

Firstly, the participation of governments and agencies is necessary to paint a complete picture of the status and extent of child labour in a country. Cooperation from regional and local governments facilitates the necessary research and reporting components of successful policy changes and implementation. For example, some governments, including those of Colombia, Kenya, Thailand and Turkey, have set up permanent child labour committees, specialized bodies headed by the government

whose task it is to oversee all activities and policies regarding child labour in the country and to work together with international organizations. Such a child labour agency can represent different government ministries and agencies that have a role to play in the elimination of child labour. But it also includes representatives of employers' and workers' organizations, as well as informed individuals from various NGOs and other knowledgeable agencies, universities, research institutes, etc. to coordinate joint actions.

Secondly, government action is important to conduct internal reviews and initiate legislation, policies, and programmes. If national legislation is adequate, the government or one of its agencies should monitor and examine its enforcement. If the legislation is inadequate or does not conform to international child labour standards, the government should take steps to introduce alternatives or to strengthen laws and regulations.

Thirdly, government participation is crucial for providing adequate enforcement of all laws and international standards that protect children from child labour. Enforcement of legislation is necessary for combating child labour but not always easy to carry out. The government can set up monitoring systems to ensure that employers do not continue to hire children, or that children do not return to the work force once they have been withdrawn from it. Government and public bodies can also examine means of prevention, i.e. ways of keeping "new" children from joining the workforce, the rehabilitation of children already working, and their reintegration into the school system or their villages and families if the children have been estranged from them.

Finally, governments can explore the children's needs in order to identify priority target groups and formulate projects; and they can allocate the necessary resources if they are available and set up ways to utilize them. The input for formulating new programmes and for introducing projects can come from various sources. In general, it has been found that a multi-pronged attack on child labour, one that involves different approaches or actors, is likely to be the most effective.

Identifying priority target groups in national programmes of action in seven developing countries

Countries identify different groups of working children as requiring priority attention. Here are examples from several countries of the kinds of child work identified by national governments and child labour experts:

In **Benin**, children who are:

- apprentices in the informal sector;
- young girls in urban areas (domestic service, servants, sales girls);
- working in agriculture.

In **India**, children who are:

- working in hazardous activities, including making glass or brass objects such as candlesticks and locks, polishing gems, making matches or fireworks, making slate and tiles, weaving carpets and rolling bidis (cigarettes).

In **Indonesia**, children who are:

- scavenging in dump sites;
- working in dangerous deep sea activities such as sea-fishing, offshore fishing from jermals, or pearl diving;
- working as street hawkers.

In **Kenya**, children who are:

- working in domestic service;
- working in the service sector;
- working in commercial agriculture;
- working in quarrying and mining;
- working in the tourist sector;
- working in the informal sector.

In the **Philippines**, children who are:

- victims of trafficking;
- working in mining and quarrying;
- working in home-based industries;
- engaged in prostitution;
- cutting sugar cane or working on vegetable farms;
- making fireworks;
- doing deep-sea diving.

In **Romania**, children who are:

- trafficked;
- working in agriculture;
- living and working on the street;
- Roma children

In **Thailand**, children who are:

- under 13 years old;
- working under hazardous conditions;
- working in illegal occupations;
- working in an enslaved condition;
- doing work which is physically and/or sexually abusive.

In **Turkey**, children who are:

- living and working on the street;
- working in seasonal agriculture;
- working in the informal urban economy;
- domestic workers.

Source: Haspels/Jankanish, 2000:
Action against child labour

In order to formulate successful programmes, governments can seek technical advice and expertise from international organizations, academics, and various other experts. Once a programme has been designed and implemented, a nationally appointed commission or public agency can be established to oversee its functioning and funding. This agency troubleshoots when necessary and also evaluates the programme's performance.

Governments also have the responsibility of evaluating the educational system in those areas where child labour is found, of exploring ways to improve children's access to education and of making it more appropriate. They must also concern themselves with the quality of schools. They might decide to introduce other kinds of educational experience, including non-formal or vocational education. National authorities also work with NGOs and community leaders about how best to raise awareness and change the prevailing attitudes about child labour - the attitudes of communities, families, employers, teachers and even the children themselves. This might involve determining the best ways to introduce social protection and other measures to sustain family incomes so that children are not sent out to work. The precise mix of actions will be specific to each region and to its child labour problems.

A considerable number of governments have already launched initiatives to accomplish some of the tasks mentioned above. Sometimes these initiatives are contained in national action programmes, like those developed in the USA.

After ratifying Convention No. 182, the United States government put in place a "National Program of Action" addressing the four principal issues that it regarded as most urgent and compelling:

- preventing the criminal exploitation of children;
- reducing workplace injuries and fatalities of young workers;
- assuring that work loads are not so heavy that they adversely affect educational achievement;
- assuring that there is adequate information to make informed and appropriate decisions about the issues arising from youth employment.

This national programme is designed as a living document to monitor existing programmes, identify new initiatives, and highlight areas in need of improvement. It identifies federal initiatives and federal/state partnerships that enforce laws and

implement programmes in the problem areas listed above, and contains specific recommendations to carry their work forward. Progress in implementing the plan is monitored by the US Department of Labor.

For a more detailed description of the first TBPs initiated by the ILO in Tanzania, please refer to the coloured pages at the end of this chapter.

One important government activity that forms part of national action programmes is the introduction of so-called “Time-Bound Programmes” (TBPs). These aim at eradicating the worst forms of child labour in a country within a given period of time. They link action against child labour with national development strategies, particularly those addressing poverty reduction, education and employment promotion. Time-Bound Programmes must receive official commitment at the highest government level. The ILO, with the support of international donors, then backs this commitment with additional resources and technical assistance.

There are other roles that only governments can play. For example, the German government, along with other sponsors, produced a brief information film on the fight against child sex tourism. This film is screened on the international flights of various airlines and has also been widely shown on television in Europe, in order to discourage persons from travelling to certain countries in search of the sexual exploitation of children.

Some bilateral agreements providing for prevention and prosecution have also been signed between countries whose citizens participate in this kind of tourism. Governments whose borders are crossed in the process of trafficking children for exploitative labour have also entered into bilateral agreements, such as that between the governments of Côte d’Ivoire and Mali, which provides for elaborating national action plans to prevent and control such trafficking and to repatriate and rehabilitate the victimized children. This agreement follows the adoption in November 2000 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which is an international instrument that supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

A point to emphasize here is that without political commitment and without collaboration with other social actors, few or none of these government initiatives will bear much fruit; they will remain good intentions on paper. Fortunately, a lot of successful activities have been carried out, and their number is constantly increasing.

Governments intending to deal with their child labour problem find that they can tackle it best in a coherent and coordinated manner, drawing on various government ministries. The Ministry of Labour plays a central role in this, but it is also important to coordinate all efforts with the government agencies responsible for national development, economic policy, rural and industrial development, public health, social protection, education, and law enforcement. Most importantly, governments have to not only provide the policy, legal and administrative framework but must also indicate their clear determination to carry out the measures they enact, for example by committing public funds for this purpose.

The scale of the child labour problem and nature of the underlying causes require that child labour concerns are “mainstreamed”, i.e. firmly integrated into the national development agenda. Many developing countries are formulating national Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSPs) and other “multi-sectoral” programmes, i.e. programmes that span various economic, political and social areas. PRSPs, which are formulated within the framework of World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance to low-income countries, are, in effect, comprehensive development plans covering many economic and social sectors, including education, health, employment and agriculture. They are mostly the result of intensive consultations at national and sub-national levels with the aim of ensuring broad-based participation, national ownership and political commitment to implementation. In many countries, the PRSPs also serve as a basis for the mobilization of development resources, especially from bilateral donors and international financial institutions. As part of the process of preparing national TBPs, increased efforts have recently been made by governments and international organizations to promote the integration of child labour concerns into PRSPs and similar development frameworks.

The following case study from Turkey is a good example of how child labour initiatives have been integrated into the national development agenda.

“ The Government’s priority policy areas for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour for the period 2004–2014 are as follows:

(a) **Poverty alleviation.** The government aims to introduce measures to improve the pattern of income distribution in line with the eighth Five-Year Development Plan and improve the economic security of

low-income families by transferring resources to the poor through direct assistance programmes. In addition, priority will be given to including families of working children in poverty alleviation programmes at all levels, including income-generation schemes, and savings and credit programmes, with emphasis on high-risk groups such as single parents.

(b) Reducing household vulnerability. The government will enlarge the scope of social security to ensure national coverage in order to minimize risks and deliver effective and sustained social services to all those in need, particularly individuals in the agricultural and informal sectors. An important strategic aim also involves gathering additional periodic information and to better utilize existing data on living conditions, income sources and expenditure patterns of families of working children to provide a reliable basis for formulating policies on income security.

(c) Education for all. The main goal of the government is to improve the educational infrastructure by introducing measures to ensure that all children of the relevant ages are included in compulsory education and that education is provided virtually free of charge for children of poor families. Additional aims are the inclusion of child labour-related issues in education policies and programmes to ensure consistency between policies on the elimination of child labour and the improvement of education, as well as advocating the extension of compulsory education from eight to twelve years.

(d) Elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency. Child labour on the streets, in the informal urban economy, seasonal commercial agricultural labour, domestic labour and rural child labour have been identified as worst forms of child labour in Turkey. The government aims to strengthen and expand the involvement of a wider range of national organizations. Rehabilitative activities need to be coordinated with ongoing and planned social sector initiatives, especially those in the areas of poverty alleviation and education. Emphasis is also given to the synchronization of the rehabilitation of working children with anti-poverty measures, vocational training and income-generation opportunities for the families of working children. ☞☞

ILO-IPEC, 2003.
*Combating the worst forms
of child labour in Turkey*

3. The importance of national legislation

National legislation is a key element in the government arsenal for combating child labour. It sets the principles, objectives and priorities for national policy. It creates specific legal rights and responsibilities and sets up the procedures for acting on complaints and making investigations. It can help to deter the exploitation of children by providing sanctions against violators and redress (or at least release and rehabilitation) for victims. It places the authority of the State behind the protection of children.

All countries have adopted some basic legislation that prohibits or sets limits on the employment of children and young people. The laws may be spread across a number of different areas and be embodied in general labour codes, minimum age laws, education laws, civil codes, laws governing conditions of employment and work, safety and health codes, and criminal laws. But in quite a few countries, national legislation does not always reflect the principles and standards of international conventions and recommendations. In some cases, even when the legislation does encompass these principles and standards, the enforcement of such standards proves to be a daunting task.

More time and focus is also needed to formulate and refine legislation relating to some of the worst forms of child labour. Many countries are elaborating the necessary legislation and are formulating and/or implementing action programmes, often together with NGOs or local or international organizations, to deal with these special problem areas.

However, even when laws do exist, working children and their families as well as employers are often ignorant of the specific laws relating to their own working situation. Out of ignorance, fear or else a desire or need to have their child continue to earn income, parents may make few complaints. Many parents are actually unaware of the dangers their children are incurring in the workplace. To counter this, information regarding the national legislation must be translated and disseminated in local dialects and languages, and presented in terms that will be understandable to the populations and communities concerned at whatever level of formal education or literacy. Simple and appropriately targeted campaigns at the community level, in which parents and children are made aware of their legal rights, can have a substantial impact.

More information on action by parliamentarians can be found in the ILO/Inter-Parliamentary Union publication “Eliminating the worst forms of child labour: A practical guide to ILO Convention No. 182, Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 3” (2002).

The next step may be more difficult: even when parents and their working children are aware of the existing laws, the procedures for filing complaints, where they exist, may be so lengthy and complicated that they act as a deterrent, and the penalty for attempting to complain may be the loss of the child’s job or other negative consequences for the child or the family. When it comes to legislation and policy against child labour, parliamentarians have a key role to play. As lawmakers, they can encourage their country’s ratification of Conventions Nos. 138 and 182. They can also help to fashion policy, adopt the requisite national legislation, vote the necessary budgets and oversee the day-to-day actions of their government. They can ensure that the sanctions provided for violations of child labour laws are severe enough to serve as deterrents, and that adequate compensation is provided for the children and their families.

4. Issues of enforcement

Labour inspection

Putting the legal framework into place is only a first step and raising awareness a second. The next challenge is how to effectively enforce legislation. Even countries that have proper child labour laws commonly find it quite difficult to put them into practice, irrespective of their level of development. Various types of enforcement mechanisms are needed to make national legislation effective, but their proper functioning depends on both human and material resources as well as political will.

One of the methods is labour inspection that is carried out by labour inspectors with the legal authority to provide advice to both employers and workers; to administer social and labour policy; and to supervise and enforce labour legislation and standards, effective national systems of labour inspection are required. Labour inspection is a public responsibility of government, which should best be organized as a system within the context of a larger state system (von Richthofen 2002).

The ILO Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No 81) sets out the basic international standards, supplemented by the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No 129), which takes into account the special characteristics of the agricultural sector.

Labour inspectorates work to secure the enforcement of the legal provisions relating to conditions of work and the protection of workers, including working hours, wages, weekly rest and holidays, safety, health and welfare, and the employment of women, children and young persons. They work especially to ensure that employers comply with their legal duties toward their workers, including people hired through contractors and sub-contractors. Inspectors also supply technical advice and information to employers and workers concerning the most effective means of complying with the legal provisions. Labour inspection systems are varied, with some countries having, for example, specialized health and safety inspectorates.

In many countries, however, labour inspection is not a high priority, which results in the difficulty of effectively organizing a minimum presence of labour inspection in large territories with a lack of resources. Many countries have too few labour inspectors to cover all economic sectors adequately.

Labour inspectorates in agriculture in developing countries face special difficulties. First, even where legislation applies to agriculture, there are too few inspectors in these countries to assure even a token appearance at more than a tiny proportion of workplaces. The larger the plantation or the more remote the agricultural activity, the greater the problem. Second, agricultural inspectors in these countries often receive inadequate training. Third, many inspectors complain of inadequate resources, particularly for transport, so that they are unable to travel to more remote farms and plantations.

The work of labour inspectors may be complemented by other measures. These include setting up special child labour units, maintaining registers of when younger workers are hired and/or requiring them to obtain work permits as a way of monitoring their employment and facilitating later investigation, imposing fines and penalties on employers who hire under-age children (or worse, imprisoning them or revoking the operating licenses for their businesses), imposing penalties on parents for violating laws about compulsory schooling, and in general establishing clear procedures for complaints and investigations by children and parents.

Focusing for a moment here on the work of government labour inspectors will illustrate some of the difficulties. There should be a system for complaints to reach the proper authorities, so that they can be acted upon, for instance any prohibited use of children in the labour force that comes to the labour inspectors'

More on the work of labour inspectors and child labour can be found in the publication ILO/International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour/InFocus Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment/International Association of Labour Inspection. "Combating child labour: A handbook for labour inspectors", (2002).

attention. Similarly, the incidence of child labour should be checked as part of the regular schedule of inspections of workplaces. Labour inspectors should also meet and consult with worker representatives in the workplace. However, the labour inspections frequently lack the resources needed to investigate the cases of possible abuse or to take legal action against the offenders. There are often too few inspectors and they are overloaded with sites requiring inspection, so that their visits are usually inadequate relative to the extent of child labour suspected of existing in the area. Workplaces that employ children may be quite numerous and scattered (comprising small farms, small shops, workshops in the urban informal sector, private homes, outlying mines and quarries, etc.). Employment is often clandestine, and many children work in establishments that do not officially exist. Moreover, the labour inspector may not be given access to places where children work if they constitute private premises. During inspections, the working children are hidden out of sight of the inspectors. There might also be inadequate transportation for covering the broad territory assigned to each inspector. The transportation factor alone is very significant, if it is recalled that in many countries the majority of working children are found in rural areas.

To complicate matters further, labour inspectors have many and varied duties, of which child labour is only one - and one that is often considered to be of only minor importance compared to their other tasks; it usually occupies only a very small proportion of their time. If they are in a country that has serious financial difficulties and their salaries are low and not regularly paid, some inspectors may be tempted to be bribed by employers who use children to turn a blind eye to the abuse. While corruption of many kinds exists in different settings, this is one form that is especially lamentable because it fails to protect the working children. Improving the enforcement of child labour laws must become a priority, and this involves strengthening labour inspection services and providing them with adequate resources, which enables labour inspectors to focus more on child labour.

Labour inspectors are more likely to obtain the support and cooperation of employers, families and local communities in their work if they regard the provision of advice and assistance to child workers, their parents and employers as part of their assignment. If they not only work with the police, other law enforcement agencies and trade unions - as they are often obliged statutorily to

do - but also cooperate with other organizations such as employers' organisations, social workers, and local community organizations, their work will become easier and their effectiveness enhanced. In a number of countries, labour inspectors have joined hands with these groups to form so-called integrated "Child Labour Monitoring Systems", expanding the notion of labour inspection to cover new areas of work and linking enforcement and preventive work directly to social protection services to be offered to working children.

In some countries, there are worker representatives that are legally empowered on safety and health issues, as well as joint management/worker committees on safety and health in the workplace. These may play important roles in eliminating child labour, especially hazardous work, and in assisting with child monitoring programmes. In fact, it is important to build the capacities of both worker representatives and labour inspectors to ensure the sustainability of efforts at the workplace level to eliminate child labour on a permanent basis. In this way, it can be ensured that child labourers are not re-employed in the enterprise at a later date.

Inspecting McDonalds in Great Britain

One successful example of effective labour inspection is the investigation of a McDonalds' franchise in Camberley, Great Britain, where what is believed to be the biggest ever fine for a child labour offence was levied on a McDonalds' franchise holder.

The £12,400 (US\$20,000) penalty followed an investigation in which school-age children were found to be working up to sixteen hours a day at the local McDonalds restaurant in what was described on the news as a "fast-food sweatshop".

Source: BBC News,
24 April, 2002

Child labour monitoring

The monitoring of workplaces is another way to ensure that employers are not using child labour, or that where children under 18 are legally employed, they are not exposed to hazardous work. Such special monitoring is often sponsored by international organizations or NGOs. Workplaces, especially those producing goods for export, have been monitored, for example, in Bangladesh (garments) and Pakistan (footballs). In India, Nepal and Pakistan, carpet producers' loom sheds have

been monitored. These are just a few examples of what is now becoming a more frequent procedure. Special workplace monitoring of child labour and other social standards have been introduced by many enterprises, from multinationals to nationals or local companies producing for export. In many cases, the monitoring is entrusted to audit firms, specialized private agencies or consulting firms. Monitoring complements, but does not replace the roles of government labour inspectors and worker representatives.

Child labour monitoring requires a good deal of initiative. What is needed are workable and reliable systems and methods for selecting the workplaces to be monitored. Monitors must be hired, trained, and sometimes provided with transportation and living expenses while in the field, as well as a regular salary, all of which is expensive and not always feasible for many local actors. The cooperation of employers' and workers' associations needs to be obtained, and they must consent to monitors' surprise visits to their members' establishments. Usually this kind of cooperation is secured once the employers' association has signed an agreement (referred to as a Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU) not to hire child labour. Monitoring then becomes an exercise in identifying workplace violations and regularly verifying and reporting on compliance.

Monitoring can give rise to various issues requiring solutions. One is what to do when child labour is found. What is the referral system that the monitors will use to agencies that can take action, e.g. labour inspectors? The referral system needs to be clearly defined and established. How can children removed from an industry be prevented from returning to it once the monitors leave, or even from entering into more harmful work? What kind of rehabilitation, follow-up or tracking system can be put in place for the children? There have been cases of monitoring where children have been removed from one industry, and it has subsequently been reported that some of them have moved into worse occupations, even migrating far away from home at young ages to do so as they need to continue earning money. How can it be assured that this does not happen, and that the children attend school? It is essential that monitoring programmes be linked to action to improve family income or employment and to ensure education. How can the cooperation of employers, families and communities be enlisted to keep their children out of the labour force? Sometimes families that have depended on their children's earnings feel that monitoring is targeted against them, and they

resent it (and they resent government labour inspectors for the same reason). Thus monitoring, set up for the good of the community and the well-being of the children, must also take into account families' perceived interests. Where children are working outside formal workplaces and beyond the reach of the labour inspectorate, other forms of monitoring can be developed, for instance involving communities themselves in the identification and prevention of child labour. In these community-based monitoring systems, parents, teachers and local government workers form teams to address the issues of child labour through observation, education and referral of child labourer to social services.

Another problem that special monitoring shares with labour inspection is the difficulty of gaining access to workplaces. Children may be found in clandestine situations, such as commercial sexual exploitation, bonded or forced labour, and/or work at sites that are physically difficult to access. For example, they may be in workshops in the informal economy, or carry out work in the family home. Without employers' cooperation, it becomes much more difficult to monitor the child labour situation. In the carpet belt in India (the area near Agra and Varanasi in northern India), several NGOs have set up monitoring operations, the best known of them being Rugmark. One result has been that thousands of loom sheds have been transferred to other Indian states, the very large state of Rajasthan for example, where carpet employers can escape the long arm of the monitors and still continue to employ children. Despite these difficulties, labour inspection and special monitoring are necessary if we want to stop child labour in reality. Programmes against child labour in the workplace must have some kind of inspection or monitoring component, and be linked to some social protection mechanism in place for children withdrawn from work.

Monitoring systems are still improving. After all, private enterprises have an increasing interest in improving the situation, as will be discussed in Chapter 8. Some companies carry out ongoing self-monitoring, according to certain pre-established criteria and/or company codes of conduct. Likewise, some companies require exporters and export associations to monitor those workplaces where their goods are produced. It is too early to tell whether these self-regulating attempts at monitoring can provide any serious sustained results.

*For more on
Rugmark,
see page 260.*

*An example of a
company that applies
these principles can be
found on pages
245-247.*

5. The role of international organizations

There are a number of ways in which international organizations dialogue and work with national governments to take action against child labour. These include:

- Raising the awareness of government officials and persuading national authorities of the urgent need to act;
- Marshalling the financial support of the governments of wealthier countries for projects and programmes and a host of other child-labour-related activities;
- Sensitizing international public opinion about child labour, including its most reprehensible forms;
- Elaborating research methodologies to help countries examine child labour;
- Promulgating international legal standards which countries can promote and ratify, and encouraging countries to implement and conform to them by offering technical cooperation and assistance;
- Encouraging governments to enter into a broad range of constructive relations and programmes with other countries of the region, with international organizations and with donors and others who share a common interest in improving children's living and work situations.

International labour standards

International labour standards are elaborated in the ILO's annual International Labour Conference by delegates representing governments, employers and workers from the ILO member states. As such, they are agreed upon by virtually the entire international community, and are a powerful tool for setting the parameters for action within countries concerning child labour and other labour issues. They provide benchmarks for formulating national objectives, and they establish expectations. International standards can also serve to raise awareness within countries about the importance of the objectives they promote. Individual countries are encouraged to ratify them and, afterward, to conform to them in their legislation and action even though there is no international "police force" that can force them to do so.

As discussed in previous chapters, the most important international labour standards adopted concerning child labour are the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). States that ratify these Conventions have the obligation to define a range of minimum ages for certain types of employment, ages below which no child should be required to work. Convention No. 138 is the main international framework for action against child labour, and has received wide ratification. The Convention establishes that the general minimum age for admission to employment should not be less than the age of completing compulsory schooling and in no event less than 15 years of age (or 14 for developing countries for whom it may initially be difficult to enforce a minimum age of 15). Countries that ratify it must “pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age...to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons”. The Minimum Age Recommendation No. 146, which accompanies Convention No. 138, provides guidance on policy and enforcement.

The full text of both Conventions can be found in Appendix 1.

Convention No. 182 concerns the worst forms of child labour, and its aim is to ensure that children in all countries, irrespective of their level of development, are protected from those extreme forms of work described in Chapter 2. Ratifying countries are expected to take immediate and effective measures to prohibit them and work toward the elimination of these forms of child labour.

The ILO’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, which was adopted a year earlier than Convention No. 182, highlights the importance of respecting the most fundamental labour rights in the context of globalization. These include the right to freedom of association and to collective bargaining, the abolition of forced labour, non-discrimination in employment and occupation, and the effective abolition of child labour. All Member States that belong to the ILO are under an obligation to respect, to promote and act upon the child labour conventions in good faith - even if they have not yet ratified them - and to make their best efforts to abolish child labour.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted by the UN in 1989, defines a child as every person under the age of 18. Several key provisions of this Convention are closely related to those of the ILO child labour standards.

The main provisions of the CRC relating to child labour can be found in Appendix 1.

The CRC's Article 32 recognizes the right of children to be protected from economic exploitation. This Article also protects children from any work that is likely to be hazardous or harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development or that interferes with the child's education. Several other Articles of the CRC have a particular bearing on some of the worst forms of child labour: illicit production and trafficking of drugs (Article 33), sexual exploitation (Article 34); the abduction, sale and trafficking of children for any purpose (Article 35); other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare (Article 36); and the use of children in armed conflict (Article 38). Optional protocols to the CRC which were adopted in May 2000 complement Convention No. 182 by focusing on two important kinds of child labour - the involvement of children in armed conflict, and the sale of children, children in prostitution and child pornography. These optional protocols further define certain concepts and describe exact measures to be taken.

The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

Spearheading assistance programmes in combating child labour is the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), a technical cooperation programme of the ILO that was set up in 1992. (The ILO itself dates from 1919 and is the oldest agency within the United Nations family.) IPEC's main goal is the progressive elimination of child labour by strengthening national capacities to address the problem and by promoting a worldwide movement to combat it. Within countries, IPEC works with ministries of labour, employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs, and with other concerned partners in the public and private spheres. It helps its partners to develop and implement measures aimed at preventing child labour, withdrawing children from hazardous work, providing alternatives and improving working conditions in non-hazardous kinds of work for older children (as a transitional measure towards the elimination of child labour).

IPEC's experience has shown that because child labour is a complex problem stemming from multiple causes, action to combat it must be holistic and multifaceted so as to result in a positive and sustained impact. It is not sufficient merely to have a programme that withdraws children from work or that rescues them from the worst forms of child labour. These children must be provided with viable developmental opportunities, including

Three important IPEC initiatives

The World Day Against Child Labour

The ILO has chosen June 12 as “World Day Against Child Labour” to focus world attention on the urgent need to eradicate child labour. It is a day to remember the affected children and to commemorate those who work to bring about a world without child labour. Around the world, the World Day Against Child Labour involves an array of activities, ranging from gatherings of child workers and their supporters to school events, children’s art shows and drama performances, child-adult information workshops, activities organized by worker and employer representatives, and a variety of media events.

SCREAM

On the World Day Against Child Labour in 2002, IPEC launched a new education and social mobilization initiative entitled “SCREAM Stop Child Labour”. SCREAM stands for Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media. Through pedagogical methodologies, such as drama, creative writing and art, SCREAM introduces young people to the complexities surrounding the issue of child labour and helps them to contribute to resolving them in a positive and constructive way. Equipped with artistic skills, they can share their knowledge with the wider community. The SCREAM Education Pack, which forms the basis of this initiative, comprises 14 modules, a User’s Guide and a photo-CD. For more information, see <http://www.ilo.org/childlabour>.

The “Red Card to Child Labour” campaign

In partnership with the African Football Confederation, IPEC carried out a campaign to raise awareness on child labour on the occasion of the 2002 African Cup of Nations in Mali. With a simple and straightforward message: “Red card to child labour”, understandable to anyone familiar with football, the campaign used a variety of different media - video, popular music and print, distributed through television, radio, international airlines and the football matches themselves - to reach millions of people in Africa and beyond. Activities were carried out in 21 African nations. It is estimated that 12 million people received the message in Kenya and 5 million in Zambia alone. In some African countries, such as Egypt and Ghana, enthusiasm for the campaign was so great that it will continue to be part of many upcoming national or local football competitions and other public events.

In view of its success, extensions of the campaign have been developed. For example, it was made part of the 100th Anniversary Celebration and Match of Real Madrid in 2002. In future it will include other major championships, such as the Youth Football World Cup in 2003, and possibly the Asian Football Cup in 2004 and the Football World Cup, 2006.

Other types of Red Card campaigns are run in public transport systems in Rome (2003) and planned in various other European cities (Paris, 2004, Lisbon and Porto, 2004).

education and training, so that they do not return to the same kind of work or enter other, perhaps worse, forms of child labour. Measures against child labour should be linked to combating poverty and unemployment, and low wages overall. Credible and cost-effective systems must also be put in place to ensure that other children do not replace those withdrawn from the workplace. Solutions to these tasks need to come from many groups and share many perspectives, and IPEC-associated programmes need to be set up wherever possible in a comprehensive and integrated approach at the level of the children, their families and communities, the employers and adult workers, the government and society in general.

The box on page 213 presents three important IPEC initiatives aimed at broad-based awareness raising and social mobilization.

IPEC has also developed a systematic approach to mainstreaming child labour in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (see page 201) and other national development programmes by supporting the networking of policy research institutions, government agencies and other IPEC partners. Highlights of the approach include the following:

- **Promotion of the elimination of child labour as an explicit development objective, particularly within poverty reduction strategies.** This includes awareness raising on the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of child labour, particularly in the context of the consultative processes used in formulating PRSPs and similar development programmes.
- **Analytical work on child labour.** This includes the development of child labour impact assessments and appropriate indicators to facilitate the integration of child labour concerns into development programmes. Work in this area also includes the widespread dissemination and discussion of the results of child labour research.
- **The integration of child labour into the monitoring and evaluation systems used in national development programmes, particularly those set up within the PRSP framework.** This work includes the selection of core child labour indicators as indicators of poverty and social development, the incorporation of child labour modules in data collection operations and the widespread dissemination of the data collected.

- **Capacity building for government and non-government agencies concerned with child labour.** This work entails the promotion of child labour research at universities and research institutes, networking of IPEC's partners and research institutions for knowledge-sharing and support, and the adoption of strategies for enhancing national ownership and sustainability of child labour programmes, including the mobilization of local resources.
- **The pursuit of dialogue with international financial institutions (World Bank, IMF, regional development banks) and other major development agencies to promote collaboration and advocate greater attention to child labour in their operations.** Similar strategies are being used in the efforts aimed at mobilizing institutions working on health issues (such as the World Health Organization (WHO)) to act on hazardous child labour.

The activities of other international organizations: UNICEF, UNESCO and The World Bank

The various international organizations concerned with the structural causes of child labour, such as poverty, inequality, inadequate education, health and child protection systems, have intensified their cooperation in recent years. Although combating child labour is not its principal focus, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which has global responsibility to improve the situation of children, also plays an important role in this area. For instance, thanks to the initiative "Say Yes for children", 94 million people all around the world have declared their support for ten imperatives for ensuring a better world for children and young people, in what has become the largest pledge campaign for children in history. UNICEF has also collaborated with the ILO in carrying out joint programmes in a range of countries, among them Bangladesh, Brazil, Nepal, Pakistan, and United Republic of Tanzania against child labour.

For more information see http://www.unicef.org/say_yes/

The UN Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) is spearheading the "Education for All" (EFA) initiative. This initiative started at the World Conference on Education for All in 1990. Representatives from 155 countries and 150 organizations pledged to provide education for all by the year 2000. Their intention was that children, youth and adults would "benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs". The World Declaration on Education

For more information on EFA see <http://www.unesco.org/education/efa>

for

All defined a bold new direction in education, and a departure from rigid, prescriptive education systems and ushered in an era where flexibility could thrive. From now on, education would be tailor-made, adapted to the needs, culture and circumstances of learners. A review took place at the World Education Forum (26-28 April 2000, Dakar, Senegal), which adopted the Dakar Framework for Action “Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments”. This document commits governments to achieving quality basic education for all by 2015, with particular emphasis on girls’ schooling and a pledge from donor countries and institutions that “no country seriously committed to basic education will be thwarted in the achievement of this goal by lack of resources.”

UNESCO also has a programme called “Education for Children in Need”, that benefits working children as well as to children who are victims of war and disasters, children living in the streets and children with disabilities.

For more information on the Global Child Labor Program see <http://www.worldbank.org/sp/childlabor/>

The principal activity of the World Bank is to assist its borrowing members in their reconstruction and economic and social development efforts. However, the World Bank also runs a “Global Child Labor Program”, established to develop strategies to strengthen the impact of the World Bank’s work on children through its ongoing poverty reduction efforts. The Program publishes research papers on child labour, as well as information on statistics and methodologies.

For more information on UCW see page 183 and <http://www.ucw-project.org/>

The World Bank, ILO and UNICEF recently teamed up together to the project “Understanding Children’s Work”, in order to harmonize the conceptual framework and research methodologies used by the three agencies and to strengthen the research capabilities of many countries in the area of child labour data collection and research.

Another example of interagency cooperation is that between the ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO and Education International in a project to mobilize teachers, educators and their organizations to combat child labour. This has resulted in the production of an information kit on child labourer for teachers. There are many other instances of international collaboration to combat child labour, which involve organizations of various kinds. Collaboration against poverty is also relevant to the fight against child labour, and collaboration concerning youth employment, an area in which the international trade union federations are involved, is relevant to the need to create viable work for young people just coming into the labour force. Other transnational

collaboration, referred to earlier, occurs for example in the fight against sex tourism and the sexual exploitation of children, and that against trafficking.

Partnerships for combating child labour

Many in-country projects and programmes are carried out with broad national and international support and participation - donor governments fund them, national governments, employers' and workers organizations and NGOs implement them, and international organizations such as the ILO and UNICEF provide technical assistance and cooperation in the field and oversight from headquarters. A trend of recent years is the closer collaboration of different international agencies working on different aspects of the same child labour issues - the World Bank, the ILO, UNICEF, the International Organization on Migration (IOM), international organizations representing employers and workers, major international NGOs such as Save The Children, and the international development agencies of the industrialized countries.

The significance of international and national cooperation extends far beyond individual projects. The elimination of child labour and urgent action against its worst forms can only be successful if broad-based alliances in support of these goals can be mobilized. Such alliances always include employers' and workers' organizations, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. When all these actors come together, engage in a continuous dialogue and combine their knowledge, influence and resources to form lasting partnerships, they can have an enormous impact on the elimination of child labour in a country or region.

Beyond these alliances specifically aimed at tackling child labour in individual countries, a number of global sectoral partnerships to combat child labour and to promote other core labour rights have emerged. Such alliances have so far been set up jointly with the sporting goods, tobacco and chocolate industries. The dynamics of these partnerships, seeking common understanding and common action against child labour, and mobilizing expertise and resources for concrete action contribute, in themselves, to monitoring and improving child labour situations.

In addition, these partnerships can initiate or sponsor concrete projects. A good example of the lasting and positive effect partnerships can have in terms of addressing problems of child

labour in a sustainable manner is the ILO/IPEC West Africa Cocoa/Agriculture Project (WACAP). This project aims at the prevention and elimination of hazardous child labour in the cocoa and other agricultural sub-sectors in five countries: Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Nigeria. The impetus for the project came from persistent reports in the media that children were working in this sector and were also being trafficked from other countries to work on cocoa plantations.

The key to the success of this project is the spirit of its partnership component. Not only do project activities focus on withdrawing children from cocoa and agricultural plantations and providing them with alternatives through education and training, they also aim to encourage the participation of the social partners in the process and to strengthen the capacity of these organizations to support their involvement. The project also fosters social dialogue between a number of related stakeholders in the community, such as employers, teachers, doctors, nurses, journalists and trade union officials.

The partnership's impact is further reinforced by its links to other projects in the region, which reveals the breadth of the multiplier effect through partnership. This includes the ILO-IPEC West and Central Africa Project on Child Trafficking and USAID's Sustainable Tree Crop Programme, which, as a direct result of WACAP, broadened its scope to include child labour issues.

6. Conclusion

This chapter illustrates the importance of action by governments and international organizations in fighting child labour. Governments and their institutions also form the crucial link between national public agencies and the international agencies, the NGOs and other actors in civil society. Governments are powerful agents for promoting changes in public opinion and in people's attitudes about child labour. On account of their central role in policy making and action, they are the logical focus for lobbying efforts by those concerned about child labour.

International organizations can dialogue with national governments to take positive action about child labour. Besides, they address regional and international aspects of the problem by developing international standards and providing a platform for international agreements. International organizations such as ILO-IPEC, UNICEF, UNESCO, and the World Bank are also promoting and coordinating numerous projects against child labour "on the ground", which benefit millions of children worldwide. They are also essential in bringing together all actors who can help to eliminate child labour and encouraging their combined efforts. Some of these will be looked at in the following chapter.



QUESTIONS

- ➔ *Which of the important Conventions (international labour standards) concerning child labour has your country ratified? If there are some it has not ratified, find out why not and whether it is planning to do so.*
- ➔ *What legislation has your country passed regarding child labour?*
- ➔ *What are the pros and cons of child labour workplace monitoring? What kinds of monitoring operations are there in your country?*
- ➔ *Which measures are being taken in your country against the worst forms of child labour? Who is taking these measures and what effect are they having?*
- ➔ *Choose one of the organizations mentioned in this chapter and find out more information about it. Consider the following points:*
 1. *What is the main focus of its activities?*
 2. *Does it concentrate on a particular aspect of child labour or a particular region of the world?*
 3. *What are its goals?*
 4. *How is it funded?*
 5. *What action is it currently involved in and what successes has it had to date?*

Discuss and compare your findings.

Which of the organizations discussed would you be interested in getting involved in, and why?

Suggestions for further study

- ☞ Haspels, N. and Jankanish, M. 2000. *Action against child labour*, (Geneva, ILO)
- ☞ ILO. Inter-Parliamentary Union. 2002. *Eliminating the worst forms of child labour: A practical guide to ILO Convention No. 182, Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 3*, (Geneva)
- ☞ ILO. International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. 2001. *Good practices in action against child labour: A synthesis report of seven country studies, 1997-1998 by independent researchers - Brazil, Indonesia, Kenya, Philippines, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey*, (Geneva)
- ☞ UNICEF, 2001. *Beyond child labour, affirming rights*, (New York)
- ☞ Fallon, P.R. 1998. *Child labor: Issues and directions for the World Bank*, (New York)
- ☞ Chao, E. L. and Moorhead, T. B. 2000. *Advancing the global campaign against child labor: Progress made and future actions*. Proceedings from a Conference hosted by the US Department of Labor in collaboration with the International Labour Organization, May 17. US Department of Labor, Washington D.C.
- ☞ ILO. International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour. InFocus Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment. International Association of Labour Inspection. 2002. *Combating child labour: A handbook for labour inspectors*, (Geneva)
- ☞ Boyden, J. and M, William E. 1995. *Exploring alternative approaches to combating child labour: Case studies from developing countries*, Occasional Paper, Child Rights Series No. 8, UNICEF (Florence, Innocenti Research Centre)
- ☞ Grimsrud, Bjorne. 2002. *The next steps: Experiences and analysis of how to eradicate child labour*, (Oslo, Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science)
- ☞ Von Richthofen, W. 2002. *Labour inspection*, (Geneva, ILO)

OPTIONAL READING

A Time-Bound Programme for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in Tanzania

The Tanzanian government demonstrated its initial commitment to the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by becoming one of the first countries to design and implement a Time-Bound Programme (TBP) (see p. 200). The successful implementation of the programme will require a very solid social foundation in terms of awareness levels and community mobilization, as well as high and sustained commitment from international organizations, the donor community, the Tanzanian government and civil society.

The following excerpt is taken from an ILO-IPEC project document from September 2001, "Supporting the Time-Bound Programme for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in Tanzania - Phase 1".

1. Child labour in Tanzania

Preliminary data suggests that only 58 per cent of Tanzania's 12.4 million children aged 5-17 are at school including only 40 per cent of 5 to 9 year olds. Furthermore, over 50 per cent of those children attending school are reported to also be involved in economic activities.¹ This situation has an obvious impact on the performance of children at school.

Child labour is known to be prevalent in smallholder and commercial agriculture, small-scale mining and quarrying, fishing, construction, informal sector activities and domestic work. Also of concern is

the issue of children in prostitution. Work has traditionally been a means of socialization of children in African societies and the dividing line between what is and what is not in the child's interest remains blurred. In a poor family, all members are expected to contribute to the survival of the family and there is often a conflict between the short-term needs and the long-term interests of the child.

2. The planning and consultative process in Tanzania

- Seven rapid assessments (informal sector, mining, prostitution, coffee, tea, tobacco and domestic work) and an in-depth review of institutional and policy issues relating to the worst forms of child labour (WFCL);
- A multi-round Child Labour Survey conducted in conjunction with the national Labour Force Survey (2000-2001);
- Consultative meeting on the TBP with social partners (January 2001);
- Consultation meeting with (ex-) child workers to obtain their input and views on the TBP initiative (21-22 April 2001);
- A National Roundtable meeting (23-25 April 2001);

1 This data comes from the IPEC-sponsored 2000-2001 Child Labour Survey conducted in conjunction with the national Labour Force Survey (2000-2001).

- A district mapping of donor and international NGOs' presence in child labour relevant programmes (May 2001);
- Project formulation mission and additional consultations with government, social partners and the donor community (May - June 2001).

3. Programme strategy

The government has set the ambitious target of reducing the involvement of children in commercial sex, mining and abusive forms of domestic work and commercial agriculture by 75% by the year 2005, and of eradicating the problem completely by the year 2010. Given the magnitude of the problem, this will require a major effort on the part of the government and its development partners to mobilize the necessary human and financial resources. Nonetheless this target is not unrealistic within the context of other goals that have been set by the government and its development partners.

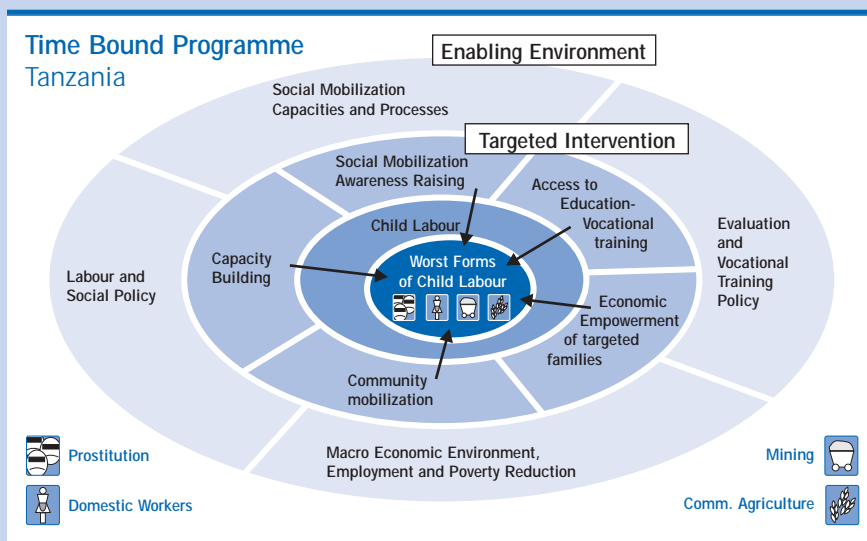
Specific goals for 2010 in the “National Development Vision 2025” and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan (see page 142) specifically relevant for child labour include, universal primary education, a reduction of absolute poverty by 50 per cent (current absolute poverty is estimated at 43 per cent of the population), and the reduction of unemployment rates to less than 10 per cent (there is no reliable figure available on current unemployment rates). Government commitment and donor support towards meeting these targets are high, and an anticipated debt relief offers some hope that these targets may be within reach.

4. Two streams of intervention

The major thrust of the first stream of intervention of the project will be to contribute towards the creation of an enabling environment for effective action against the WFCL. This will involve the formulation and implementation of a Strategic Programme Framework (SPF), which will serve as a platform of action that partners can sign up for as resources



Figure 1: Overall programme approach



become available and commitments are reached.

The second component of the strategy will entail targeted interventions at sectoral, district and community levels, with a view to rapidly demonstrating results, while helping to mobilise the largest possible coalition of partners and resources for scaling up interventions. The fundamental elements of the targeted interventions are:

- identifying children engaged in the priority sectors and occupations and those at risk in selected districts and regions;
- preventing and withdrawing children most at risk and providing them with education opportunities and their families with income alternatives;
- improving working conditions for children above 14 in activities that are not considered inherently hazardous (commercial agriculture, domestic work)
- empowering communities of origin of child labourers to express their views and participate in decision making and putting into place community monitoring systems to prevent children from (re)entering hazardous work situations and withdraw children from such work; and to ensure that local development interventions are child labour sensitive.

The targeted interventions will have strong links to the Local Government Reform Process as well as a number of key donor agencies at the national level such as UNICEF, the School Feeding Programmes (WFP), the Small Entrepreneur Loan Facility (AFDB), and the Danish

International Development Agency (DANIDA), who have already confirmed their interest to join the partnership and work together with IPEC and the Government in addressing the problem of WFCL.

5. The Phasing of activities

The project has been designed for a period of 42 months. The ambitious goal of eliminating the WFCL in Tanzania by the year 2010 is beyond the resources and time frame of this project. Figure 2 illustrates the proposed phasing of activities for the implementation of the overall TBP. Activities covered under this project are limited to stage 1 of Phase 1, but the project will contribute to the scaling-up of the coverage and expansion of the TBP by mobilizing other national and international development partners to join the combat against WFCL with the context of the TBP.

Phase 1 (current project: 2002-2005)

Stage 1 (2002-2003): The first 24 months of the project will focus on:

- The formulation and promotion of a Strategic Programme Framework on the WFCL as a platform of action for resource mobilization;
- Policy level input as part of creating a conducive environment;
- Implementation of direct support projects in the 11 selected districts focusing on the four WFCL with the aim to show rapid impact, which in turn will facilitate resource mobilization required for scaling-up and provide a basis for continued refinement of strategies used.

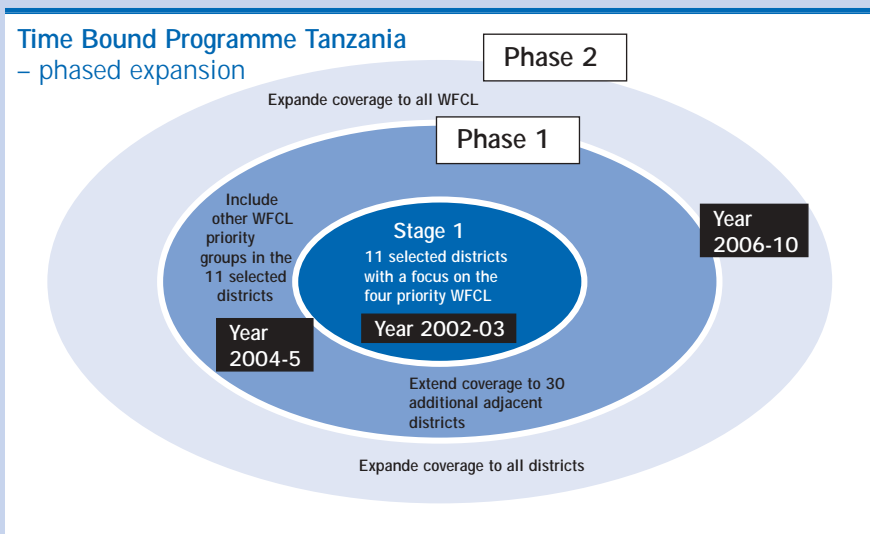
Stage 2 (2004-2005): The subsequent 18 months will focus on:

- continuation of promotion of SPF and resource mobilization;
- continuation of policy input as appropriate;
- consolidating results in eliminating the four WFCL in the 11 selected districts (the aim is a reduction of 75 per cent by the end of 2005);
- preparation for expanding the scope and coverage of the project.

Phase 2 (new project - 2005-2010)

Phase 2 of the programme of support would, in the context of the developed SPF, expand coverage of the targeted interventions to all districts and WFCL in order to realise the goal of eliminating the WFCL by the year 2010. This would be in line with what is ILO-IPEC's comparative advantage as a partner in the SPF on the elimination of WFCL. Other areas of the SPF at the enabling environment level could also be part of Phase 2 if ILO-IPEC has particular experience in those areas.

Figure 2: Phasing of activities for the overall TBP



At the time of going to press (October 2003), the main infrastructure of the programme was in place at the national and district levels. Key ministries, donors, UN organizations, workers' and employers' organizations, NGOs, relevant ILO projects and other development organizations successfully established a network for collaboration. Five action plans were being implemented to target the worst forms of child labour, and three more were approved by the National Inter-Sector Coordinating Committee (NISCC) to commence. Special database systems were developed to identify and record profiles of withdrawn children and those at risk. The development of a child labour monitoring system was underway. All the stakeholders involved were working together to meet the targets outlined in the TBP report, to reduce significantly the burden of child labour by 2005, and to eradicate its presence by 2010.

Chapter 8

Actions of Employers' Organizations, Trade Unions, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Children

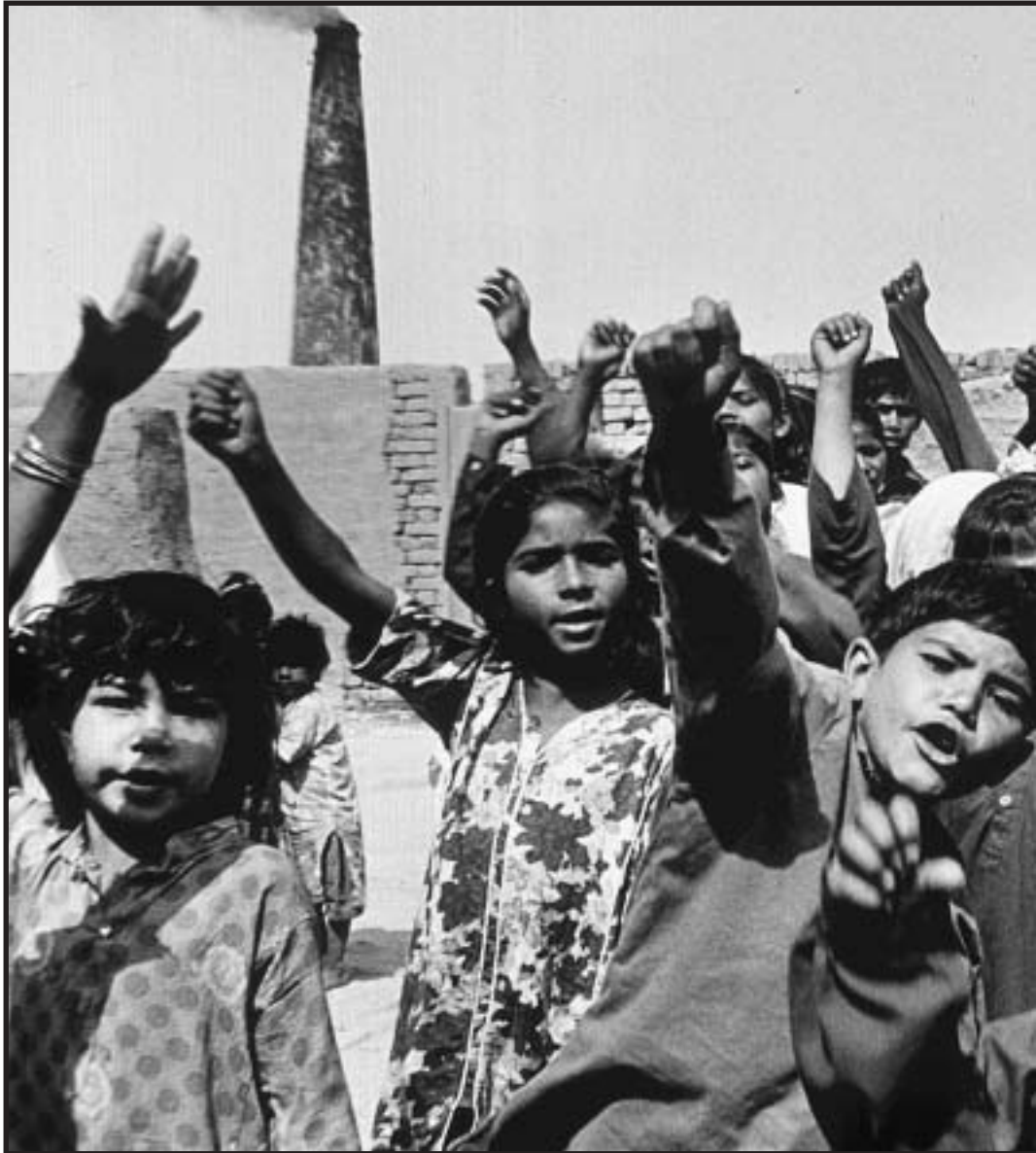


Photo ILO/F. Molerés



1. Introduction

Tackling child labour requires raising the awareness of both those directly involved in and affected by child labour (children, parents, employers), as well as society as a whole. The acknowledgement by society, or some of its sectors, that child labour is a problem helps facilitate positive action. This process begins with raising awareness in individuals by, firstly, identifying child labour as a problem and, secondly, showing it to be an unacceptable situation that can and has to be changed.

In the world of work, three sets of “actors” have the power to determine and to affect working conditions most directly: governments (see Chapter 7), employers, and workers. The latter two are identified as “social partners” because they engage in a dialogue with each other, which assumes different forms in different social and political contexts. The dialogue of employers and workers is often referred to as “collective bargaining”, which occurs through their respective representative organizations. Children do not belong to these representative organizations, but their parents may; and collective bargaining and negotiations can also deal with child labour and the problems of child workers. However, this will of course depend on the structure and nature of the type of child labour - illegal forms of child labour can not be the subject of dialogue.

Several other kinds of social actors can also contribute to the fight against child labour. Among them are community-based groups (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and working children themselves. This chapter will examine their various contributions.

2. Employers’ organizations

Employers’ organizations represent business interests and help to create the conditions for their success. They do so by influencing the environment in which business is done and by providing services that improve their individual performance.

More and more employers now accept the fact that exploiting children is intolerable and has long-term human costs for their society. Many employers are farsighted enough to realize that

putting children to work can limit the social and economic development of a country, since children who are working at a young age will hinder the formation of the well-educated and skilled labour force that is needed to use and even create new technology and new businesses. Thus, the economy will be stunted.

The cooperation of employers is crucial in the fight against child labour, because employers can ensure that their enterprises are free of child labour. They also play a powerful role in influencing those who hire children, often small businesses in the informal sector supplying products to the larger formal economy firms. National employers' federations have a great potential for:

- providing specific information on the incidence of child labour in various sectors;
- influencing the development of national policies on child labour;
- working with trade unions and NGOs in the design of relevant vocational training programmes for working children;
- changing public perception on the rights of children.

A successful awareness-raising campaign on child labour has recently been carried out in the Philippines. The Employers' Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) has established a scheme for recognizing "child-friendly firms". It is awarded to enterprises that successfully adopt good business practices in abolishing child labour, which include compliance with labour laws and regulations, not employing children and ensuring that young workers perform non-hazardous work, and being committed to undertaking collaborative activities with ECOP and other organizations against child abuse and exploitation.

The following example illustrates how a national employers' organization can facilitate the rehabilitation of child workers.

The Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations (TISK) has carried out extensive work since as early as 1993. One of their programmes aimed at improving working conditions in small- and medium-sized enterprises in the metal industry, which was considered one in which children were at most risk. To consolidate on the knowledge and experience it had gained from the programmes implemented in the metal industry, TISK established a "Child Labour Unit" under another programme initiated in July 1998 in order to bring about a better focus in its child labour activities. This programme was also targeted at the metal industry and implemented in an industrial site in Pendik (Istanbul), with health issues being a principal component.

Activities included a seminar on first aid, health and safety and nutrition, and 330 children were given medical checkups, with reports on their health status being submitted to their employers for further action. Since 2001, efforts have been increased to include direct measures to prevent and eliminate child labour in the metal industry as well as to rehabilitate the children removed from work. The objectives of the programme are to:

- develop the capability of the Unit to implement child labour programmes without external support;
- improve working conditions, the quality of psycho-social as well as educational programmes and vocational training for 200 children under the age of 15 years who are working full-time in the Pendik industrial estate and 1,800 apprentices between 15 - 18 years in the surrounding industrial areas. In addition, fresh entrants below the age of 15 years will be prohibited and 50 parents will receive assistance in the form of counselling and through the provision of social services;
- withdraw children below the age of 15 years from all forms of work and those between 15 - 18 years from hazardous work; and
- sensitize policy makers, employers and supervisory staff in the industry, the families of the children and the general public on the problem of child labour and conduct advocacy programmes at various levels.

Taken from: IOE,
1998: *Employers’
handbook on child labour:
A guide for taking action*

Employers’ organizations face a particular challenge in carrying the message to small enterprises in the informal sector. In this regard, organizing employers and enterprises in appropriate support networks can be very effective, since they often have common difficulties or goals. For example, small businesses may share common concerns, whereas multinational companies may well have a different set of interests. One main activity is to discuss matters relating to their area of business with others who are involved in the same sector, in order to reflect on the particular challenges or issues they face. Employers’ organizations have mobilized and sensitized their members’ companies to take action against child labour. Their position allows them to provide more specific information on the incidence of child labour in various sectors. The impact of employers’ organizations is not limited to the national level, as they are also active at the international level, most notably through the International Organisation of Employers (IOE).

The IOE is composed of 137 national employers' organizations from 133 countries. It has two main functions: it represents the interests of its members and it offers support and outreach.

In the International Labour Organization (ILO), the IOE ensures that the voice of business is heard at an international level. It also acts as a focal point for the exchange of information, views and experience among employers throughout the world, and actively supports the ratification and implementation of international standards on child labour. As a support organization, the IOE sponsors training programmes, workshops and seminars. It harnesses the expertise of more developed employers' organizations in some countries for the benefit of less developed ones in other countries. As employers' organizations have become more aware of the importance of their role in combating child labour, the IOE has committed itself to working towards the elimination of hazardous and exploitative child labour. In a 1996 Resolution, the IOE calls on all its members to raise awareness concerning the human, economic and social costs of child labour and to develop policies and action plans to contribute to the international campaign for its elimination. In 1998, the IOE produced an "Employers' Handbook on Child Labour: A Guide for Taking Action", which was revised in 2001 (available at the IOE website www.ioe-emp.org).

Awareness is also increasing both within countries and in the international community, and this has led many employers to join the fight against child labour. In general, the media, consumers, investors, governments and trade unions are becoming increasingly vocal in their questioning of the conditions under which goods are manufactured. Many companies have responded by coming up with corporate social responsibility policies to prevent abuses. In these policies, companies commit themselves to upholding certain labour standards and to prevent children's direct or indirect involvement in the manufacturing of their products, by drawing up codes of conduct and sourcing guidelines.

Codes of conduct and sourcing guidelines vary from company to company because they fit individual companies' needs and circumstances, and reflect their particular philosophy and goals. Companies have developed titles to designate their codes of conduct, such as the "Global Sourcing Guidelines" of Levi Strauss or the "Code of Business Practices" of the International Council of Toy Industries. These standards are set by companies involved in international trade, mainly multinational enterprises

or importers in industrialized countries in Western Europe and in North America. Codes of conduct require that branches and subsidiaries of these multinationals, as well as their agents and suppliers in developing countries such as sub-contractors, respect a number of basic workers' rights, including a child's right not to be subjected to economic exploitation. However, the implementation of codes of conduct or sourcing guidelines is sometimes a controversial issue. Many companies use their quality control personnel as social auditors, rather than engaging outside agencies to monitor and verify compliance. Some companies merely ask their sub-contractors to sign an affidavit that they are observing the company's code of conduct, without further verification. These latter practices leave a great deal to be desired in terms of verification, and sometimes the code remains unimplemented as a result. Therefore, codes of conduct should always be accompanied by monitoring mechanisms.

More on codes of conduct can be found on pages 245 to 247 at the end of this chapter.

A company code of conduct: The example of Reebok

In its "Human Rights Production Standards" of 1992, Reebok set up the following standards against child labour and other kinds of labour, including:

- Refusal to work with business partners who hire a person under the age of 14, or younger than the age for completing compulsory education if that age is higher than 14.
- Refusal to work with business partners who use forced or other compulsory labour.
- Refusal to purchase materials produced by forced, prison or other compulsory labour. The company will terminate business relationships with any sources found to utilize such labour.

Every factory producing Reebok products is required to publicize and enforce a non-retaliation policy that permits factory workers to speak with Reebok staff without fear of retaliation by factory management.

Reebok applies its Standards in the selection of its business partners and in its ongoing relationship with them. To ensure proper implementation of this policy, Reebok seeks business partners that allow it to have full knowledge of the production facilities used and will undertake affirmative measures such as on-site inspection of production facilities to implement and monitor the standards.

Source: IOE, 1998:
*Employers' handbook on
child labour: A
guide for taking action*

3. Workers' organizations

Workers often join together in trade unions or other organizations to improve their working conditions and defend workers' interests. These organizations cover many different occupations and professions, and have local and national offices, while many are affiliated with international trade union organizations that unite workers with common interests.

In most countries, trade unions have a considerable amount of influence on work-related issues, including child labour. Since child labour invariably implies a violation of human rights and national legislation and also affects adult workers, it is also a matter for the trade unions. In addition, the attainment of basic trade union objectives - including more jobs, better wages and improved working conditions - can help eliminate child labour. Collective bargaining has served the trade union movement well in improving wages and working conditions. It has proven effective in influencing what occurs in the workplace. Hence, collective bargaining must be seen as one of the main trade union strategies to combat child labour.

The strengths of trade unions lie in their ability to disseminate ideas and new perspectives within a country, their strong experience in campaigning, and their possibility of taking direct action against child labour. They often also have the power to influence law and labour practices. Moreover, they may have extensive networks established through their members, who are spread out across a region or country and can reach different segments of society. They can influence adult workers' attitudes and behaviour, and those of child workers through their families. In many countries, trade unions have a long tradition of activism and the capacity to take up and popularize a cause, thus increasing overall support.

Trade union members may be well placed to notice if children are working and if they are subjected to hazardous or inhumane conditions at work. These members are more than mere watchdogs; they can take direct action to prevent child labour and withdraw children from work in workplaces that are bad for them, or they can notify the labour inspectors and other government authorities. They can take part in research on child labour by conducting or participating in surveys. In addition, they can also provide working children with much-needed welfare and educational services. In this way, trade union organizations have

assisted children to move from the workplace into education or vocational training, or to bypass the workplace and acquire education and skills directly.

Health workers, social workers and teachers are usually well-informed about local community problems relating to child labour and they can provide feedback to the unions about local workers' needs and problems.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) is an international trade union organization and was established in 1949. The ICFTU represents 158 million workers in 231 affiliated organizations in 150 countries and territories. It has three regional organizations: ICFTU-APRO for Asia and the Pacific, ICFTU-AFRO for Africa and the ORIT for the Americas. One of the major campaigns of the ICFTU is focused on the eradication of child labour. The ICFTU has been instrumental in promoting the Sialkot programme, which will be described in detail in the next chapter.

Another international trade union organization is the World Confederation of Labour (WCL). The WCL is the oldest existing international trade union organization, founded in 1920. It unites 144 trade unions from 116 countries, and has three regional organizations: the BATU (Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unionists) in Asia, the CLAT (Central Latinoamericana de Trabajadores) in Latin America and the Caribbean and the DOAWTU (Democratic Organization of African Workers' Trade Unions) in Africa. In January 2000, the WCL launched an international campaign for the ratification of Convention 182.

A construction trade union in Bangladesh

The programme of the Bangladesh Building and Woodworkers' Federation (BBWWF) attends to children working in informal construction industries in two localities. It provides 300 working children with access to government-sponsored schools and a "food for education" programme. It also raises awareness among adult construction workers, trade union leaders and parents of working children about the hazards of child labour and the advantages of education.

Source:
Haspels/Jankanish,
2000: *Action against
child labour*

Strong trade unions are very influential because their large numbers of members can compel governments and political parties to take them seriously. They can use this power to exert pressure on governments to create laws to make the worst forms of exploitation illegal and to encourage employers to treat their workers fairly. They have contributed to changing some existing labour practices, and in some countries they have succeeded in including child labour issues in their collective agreements.

Among national trade unions, teachers' unions are particularly important. Teachers and their organizations are potential agents of change, as they have the ability to:

- organize informational programmes to promote awareness about child labour among teachers, parents, children, communities and decision makers, and strongly advocate the importance of providing quality education for all.
- monitor school enrolment, attendance and dropout rates, in order to identify problems in the educational system and its ability to serve the children who work or to persuade children away from the labour force altogether.
- press for an increase in educational expenditure for smaller class sizes, better teaching facilities and materials, the inclusion of social justice issues such as child labour in the curriculum, better working conditions and treatment for teachers, etc.
- press for education and child labour laws to be enforced, and produce literature about child labour issues for dissemination to a wide range of readers.

For example, the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), supported by IPEC, is a comprehensive programme that includes awareness raising, teacher training, the formation of community based child labour monitoring committees, direct support for children and families, political campaigning, and curriculum reform. In addition to prevention, the programme also focuses on removal and rehabilitation of working children from three hazardous sectors: lake fishing, sisal plantations and cultivation of miraa.

Teachers' organizations in Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, Paraguay, Philippines, Nepal, Peru and Tanzania are implementing several of the above components. They are all heading or participating in Education Task Forces, which coordinate the varied expertise of a number of organizations, including government ministries, NGOs, bilateral donors, development banks and workers and employers' organizations.

The teachers' trade union in Paraguay

OATEP, the teachers' trade union in Paraguay, greatly influenced discussions on a reform of the Childhood and Adolescence Code, which included, for example, the "right to work" for children. OATEP was able to incorporate the issues of the prevention and eradication of child labour in the debates. It participated with other groups in the struggle for the abolition of the most controversial paragraphs concerning child labour in the draft Code. The results were that even though the approved legislation reduced the minimum working age for children, the pressure did manage to moderate those articles that could give rise to child labour.

ILO Bureau for
Workers' Activities,
2000: *Trade unions and
child labour*, Booklet 7

4. Non-governmental and community-based organizations

Since the problem of child labour touches so many people and families, one of the most effective and sustainable approaches is to mobilize communities to work toward its elimination. This is especially important - but also difficult to bring about - where child labour is part of the community's social and cultural (as well as economic) heritage.

Over the past decades, community voluntary organizations have played a critical role in helping to listen to and amplify the voices of very poor people in the decisions that affect their lives. These different organizations, collectively called community-based organizations (CBOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), have greatly contributed to improving working children's lives in many ways, thanks mostly to committed individuals.

They work to promote local welfare and rights through campaigns, and they set up training workshops for those who advise the children (social workers, legal professionals, and teachers). They provide services such as legal and moral support, create alternative educational programmes, and rescue children from exploitative situations. In many countries, they play a prominent part in national campaigns against child labour and are sometimes the first to launch initiatives against it.

In addition, these organizations are also in a position to enable parents and children to make informed decisions, and to motivate them if they are given the right incentives. CBOs and NGOs can discuss problems with parents and can convince them of the dangers inherent in their children's premature entry into the world of work. They can persuade them of the advantages to be obtained from the children's removal from such work and their return to school. Similarly, they can help parents and their children to understand children's rights and encourage them to exercise their right to education and to a childhood free from exploitation. These face-to-face talks with parents and with children are necessary because measures are likely to be inefficient if the children themselves are not motivated and fully involved in the process.

A Thai NGO against sexual exploitation

Since 1992, IPEC has supported an NGO in Thailand called Development and Education Programme for Daughters and Communities Centre (DEPDC).

DEPDC aims to prevent child prostitution and child labour by providing alternative education to girls who are at high risk of being sexually exploited. These include children from families in extreme poverty, often with debts, children in tribal or marginal communities, children from broken homes and children of drug-addicted parents. Alternative education provided by DEPDC is a combination of formal and non-formal education and basic skills training. In addition, the NGO has been raising awareness among parents and the community concerning the sexual exploitation of children, child labour and the potential alternatives that DEPDC and other organizations can provide to parents and children.

Source:
Haspels/Jankanish,
2000: *Action against
child labour*

NGOs and CBOs vary in scope, experience, size and scale, from local groups to international ones. Community-based organizations mainly focus their activities on a neighbourhood or local area, where they promote and protect the welfare and interests of community members. NGOs operate at national and international levels, although CBOs may expand their scope upward. NGOs may be independent or may be based within church institutions, universities or related to other organizations.

A Tanzanian NGO helps child domestic workers

In the United Republic of Tanzania, a Tanzanian association of women journalists and lawyers (TAMWA) took the lead in a child domestic workers prevention campaign, in response to concerns over the growing numbers of girls under 14 recruited from rural areas to work as domestics in the main cities of Dar Es Salaam, Arusha and Mwanza. Over 4,500 girls in six urban centres have been reached by TAMWA. Girl domestics are paired with women domestic workers who offer them individual support and guidance. The TAMWA centres are located at major crossroads where the girls are recruited. TAMWA contacts the girls upon their arrival in cities and provides them with basic assistance. The programme is also raising awareness among parents and institutions responsible for the welfare of children, religious bodies and women's groups. A multi-media awareness campaign was launched which included broadcasting about the problem through radio programmes, producing and distributing pamphlets and cartoon booklets about it, and developing a video and a play for community theatre. Village-based seminars for parents and community leaders have exposed the harsh realities that can face girl domestics in towns and have contributed to a sharp decline in recruitment of young girls from rural areas.

Source:
Haspels/Jankanish,
2000: *Action against child
labour*

Large international NGOs deal with child labour as a part of other issues. Some of them focus on human rights in general (e.g. Amnesty International, Anti-Slavery International, and Human Rights Watch), while others specialize in children's issues (e.g. Global March Against Child Labour, International Save the Children Alliance, Defence for Children International). They sensitize local NGO partners, which are in direct contact with working children, sometimes organizing meetings as a way of doing this.

An NGO's initiative at the regional level in Latin America

As a first step towards developing a regional strategy for the elimination of the harmful employment of children in other people's houses, Save the Children UK hosted a technical meeting in Lima, Peru, in September 1999. Selected organizations from seven countries attended, together with the Latin America and Caribbean Confederation of Household Workers, some government officials and representatives of UNICEF, ILO-IPEC and Save the Children UK. This was the first ever-regional attempt in Latin America to build organizational awareness around child domestic work. As a result of the meeting, a programme of activities in various countries has been developed, with the aim of transforming attitudes and practices surrounding the employment of girls in the household. Gender and rights perspectives are included, and housework must be acknowledged as work and not as a surrogate form of upbringing.

Source: Black, 2002:
A handbook on advocacy

These partnerships are important for generating social mobilisation. NGOs in the developed countries design and support campaigns, and they invite their members and sympathizers to show support and take action.

CBOs and NGOs often have a comparative advantage in several areas. They are attuned to working children and their families' needs, perspectives and viewpoints. Being closely involved in and accepted by local communities, they can influence family and community concerns that determine whether and where children work and what happens to them. They can influence changes in local culture, which can lead to a better popular understanding of the risks and dangers of child labour and the value of education. They are well placed to document areas, activities and workplaces that put working children at serious risk. For these reasons, they are able to point out the shortcomings in public sector action, in particular the failure to enforce relevant laws and regulations. Some NGOs are able to develop and implement projects that can serve as models to address child labour problems.

Both CBOs and NGOs often work with governments and are supported by the government and might receive financial support from the external affairs budget. Quite often, the government selects NGOs for potential support, and those se-

lected present some of their projects for government funding. The selection and the implementation of the projects are done by the NGO; the government can visit the projects or ask for external monitoring.

5. Working children

The main provisions of the CRC can be found in Appendix 1

Working children have organized themselves on all continents to improve their own lives. In doing so, they give expression to the rights recognized in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which contains provisions that give children the right to express their opinions and to be part of the decision-making process on issues relating to their future and their well-being. Children are thus empowered to ask governments and employers to put an end to child labour, to lay claim to their right to education, and to assert their right to adequate leisure and cultural activities.

Many organizations of working children have started from small groups of children and committed adults working very closely together. In their organizations, working children do not limit themselves to providing witness accounts of their on-the-job exploitation. They participate by playing an active role in analysing their situations and in deciding what to do to improve them. These children then convince others to defend their rights. This process enables working children to be more aware of the situations they are in and to know how to deal with the daily problems that arise. Joining others who are in the same situation creates a sense of belonging and group solidarity, and makes the children motivated. Hence, steps they take to improve their situations are more likely to succeed because of the sense of ownership and responsibility that they develop in running their own organizations.

Local groups of working children often constitute the basic organizational unit of larger movements. In Africa, for example, the African Movement of Working Children and Youths has brought together numerous working children. The Movement started from grassroots associations formed with the help of services provided by government, the church and African NGOs in the 1990s. This organization has groups in 17 countries throughout Africa. The organization asserts twelve

From community action to the provincial plan in the north of Thailand

In the northern provinces of Thailand, the prevention of child labour and children in prostitution is no longer an action taken by one or two small NGOs but a joint effort by all concerned. Children, parents, teachers, local government bodies and NGOs all join hands in a concerted effort against the recruitment of young girls for prostitution and other forms of child labour. Preventive action includes the following: NGOs carry out campaigns and educational and vocational training programmes aimed at preventing children from being lured into prostitution. Moreover, potential child labourers have been trained to become defenders of their own rights. They have travelled through villages with puppet shows, drama performances and exhibitions to disseminate information against child trafficking, prostitution and other exploitative forms of child labour. Communities, parents and children are informed about dangers and risks, as well as about alternatives to exploitative labour. Villages are mobilized in this way to fight prostitution and to seek better opportunities for their children. Primary school teachers and school authorities are mobilized to function as campaign centres against the problem, and teachers are trained to identify girls at high risk of being trafficked.

In order to encourage greater cooperation among the key actors, a working group was set up, including representatives of provincial academic institutions, schools, provincial labour and welfare offices, and NGOs.

It meets on a regular basis to review progress, examine the obstacles and devise strategies to overcome them. In addition, through this coordination mechanism, a study on child labour, child trafficking and children in prostitution at the provincial level was conducted.

Source:
Haspels/Jankanish,
2000: *Action against
child labour*

fundamental rights to assess the improvement of working conditions and life in general for its child members: the right to be taught a trade, to stay in a village (not to migrate), to do light work, to work in a safe environment, to rest when ill, to be listened to, to healthcare, to equitable legal aid, to self expression, to learn to read and write, to play, and the freedom to form organizations.

6. Conclusion

The actors and organizations discussed in this chapter cooperate with governments and international organizations to work out solutions to combat child labour. This cooperation can be on economic, social, educational and/or cultural fronts. Given the scope of the problem, no single approach and no single organization can bring solutions on its own. By collaborating, they can capitalize on their strengths and take complementary measures within the same framework, and active participation is made possible. In practice, numerous alliances are formed to take joint action.



QUESTIONS

- *Which groups are active within your country, and on behalf of your country?*
- *To what extent does your country have a strong history of trade unions and employers' associations? How successful are they on behalf of working children? Consider possible reasons for this.*
- *Has any local or regional action been taken that you feel could be of value in other regions, both in your own country or in others? Discuss how it could be implemented.*
- *What actions have you heard about in other parts of the world that could be of value in your country? What kind of problems might be associated with implementing it?*
- *Choose an NGO or community-based organization which is active in your country and find out more information about it. Consider the following points:*
 1. *What is the main focus of its activities?*
 2. *Does it concentrate on a particular aspect of child labour or a particular region of the world?*
 3. *What are its goals?*
 4. *How is it funded?*
 5. *What action is it currently involved in and what successes has it had to date?*

Suggestions for further study

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OPTIONAL READING

A Swiss home furnishings company takes action against child labour

1. Background

Charles Veillon S.A. is a major Swiss mail-order fashion apparel and home furnishings catalogue company. In March 1994, a television documentary on child labour alleged that a major home furnishing retailer had unwittingly sold hand-knotted carpets produced by children working under dangerous conditions. At the time of the documentary, Charles Veillon S.A. was one of the largest home furnishing companies in Switzerland, and Switzerland was one of the top ten importers of hand-knotted carpets in the world.

This incident prompted Veillon to accept a proposal by the Swiss-based Association Francois-Xavier Bagnoud (AFXB) calling for a “transparent standard” on child labour and the establishment of an independent monitoring system to verify suppliers’ adherence to it. The company subsequently set out to develop this supplier code of conduct and an independent monitoring programme.

2. The Code of Conduct

The following is an excerpt from Veillon’s code of conduct, taken from the website of the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (<http://www.somo.nl/>).

“The firm Charles Veillon SA, in its wish to ensure decent and fair working conditions for people taking part in its

business operations throughout the world, hereby acknowledges its responsibility for the social conditions in which the products that it distributes are manufactured. This responsibility applies to the whole length of the production chain, i.e. to all stages of production leading to the finished product: cutting, making, trimming, assembly and packaging. Charles Veillon SA has direct control over this chain in the case of its own suppliers, and indirect control where subcontractors of the latter are concerned. The present code of conduct is based on respect for the core standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and universal principles of Human Rights.

Charles Veillon SA requires that all its suppliers and their subcontractors apply the legislation in force in the country where they do business. For example, the obligations to workers arising from a regular employment relationship and resulting from labour legislation and social laws are not to be evaded by unilateral contracts which are binding only on the worker, or by training programmes which do not really aim to impart skills or provide regular employment. Charles Veillon SA undertakes not to use these standards and basic conditions as maximum standards or as the only standards permitted by the company, and not to allow its contracting suppliers or their subcontractors to do so either.



Any worker involved in the business operations of Charles Veillon SA, whatever his or her status:

- a) must be able to freely choose to enter into employment; he or she cannot be subjected to forced labour, or enslaved (ILO Conventions 29 and 105);
- b) must be guaranteed equality of opportunity and treatment, regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, nationality, social origin or any other characteristic irrelevant to the demands of the job (ILO Conventions 100 and 111);
- c) must be above 15 years of age, respectively 14 years in those countries recognized by Art. 2.4 of ILO Convention 138, or older than the compulsory school-leaving age (ILO Convention 138). Help with education and transitional financial assistance are to be provided whenever respect for this clause requires the dismissal of young workers;
- d) if a young worker, he or she must be given the opportunity to take part in training and educational programmes;
- e) is entitled to receive a salary and benefits that at least meet legal and industry minimum standards. These must always be sufficient to cover basic needs and include an amount for discretionary income; deductions from wages for disciplinary measures are forbidden, as are any deductions not provided for in national law, or undertaken without the prior expressed agreement of the worker concerned; all workers must receive a copy of their contract of employment as well as written and easily understandable information on the conditions pertaining to wages, before taking up work; each time that they are paid, they must also receive the particulars of their wages for the pay period concerned;
- f) must not work more than 48 hours a week on a regular basis, and must have one day off at least every 7 days. Overtime shall be done on a voluntary basis, shall not exceed 12 hours a week, shall not be demanded on a regular basis and shall always be compensated by a bonus. In all cases, the law and industry standards must be respected;
- g) is entitled to a safe and hygienic working environment. All practicable measures leading to this objective and justified by the prevailing knowledge of the industry and of any specific hazards, must be taken. Physical abuse, threats of physical abuse, unusual punishments or discipline, sexual or other harassment, as well as any kind of intimidation by the employer is strictly prohibited;
- h) is entitled to be able to form a union, to join one, to pursue collective bargaining (ILO Conventions 87 and 98). Workers are entitled to have people in whom they trust represent them in dealings with the employer, whether these people are acting in the context of a collective agreement, by means of a union-type organization or by means of an autonomous association of workers. Workers representatives shall not be the subject of any discrimination and shall have access to all workplaces necessary for them to carry out their representation functions (ILO Convention 135 and Recommendation 143).”

3. Monitoring

In the initial stages of the project, Veillon discussed the policy with its buyers to

ensure its implementation in a spirit of cooperation and partnership. The company acknowledged that for the validity of the code, its implementation should be independently monitored not only at Charles Veillon but at its suppliers and at their subcontractors. This independent monitoring responsibility was given to AFXB by mutual agreement between Charles Veillon SA and its partners in the programme, including other firms and concerned NGOs and trade unions. The monitoring body met with each of the partners to explain the monitoring techniques to be followed. It was also stipulated that the monitors would provide advice where appropriate on solutions to the individual challenges which each supplier faces in eliminating child labour.

For Veillon and its partners, the monitoring system involved ongoing cooperation with AFXB, who guided and advised companies in the area of child labour. Veillon obliged any partner wishing to consolidate its commercial relationship on a durable basis to respect the code of conduct and to agree to the monitoring of compliance with the code. In practical terms, the independent experts responsible for monitoring had to be able to:

- freely visit, with no restrictions whatsoever, all the premises considered necessary in the exercise of their mandate;
- hold an in-depth dialogue with the person or persons responsible for the company, so as to obtain the information needed for monitoring working conditions;
- speak freely to the persons of their own choice employed in the workshops, in the absence of any third parties, and with no pressure or subsequent retaliatory action against such persons;
- ensure that workers leave the production premises at the end of the day and that, if work continues at night, no children are employed during that time; and
- ascertain whether any adolescents who are employed receive a basic education.

If any contracting suppliers and their subcontractors were observed in breach of one or more clauses of the Code, and if they were not seen to take immediate corrective action, they were to lose the right to produce or organize production for Charles Veillon SA.

4. Recent developments

In 1996, Veillon's executive council agreed to make a contribution of 35,000 Swiss Francs to AFXB for the first time, to support its ongoing child welfare programmes, which included the implementation of the pilot-monitoring programme of Veillon's principal suppliers in India. Since then, the company has also been supporting other organizations working towards the elimination of child labour.

The pilot project for "neutral monitoring" of compliance with the code of conduct was concluded at the beginning of 2003. In its place, Veillon has engaged an expert to devise an internal training and monitoring system for use by suppliers. This will involve factory inspections, from which improvements will be proposed, where necessary, and then implemented in stages. External social consultants will check whether the set objectives for improving working conditions have been achieved.

Adapted from: Haspels/Jankanish, 2000. *Action against child labour*, and <http://www.somo.nl/>.



Chapter 9

“What Can I Do?”



Photo ITCLO/N. Robin



1. Introduction

Thus far, the discussion of child labour has focused on outlining the problem and describing the actions currently being taken on a national and international level. The question that naturally follows is: What role can individuals or the general public play in the fight against child labour?

Social mobilization against child labour is not a spontaneous process - it has to be induced and shaped. Successful mobilization incorporates a series of collective actions based upon the efforts of individuals. If done well, the impact of such a movement can be extremely powerful. For example, in 1900, the United States Census found that approximately two million children between the ages of 10 and 15 were working in mills, mines, fields, factories, stores, and on city streets across the country. Once publicized, this information sparked a massive movement to end child labour, which over several decades ultimately resulted in the Fair Labour Standards Act in 1938 that put in place legislative protection against child labour. The movement incorporated the actions and efforts of labour organizations, government institutions, and individuals to bring about change.

There are a number of individual and collective actions that people can take. The first and most important step is to inform oneself on the issue of child labour, its causes, its effects, and who exactly is working on child labour issues. This information will already allow an individual to take effective action against child labour. This chapter looks at the role individuals play in combating child labour and describes a number of steps people can take to help. The latter part of this chapter will include a discussion of steps students, in particular, can take within their college community.

2. The role of individuals

Individuals can act alone or collectively as part of organized action. Firstly, they can contribute on their own to the fight against child labour through their consumer behaviour. A number of oversight bodies and mechanisms exist which track certain types of products to differentiate those that are produced using fair labour standards, including those produced without child labour. By educating themselves about the products they purchase, individuals can affect the market for child labour.

The SA-8000 general system of social standards

One system that provides information about child labour-free products is the SA-8000 general system of social standards.

This social auditing system was developed in 1998 by an advisory board of 25 people, including representatives from the Council on Economic Priorities Accreditation Agency, Amnesty International, the National Child Labour Committee, KPMG, SGS International Certification Services, Avon Products, Toys R Us, Reebok, The Body Shop, clothing company Eileen Fisher, the Amalgamated Bank and the International Textile Workers Union. The SA-8000 standard also contains some requirements relating to child labour. Any organization wishing to subscribe to it must not engage in or support child labour, which SA-8000 specifies as any work by a child younger than 15 years of age (or, in special cases, age 14, in accordance with developing country exceptions under ILO Convention 138). Nor is forced labour permitted anywhere. The NGO that initiated this standard, called Social Accountability International (SAI), is committed to ensuring that the system for verifying compliance with the standards is credible and publicly accessible.

SAI maintains a web site for this purpose, the Social Accountability International web site: www.cepa.org.

Secondly, individuals can also undertake a variety of activities ranging from discussing child labour issues with friends and family to direct lobbying of their local politicians and public servants. The range of activities somewhat depends on the country in which the individual lives. In some contexts, influencing the government through voting or petitioning can be an important step in challenging child labour.

Thirdly, individuals also have a role to play in larger or collective actions aimed at problem-solving at the local level. They can join organizations already engaged in activities against child labour, or they can start a project within an organization or community of which they are members. The following section lists some of the main potential agencies for collective action against child labour.

3. Agents of social mobilization

Some organizations involved in actions against child labour have already been mentioned in Chapters 7 and 8, but any number exist that could potentially play an important role. Before decisions reach the level of national governments or international organizations, a variety of actors have usually participated in raising awareness and creating an environment in which policy changes can be implemented.

Workers' and employers' organizations

Trade unions, teachers' unions, and employers' associations, whose importance in the fight against child labour has already been highlighted in Chapter 8, also play an active role in social mobilization. Trade unions are a primary source of information for exposing the poor working conditions in which production may occur. Information can circulate up from branches of a trade union, or within branches of a union specific to one particular trade or industry. In many countries, teachers' unions are essential in helping to reach large groups of teachers and in designing specific tools to bring campaigns against child labour into the schools. Solidarity between children in developed and developing countries, and between children who do not work and children who do, is an important step, which can be achieved through school partnerships and other creative outreach activities for which the support of teachers is vital. Employers may be the targets of action to combat child labour in some campaigns, while in others they are the main actors for change, designing and promoting standards and codes of conduct. It is very important to include employers' associations and business organizations in national and international campaigns against child labour, since they can sensitize their members to the problem.

Universities

Universities can influence policy-making through a variety of activities. University researchers perform important evaluations of the child labour situation in specific contexts, analyse data, and assess the impact of “pilot” action programmes (i.e. programmes that were implemented on a small scale to test their effectiveness). Their insights into child labour often provide the basis from which child labour policy initiatives emanate. Several universities are also taking up the issue in their courses, so that students are informed about the topic. Additionally, universities are historically a hotbed for student activism and social justice movements. From anti-apartheid rallies to human rights marches, university students worldwide continue to apply pressure to governments to change their behaviour and act more responsibly towards their citizens.

The media

The media disseminate information worldwide, particularly in this era when technology such as the Internet continues to spread to even the most remote parts of the world. The media have the ability to influence public opinion and increase awareness about child labour issues dramatically. Informing the masses about the existence, extent, and impact of child labour is a critical step in encouraging governments and businesses worldwide to apply the types of labour standards and rights listed in Conventions Nos. 138 and 182.

See page 245 for an example of media influence.

Public interest organizations

Public interest organizations provide a medium through which concerned individuals can cooperate both to raise social awareness in the population as a whole and to influence governments. These organizations can take the form of international advocacy NGOs such as the Global March on Child Labour or national consumer organizations. Over the years, these organizations have been leaders in many awareness-raising campaigns about child labour. Since their activities affect those of consumers, retailers and producers, they can occupy a key position in the design of anti-child labour campaigns. NGOs in the developed countries have a special role to play in social mobilization. They relay information from their NGO partners in developing countries where production may take place, and who are in direct contact with child labour; they design and support campaigns in

the developed countries; and they invite their members and sympathizers to show support and take action. They also provide a way of encouraging participation and financial support for initiatives going on both locally and in poorer countries.

Once individuals organize themselves collectively through the above types of organizations, a number of strategies exist that they can undertake to effectuate change. In all cases, collective action requires constant dialogue, action and negotiation among these sets of actors. The dialogue may be difficult at many stages of a campaign, but attempts to reach a consensus require tireless activity and persistence.

4. Possible initiatives for collective action

Organizing a campaign

Signature campaigns and petitions are sometimes used in the fight against child labour. People are invited to write a letter or a postcard to company directors or government policy makers, to add their name to a petition, or use other means to express their support. The aim is to show to those in positions of influence how many people support the campaign and to ask for positive changes in their attitudes and actions to combat child labour.

Some examples include

- the collection of seven million thumbprints against child labour in 1997-1998 by the Global March against Child Labour;
- the signature and postcard campaigns addressed to retailers by the Clean Clothes Campaign urging them to implement a code of conduct;
- a national campaign started in Switzerland in 2003 to collect signatures so that child trafficking would be recognized in Swiss law as a crime against humanity;
- campus activists in the USA, where students are regularly invited to sign petitions or write letters to companies that have been found not respecting codes of conduct.

An example of corporate action due to international pressure: Sialkot

Football is one of the most popular games all over the world, and around 40 million footballs are sold every year. Approximately 75% of the world's hand-stitched footballs are made in Sialkot, Pakistan. The first report on child labour in the sporting goods industry, including the production of footballs, was released in 1995. In 1996, the International Labour Rights Fund (an advocacy organization dedicated to achieving just treatment for workers worldwide) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), together with UNICEF, the Save the Children Fund (UK), and the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), implemented a campaign to call attention to the fact that children were working full-time stitching footballs for the world market in villages in the Sialkot region. An ILO study in the Sialkot region estimated that more than 7,000 Pakistani children between the ages of 5 and 14 stitched on a regular, full-time basis; some worked as long as 10 to 11 hours a day. In addition, large numbers of additional children worked part-time outside of school hours.

The campaign, based on this research, which mobilized football players and users around the world, was fully implemented in December 1997. Youth football leagues, city councils, and other groups with sports programmes were encouraged to pass resolutions banning their use of balls made by children. This effort was accompanied by extensive media coverage on the exploitative child labour practices in the football ball industry. For example, in June 1996, on the eve of the European Cup, the unions released footage showing eight-year-old children from Sialkot, Pakistan stitching footballs bearing logos of the International Federation of Football Associations (FIFA) and Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). A Partners' Agreement between the SCCI, the ILO and UNICEF was signed to develop and implement an action plan to address this issue. Its aim was to eliminate child labour from the football ball industry in Pakistan, and to provide former child workers with educational opportunities so that they would not be forced to work in another industry. Manufacturers were required to undertake an internal monitoring process to record information about their stitching centres and the stitchers working there. The World Federation of Sporting Goods, comprising more than 50 brand names, took up the campaign, and in 1998 FIFA established its Code of Labour Practice. Hailed by trade unions as a trail-blazing code of conduct, it bans the use of the official FIFA stamp of approval on footballs manufactured with child labour; it also provides for monitoring and severe penalties for breach of the code.

Nearly 100 manufacturers, representing over 95% of Sialkot's total export production of footballs are now actively participating in the programme.

Boycotts

Another type of collective action advocated by some groups is a boycott. A boycott encourages consumers not to buy products or services from a company or a country that acts in ways disapproved of by the campaign. In the case of child labour, the sponsors of consumer boycotts invite consumers not to

purchase any product made by a company that has not taken action to eliminate child labour in its production process. Boycotts of entire countries are also possible if the country has not passed (or enforced) legislation to protect children from the hazards of work at a young age. Some individuals may decide on their own initiative to boycott certain products for ethical reasons, without being part of a larger-scale action.

The underlying aim of a call for boycott is to play on the fear of a company (or even a country) of losing market share. It is the organizer's hope that this fear will force the company to seriously address the problem of child labour in its factories or among its sub-contractors. To this end, boycott campaigns not only invite the consumer not to buy products but also to let the company know about this action, by communicating it to the company management and reporting it in the press to achieve maximum publicity. If the campaign is successful, sales will fall and the company will suffer financial losses as well as a possible loss of international reputation.

However, boycotts are not universally regarded as effective action against child labour. There are those who argue that boycotts only target export industries, causing child labourers to lose their jobs in that sector and pushing them into working in the informal sector, making them and their families even worse off. Owing to this, boycotts have lost some of their attraction in favour of other strategies such as social labelling, and direct work with private sector firms.

Fair Trade Initiatives and Social Labelling

Another form of consumer action, also occurring at the demand level, concerns the purchasing of products that are registered in some way indicating that they are produced under fair labour standards. These types of campaigns aim at informing consumers about identical products in the hope that they will then choose to buy the products produced under better conditions for workers, including without the use of child labour. Specifically, some activist organizations urge consumers to support and purchase alternative products. People are invited to select alternative products bearing a social label or supported by the Fair Trade movement, or those produced by a company that is known to implement a code of conduct.

The Fair Trade movement was set up in the 1980s to demonstrate that it is possible to follow alternative, more

socially-oriented practices in South-North trade. Many definitions of fair trade can be found, but an informal umbrella of the four main Fair Trade networks - Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO), the International Federation for Alternative Trade (IFAT), the Network of European World Shops (NEWS!), and the European Fair Trade Association (EFTA) - has agreed on the following:

“ Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers - especially in the South. Fair Trade organizations (backed by consumers) are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade. ”

Source: <http://www.eftafairtrade.org>

The Fair Trade movement is important in the fight against child labour because the communities where production takes place explicitly address this issue. Products that are sold in the Fair Trade network come from areas where child labour may exist but it is not involved in the production of their products. Sometimes, they are quite similar to other products sold in supermarkets.

Fair Trade products are different due to the guidelines under which they are produced and what happens to them after manufacture. The guidelines as given by the European Fair Trade Association (EFTA), which unites together the twelve largest Fair Trade importing organizations in Europe, include a guarantee by suppliers that wages and working conditions for adults are fair and that no child labour is involved in production. This applies to industrial production as well as to production contracted out to workshops or cottage industries.

Responsibility extends beyond establishing written requirements and leaving it to the supplier to implement them. Discussions occur with the supplier about what is needed to meet the criteria for socially responsible products, in particular those made without child labour. It is usually decided to set up a monitoring and control system.

The fight against child labour in the Fair Trade sphere emphasizes the monitoring of producers to ensure compliance with fair labour standards. Prevention is achieved by providing adults with fair wages, so that they do not have to depend on the wages earned by their children. Also, the importance of education for

children is emphasized. Most of all, Fair Trade allows the producer communities to be fully empowered and responsible for tackling the problem of child labour, aided by representatives of the Fair Trade associations, who make site visits. Fair Trade

Max Havelaar: A trademark of fair trade

Products with a Max Havelaar label can be found in most European countries, as well as in North America. Upon its creation in the Netherlands in 1988, the Max Havelaar trademark initially focused on coffee, due to the fact that coffee producers were subject to the volatility of the international market. The prices they received for their coffee crops varied wildly from season to season and within each season. Max Havelaar's idea was to create a Fair Trade label for coffee that could appear on the packaging to show consumers that a particular coffee had been bought from small coffee farmers at a premium price that guaranteed a fair return. The Max Havelaar label now follows the standards of FLO (Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International) that are designed for agricultural products. FLO permits more than 800,000 producers and their dependants in more than 40 countries to benefit from labelled Fair Trade (see: www.fairtrade.net). FLO standards vary according to the size of the producer (from small producer organizations, set up in a democratic way to large plantations and factories). But in all cases, the requirements concerning child labour are based on ILO Conventions No. 29 (Forced Labour Convention, 1930), No. 105 (Abolition of forced labour, 1957) and No. 138 (Minimum Age Convention, 1973). One article of the general standard raises the minimum age for dangerous work to 18.

In addition, the trading standards stipulate that traders have to:

- pay a price to producers that covers the costs of sustainable production and living;
- pay a premium that producers can invest in development;
- partially pay in advance, when producers ask for it;
- sign contracts that allow for long-term planning and sustainable production practices

There is a large variety of products with the label: coffee, tea, chocolate, fruit, rice, honey, sugar, flowers, etc. All labelled items are sold with the guarantee that the FLO standards, including the fact that no child has been exploited in the production, are upheld.

products now reach most cities in the developed countries, and can be found in supermarkets and in specialized shops.

Another closely related type of consumer campaign is known as social labelling. Some consumers would prefer to purchase products that actually carry a “guarantee” that no child labour has been used in the production process. Social labels are one proposed way of doing this; their objective is to inform consumers, by means of the label attached to the product, that the item they are purchasing was produced under certain approved social conditions, including the absence of child labour.

For example, the “Child-Friendly Company” Programme in Brazil, launched by the Abrinq Foundation in 1992, encourages companies in Brazil to eliminate child labour and to invest in projects to improve children’s lives. In exchange, they earn the right to use the Child-Friendly Company seal on all of their product packaging. To be awarded the Child-Friendly seal, a company has to make a commitment not to use child labour, not to do business with anyone employing children, to invest in the welfare and education of its employees’ children and in social projects to protect children and adolescents. Each commitment is publicized throughout the country.

The most publicized and best known of all the social labelling initiatives is the Rugmark programme and its associated label. Rugmark is a global NGO working to end child labour and to rehabilitate children and offer them educational opportunities. Devoted to the elimination of child labour in the carpet industry of India and other South Asian countries, Rugmark arose after European consumer groups became aware of the extent of child labour in the production of hand-knotted oriental carpets.

The Rugmark labelling programme against child labour

The number of workshops and loom sheds producing hand-knotted oriental carpets grew rapidly in India and Pakistan after children were banned from the carpet industry in Iran in the 1970s. Research carried out in the 1980s showed that much of this production involved child labour. In 1990 a consumer awareness campaign was initiated in Germany with the collaboration of different groups - trade unions, religious and human rights organizations, and consumer groups. The campaign quickly spread to other European countries and the USA. Its impact on the Indian carpet trade was significant, leading to the fear of a collapse of the industry, which had become important to India's economy. A partnership was created including development and human rights organizations, Indian carpet exporters both individually and through their trade association, and UNICEF. Together these agencies and organizations devised a project to set up and administer a special label for hand-knotted carpets made without the use of child labour. As of December 2002, more than 3 million carpets bearing the "Rugmark" label had been sold in Europe and North America. This label is now the best known among all labels in the carpet industry.

In India, carpet manufacturers sign a contract with Rugmark in which they pledge not to use child labour and to register all looms and to allow access to them for unannounced inspections. Trained inspectors hired by the Rugmark Foundation perform the inspections. Each loom is registered and each carpet woven on it is individually tracked in order to assure that no child has worked on it. The label is a registered international trademark: only carpets inspected in this way can legally carry it.

Rugmark has a rehabilitation and education programme and, since 1995, schools in India, Nepal and Pakistan have offered educational opportunities to some 2,300 former child weavers and to other children and adults from weaving communities. The Rugmark initiative has attracted a great deal of publicity and documentary films have been made about it.

Ethical investments

Ethical investments are another step consumers can take to combat child labour. As investors, individuals are sometimes urged to place their money in ethical investment mutual funds -

funds whose charter permits investment only in companies with codes of conduct or policies that adhere to international labour standards. In the USA, the Social Investment Forum proposes three strategies: screening, shareholder advocacy and community investment. Screening describes “the inclusion or exclusion of corporate securities in investment portfolios based on social or environmental criteria. Socially concerned investors generally seek to own profitable companies with respectable employee relations, strong records of community involvement, excellent environmental impact policies and practices, respect for human rights around the world, and safe and useful products. Conversely, they often avoid investments in those firms that fall short in these areas” (<http://www.share.ca>). The Shareholder Action Network serves as “a clearinghouse of information and analysis to the socially responsible investing community on shareholder advocacy” (<http://www.shareholderaction.org>). Community investment supports development initiatives in low-income communities, both in the USA and in developing countries. Loans can be given to help people to find housing or to start responsible businesses.

Some companies publicize the support they give to social projects on their products. This is the case when consumers are urged to purchase ethically motivated telephone services that contribute part of their profits to good causes (e.g. the Working Assets long distance service now offered in the USA). Most of these initiatives support a range of socially conscious causes, one of which is always combating child labour. The box below provides an example of an ethical investment bank.

An ethical investment bank in Europe

The Triodos Bank is one of Europe’s leading ethical banks, which was established in 1980 in The Netherlands, with an office in Great Britain following in 1995. Triodos offers a comprehensive range of banking services for social businesses, charities and groups along with a variety of savings accounts for individuals. Triodos Bank only lends money to organizations and businesses pursuing positive social, environmental and cultural goals. It does this with the support of depositors and investors who wish to encourage the development of responsible business working for social renewal. The threefold approach - social, ethical, financial - is the source of the name Triodos ‘tri hodos’ which means ‘threefold way’.

Source: <http://www.triodos.co.uk/>

5. Student activism

Students can engage in any of the actions described above. Moreover, they are in a unique position to have both the time and idealism to contribute energy to action for social justice such as the fight against child labour. Student activism can occur both within the campus community or be taken more broadly to encompass other campuses around the world. The United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) action is an example of a campaign that does both. It was launched in 1998 by activists from 30 universities in the USA and grew to involve some 200 universities five years later. The students attending these universities are informed about the working conditions in garment factories in the developing countries and they are invited to pressure their university campus shops to purchase only garments manufactured under acceptable working conditions, including without child labour.

The United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) campaign

The “United Students Against Sweatshops” campaign is an international student movement of campuses and individual students fighting for “sweatshop-free” working conditions and workers’ rights. The term “sweatshop” is broadly defined and USAS recognizes that it is not limited to the clothing industry. The campaign’s aim is that university campus shop purchasing standards should be brought in line with the standards of the students, who demand that their school’s logo be emblazoned only on clothing made in decent working conditions; these include “No child labour”. USAS has fought for these beliefs by demanding that their universities require the adoption of ethically and legally strong codes of conduct among their suppliers, full public disclosure of company information, and truly independent verification systems to ensure that sweatshop conditions are not practiced. Ultimately, they are using student purchasing power, which is far from negligible, to affect a very large and lucrative industry that “thrives in secrecy, exploitation, and the power relations of a flawed system”.

Source:
<http://www.usas.org>

University institutions may provide an excellent platform for awareness-raising as well as “hands-on” activities against child labour, as experience in Turkey has demonstrated. In 1997, three Turkish universities embarked on a programme called “Developing the awareness of university students and teachers on the problem of child labour”, in which materials on child labour were developed for teaching English courses at the university level. These booklets are used by approximately 3,000 students per year. Many students have produced project work on child labour that includes essays, songs, art work, T-shirts and have carried out interviews with working children.

At Bilkent University in Turkey, awareness raising was turned into action with the establishment of a Child Labour Unit within the Dean of Students Office, where students applied to work on a voluntary basis. The main objectives of the Unit are to raise awareness of students at Turkish universities and provide support to working children by offering voluntary courses in computer, English, literacy, sports, music and art. The Child Labour Unit students also participate in other activities against child labour, during the school year as well as during their summer holidays. Some university teachers have also joined the students participating in activities to combat child labour.

6. Conclusion

Despite the enormity of the problem, child labour is a phenomenon that can be combated, not only by policy makers, but also by ordinary citizens. This chapter has listed a number of organizations involved in collective action against child labour and provided examples of campaigns and actions that are successfully combating child labour across the globe.

No individual, no organization, even the largest one, can begin to stop child labour on its own, and no action, even the smallest, can be dismissed as being too small to bring about change. It is only through joining the forces of goodwill on all levels of society that we can hope to put an end to child labour.



QUESTIONS

- ➔ *While reading the textbook, you might have been following reports in your national or local media as suggested in the introduction. Discuss your impressions and think about what action you can take to encourage them to focus on the issue of child labour.*
- ➔ *What do you know about the World Day against Child Labour? What action have organizations and individuals in your country ever taken on this day? What is being planned for the next one? You might decide to take part by undertaking the project outlined below.*
- ➔ *How could you raise awareness about child labour issues in your community? What possible difficulties might you encounter? How could you overcome them to ensure the success of your campaign?*
- ➔ *Organize an awareness campaign about child labour issues at your university/ college or for your local community.*
 - *First of all define your objective and what you would like to achieve in the campaign. On which particular aspect(s) of the problem will you concentrate?*
 - *Consider your target group. What means will attract the most attention and best serve your purpose? (Flyer, brochure, new page on the university/ college web site, information meeting, petition etc. or a combination of different elements?)*
 - *Following the completion of your campaign, evaluate the results. What were its strengths and weaknesses? Did you achieve your objective?*

→ *Alternatively you may have encountered a situation in which child labour occurs and wish to bring about change. The situation might be a local or international one (e.g. a TV station has broadcast a film on the carpet industry in another country, and young children were seen working in these workshops). Consider the following:*

Phase one: Research and data collection

1. *Gather as much information as possible regarding the issue (e.g. where does it occur? To what extent?)*
2. *Look for and evaluate information on the social, economical, political and legal context.*
3. *Analyse the situation, identify the stakeholders (employers, customers, retailers, consumers) and consider the processes that led children into this situation.*

Phase two: Defining the action to be taken

1. *Consider what should be done (e.g. free the working children identified in the research? Propose sustainable alternatives to them? Prevent new children from joining the workforce?)*
2. *Consider what can be done to help bring about the change (exerting pressure on the stakeholders, informing people in your local community, etc.)*

Phase three: Putting your plan into action

1. *How can change best be affected? Define your objective and what you would like to achieve in the campaign. On which particular aspect(s) of the problem will you concentrate?*
2. *What means will attract the most attention and best serve your purpose? (Flyer, brochure, information meeting, petition, contact the local media, organizing a demonstration etc. or a combination of different elements?)*
3. *Design your material and plan the concrete steps you will take.*

Phase four: Evaluation

Following the completion of your campaign, evaluate the results. What were its strengths and weaknesses? Did you achieve your objective?

Suggestions for further study

<http://www.cleanclothes.org>

<http://www.rugmark.org>

<http://www.antislavery.org>

<http://www.christian-aid.org.uk>

<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~fragola/usas/index.html>

<http://www.ethique-sur-etiquette.org>

<http://www.globalmarch.org>

<http://www.fairtrade.net>

<http://www.eftafairtrade.org>

OPTIONAL READING

Kailash Satyarthi - An activist against child labour

Kailash Satyarthi has been a key actor in the worldwide movement against child labour. One of the first crusaders to fight child slavery in India, he embarked on his journey in 1980 after giving up a lucrative career as an electrical engineer. Born on 11 January 1954 in Vidisha, Central India, he is the founder of the NGO “South Asian Coalition On Child Servitude” (SACCS) as well as an international “Global March Against Child Labour” on the issue of child servitude.

He and his organization have liberated more than 55,000 child-bonded labourers through legal, judicial, and direct actions and helped them in rehabilitation and education. He has set up three model centres for special educational activities and transit rehabilitation for freed slave children.

Known for launching several innovations in the field of child labour, Satyarthi is a tireless campaigner for consumer awareness and the architect of the labelling system Rugmark (presented earlier in this chapter), the first of its kind in Europe and USA to find a positive constructive solution of using consumer power for the protection of child rights.

Satyarthi has campaigned for the adoption of ILO Convention NO. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, working very closely with employers. He has led a worldwide march with child labourers across 100 countries in 1998, covering 80,000 km, that culminated in Geneva, de-

manding the immediate adoption of the new ILO Convention. Now the Global March Against Child Labour headed by Satyarthi is working as a movement in 140 countries.

Kailash Satyarthi has been honoured with many international awards for human rights, including the Aachener International Peace Prize - Germany (1994) and the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award - USA (1995).

The following excerpts are taken from two interviews with Kailash Satyarthi.

What are the origins of the South Asian Coalition On Child Servitude?

“We began in 1980 liberating bonded child labourers in India. At that time, there was no awareness of the problem. A law had been enacted banning child labour, but it received no more than a four or five line article in the newspapers. Our initial tactic was to conduct raids on the factories, freeing entire families of bonded labourers, this exposed the situation in the media. We soon realised that the most vulnerable of these labourers were children, with nowhere to escape to and completely unaware of their rights. We also realised that the problem was not restricted to India, and in 1987 and 1988 we launched campaigns throughout South Asia. SACCS now incorporates over 50 organizations in the region.”



“For 10 years we focused on placing pressure on the industry within India, but with limited success. So we decided to focus on the consumer market, particularly in German carpet imports to begin with, and later we expanded to other European markets and the United States. The only success we have seen has been through consumer pressure.

In the carpet industry, a major export industry for India, it was only after our consumer campaign that it was admitted that the problem of child labour existed. Until that time the industry and government claimed that children working in the industry were working in family looms, learning a craft. When consumers were made aware of how their carpets had been produced, they demanded child labour-free carpets.”

There were many protests against child labour involved in making things like sports shoes. How important are these protests that involve consumers?

“It was the protest by our partners against the use of child labour in the making of Nike and Reebok shoes in factories in the developing countries that raised consumer awareness worldwide and forced these huge MNCs to change their practises.

The same thing happened in woollen garments. We began a system whereby all garments made without child labour had the Rugmark label. An independent agency or NGO issues this label. It was and is a huge success, so we know this type of solution can be replicated in other industries. The best example was the “foul ball” case. Soccer balls were made by children in Pakistan and some groups raised a stink. These groups then asked children in the US to not buy such products made by children. The success was immense and the Pakistani industries were forced to change their practices and get independent confirmation to prove it.

We were using the same tactics when almost a decade back, SACCS initiated a “Boycott Firecrackers” campaign aimed at sensitizing hundreds of thousands of school-going children about the hazards of child labour and asking them to shun the use of firecrackers. The campaign spread like wild fire, in 1997 there was a drop of 30 per cent in the sales of firecrackers. The consumer pressure built over the period forced the firecracker manufacturers to take some remedial measures including removal of child labourers to a large extent, adoption of codes of conduct and a significant change in their trade behaviour.”

So, consumers can make a difference?

“I personally believe in the power of the consumers and would place it over and above all other powers that are responsible for driving the corporations to behave responsibly. The present times have seen an enormous growth in the socially-conscientious consumer and in line with this has been a growing demand for socially-responsible products. My experience has shown that consumers do not only want good and safe products, but they also want to know if they are produced in a socially responsible manner. At times consumers are even willing to pay more for such products. Consumer campaigns have been successful in tapping this consumer power and have resulted in paramount changes in the corporate world.”

Adapted from: *Multinational Monitor, An interview with Kailash Satyarthi*. October 1994, (<http://www.cwa.tnet.co.th>)

Amberish K Diwanji, *The Rediff Business Interview/ Kailash Satyarthi. Rediff On The Net*, December 1999, (<http://www.rediff.com>)

Kailash Satyarthi, *Speech on Corporate Social Responsibility*, held in Naples, Italy, October 2002, (<http://www.globalmarch.com>)

Conclusion

“Who will cry out with me?” was Michelle Bedulli’s entreaty in the poem quoted in the introduction.

We must not remain indifferent to this cry. Each of us has a choice: either to look on passively, or to raise our voice and fight this global scourge. It is unacceptable for children to be forced to waste their youth, to risk their safety and ruin their health. Girls and boys must be given the opportunity to have an education, be allowed access to proper health care and nutrition. We must help to provide their families with a way out of poverty, thus breaking the vicious circle that supports child labour.

And it can be broken. If the political will exists, change is possible. And change is underway in many countries and at the international level. Action against child labour has become a movement almost unprecedented in its intensity and scope. All segments of society - governments, international organizations, employers’ and workers’ organizations, NGOs, individuals and children themselves - are involved.

Yet there is still a long way to go until child labour has been eradicated around the globe. We must therefore double our efforts and make childhood what it should be - the phase of life filled with hopes and dreams and part of the process of personal development, accompanied by basic rights and equal opportunities.

“ Few human rights abuses are so widely condemned, yet so widely practised. Let us make [child labour] a priority. Because a child in danger is a child that cannot wait. ”

Kofi Annan,
UN Secretary-General

APPENDICES

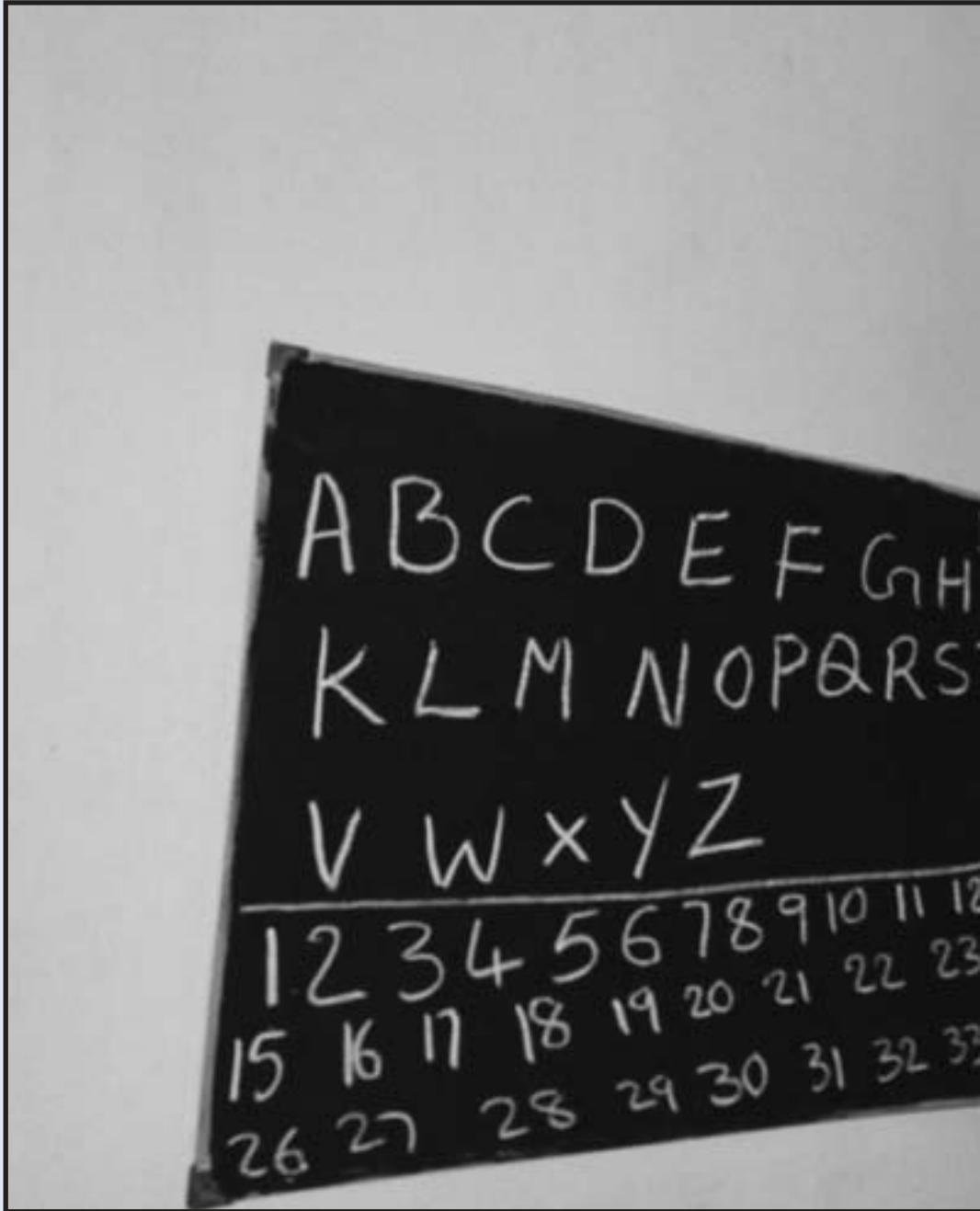


Photo ILO/M. Crozet



Appendix 1: International Conventions on Child Labour

ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No 138)

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Fifty-eighth Session on 6 June 1973, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to minimum age for admission to employment, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Noting the terms of the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919, the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention, 1920, the Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention, 1921, the Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921, the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932, the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (Revised), 1936, the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937, the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention (Revised), 1937, the Minimum Age (Fishermen) Convention, 1959, and the Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965, and

Considering that the time has come to establish a general instrument on the subject, which would gradually replace the existing ones applicable to limited economic sectors, with a view to achieving the total abolition of child labour, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of an international Convention,

adopts the twenty-sixth day of June of the year one thousand nine hundred and seventy-three, the following Convention, which may be cited as the Minimum Age Convention, 1973:

Article 1

Each Member for which this Convention is in force undertakes to pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age

for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons.

Article 2

1. Each Member which ratifies this Convention shall specify, in a declaration appended to its ratification, a minimum age for admission to employment or work within its territory and on means of transport registered in its territory; subject to Articles 4 to 8 of this Convention, no one under that age shall be admitted to employment or work in any occupation.

2. Each Member which has ratified this Convention may subsequently notify the Director-General of the International Labour Office, by further declarations, that it specifies a minimum age higher than that previously specified.

3. The minimum age specified in pursuance of paragraph 1 of this Article shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15 years.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article, a Member whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed may, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, initially specify a minimum age of 14 years.

5. Each Member which has specified a minimum age of 14 years in pursuance of the provisions of the preceding paragraph shall include in its reports on the application of this Convention submitted under article 22 of the constitution of the International Labour Organisation a statement—

- (a) that its reason for doing so subsists; or
- (b) that it renounces its right to avail itself of the provisions in question as from a stated date.

Article 3

1. The minimum age for admission to any type of employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons shall not be less than 18 years.
2. The types of employment or work to which paragraph 1 of this Article applies shall be determined by national laws or regulations or by the competent authority, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist.
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article, national laws or regulations or the competent authority may, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, authorise employment or work as from the age of 16 years on condition that the health, safety and morals of the young persons concerned are fully protected and that the young persons have received adequate specific instruction or vocational training in the relevant branch of activity.

Article 4

1. In so far as necessary, the competent authority, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, may exclude from the application of this Convention limited categories of employment or work in respect of which special and substantial problems of application arise.
2. Each Member which ratifies this Convention shall list in its first report on the application of the Convention submitted under article 22 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation any categories which may have been excluded in pursuance of paragraph 1 of this Article, giving the reasons for such exclusion, and shall state in subsequent reports the position of its law and practice in respect of the categories excluded and the extent to which effect has been given or is proposed to be given to the Convention in respect of such categories.
3. Employment or work covered by Article 3 of this Convention shall not be excluded from the application of the Convention in pursuance of this Article.

Article 5

1. A Member whose economy and administrative facilities are insufficiently developed may, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, initially limit the scope of application of this Convention.
2. Each Member which avails itself of the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article shall specify, in a declaration appended to its ratification, the branches of economic activity or types of undertakings to which it will apply the provisions of the Convention.
3. The provisions of the Convention shall be applicable as a minimum to the following: mining and quarrying; manufacturing; construction; electricity, gas and water; sanitary services; transport, storage and communication; and plantations and other agricultural undertakings mainly producing for commercial purposes, but excluding family and small-scale holdings producing for local consumption and not regularly employing hired workers.
4. Any Member which has limited the scope of application of this Convention in pursuance of this Article—
 - (a) shall indicate in its reports under article 22 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation the general position as regards the employment or work of young persons and children in the branches of activity which are excluded from the scope of application of this Convention and any progress which may have been made towards wider application of the provisions of the Convention;
 - (b) may at any time formally extend the scope of application by a declaration addressed to the Director-General of the International Labour Office.

Article 6

This Convention does not apply to work done by children and young persons in schools for general, vocational or technical education or in other training institutions, or to work done by persons at least 14 years of age in undertakings, where such work is carried out in accordance with conditions prescribed by the competent authority, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, and is an integral part of—

- (a) a course of education or training for which a school or training institution is primarily responsible;
- (b) a programme of training mainly or entirely in an undertaking, which programme has been approved by the competent authority; or
- (c) a programme of guidance or orientation designed to facilitate the choice of an occupation or of a line of training.

Article 7

1. National laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons 13 to 15 years of age on light work which is—

- (a) not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and
- (b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received.

2. National laws or regulations may also permit the employment or work of persons who are at least 15 years of age but have not yet completed their compulsory schooling on work which meets the requirements set forth in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph 1 of this Article.

3. The competent authority shall determine the activities in which employment or work may be permitted under paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article and shall prescribe the number of hours during which and the conditions in which such employment or work may be undertaken.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, a Member which has availed itself of the provisions of paragraph 4 of Article 2 may, for as long as it continues to do so, substitute the ages 12 and 14 for the ages 13 and 15 in paragraph 1 and the age 14 for the age 15 in paragraph 2 of this Article.

Article 8

1. After consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, the competent authority may, by permits granted in individual cases, allow exceptions to the prohibition of employment or work provided for

in Article 2 of this Convention, for such purposes as participation in artistic performances.

2. Permits so granted shall limit the number of hours during which and prescribe the conditions in which employment or work is allowed.

Article 9

1. All necessary measures, including the provision of appropriate penalties, shall be taken by the competent authority to ensure the effective enforcement of the provisions of this Convention.

2. National laws or regulations or the competent authority shall define the persons responsible for compliance with the provisions giving effect to the Convention.

3. National laws or regulations or the competent authority shall prescribe the registers or other documents which shall be kept and made available by the employer; such registers or documents shall contain the names and ages or dates of birth, duly certified wherever possible, of persons whom he employs or who work for him and who are less than 18 years of age.

Article 10

1. This Convention revises, on the terms set forth in this Article, the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919, the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention, 1920, the Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention, 1921, the Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921, the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932, the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (Revised), 1936, the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937, the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention (Revised), 1937, the Minimum Age (Fishermen) Convention, 1959, and the Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965.

2. The coming into force of this Convention shall not close the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (Revised), 1936, the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937, the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention (Revised), 1937, the Minimum Age (Fishermen) Convention, 1959, or the Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965, to further ratification.

3. The Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919, the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention, 1920, the Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention, 1921, and the Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921, shall be closed to further ratification when all the parties thereto have consented to such closing by ratification of this Convention or by a declaration communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office.

4. When the obligations of this Convention are accepted—

(a) by a Member which is a party to the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937, and a minimum age of not less than 15 years is specified in pursuance of Article 2 of this Convention, this shall ipso jure involve the immediate denunciation of that Convention,

(b) in respect of non-industrial employment as defined in the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932, by a Member which is a party to that Convention, this shall ipso jure involve the immediate denunciation of that Convention,

(c) in respect of non-industrial employment as defined in the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention (Revised), 1937, by a Member which is a party to that Convention, and a minimum age of not less than 15 years is specified in pursuance of Article 2 of this Convention, this shall ipso jure involve the immediate denunciation of that Convention,

(d) in respect of maritime employment, by a Member which is a party to the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (Revised), 1936, and a minimum age of not less than 15 years is specified in pursuance of Article 2 of this Convention or the Member specifies that Article 3 of this Convention applies to maritime employment, this shall ipso jure involve the immediate denunciation of that Convention,

(e) in respect of employment in maritime fishing, by a Member which is a party to the Minimum

Age (Fishermen) Convention, 1959, and a minimum age of not less than 15 years is specified in pursuance of Article 2 of this Convention or the Member specifies that Article 3 of this Convention applies to employment in maritime fishing, this shall ipso jure involve the immediate denunciation of that Convention,

(f) by a Member which is a party to the Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965, and a minimum age of not less than the age specified in pursuance of Article 2 of this Convention or the Member specifies that such an age applies to employment underground in mines in virtue of Article 3 of this Convention, this shall ipso jure involve the immediate denunciation of that Convention, if and when this Convention shall have come into force.

5. Acceptance of the obligations of this Convention—

(a) shall involve the denunciation of the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919, in accordance with Article 12 thereof,

(b) in respect of agriculture shall involve the denunciation of the Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention, 1921, in accordance with Article 9 thereof,

(c) in respect of maritime employment shall involve the denunciation of the Minimum Age (Sea) Convention, 1920, in accordance with Article 10 thereof, and of the Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921, in accordance with Article 12 thereof, if and when this Convention shall have come into force.

Provisions common to ILO Conventions are not reproduced here.

Minimum Age Recommendation, 1973 (No. 146)

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Fifty-eighth Session on 6 June 1973, and

Recognising that the effective abolition of child labour and the progressive raising of the minimum age for admission to employment constitute only one aspect of the protection and advancement of children and young persons, and

Noting the concern of the whole United Nations system with such protection and advancement, and

Having adopted the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, and

Desirous to define further certain elements of policy which are the concern of the International Labour Organisation, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals regarding minimum age for admission to employment, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation supplementing the Minimum Age Convention, 1973,

adopts this twenty-sixth day of June of the year one thousand nine hundred and seventy-three, the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Minimum Age Recommendation, 1973:

I. National Policy

1. To ensure the success of the national policy provided for in Article 1 of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, high priority should be given to planning for and meeting the needs of children and youth in national development policies and programmes and to the progressive extension of the inter-related measures necessary to provide the best possible conditions of physical and mental growth for children and young persons.

2. In this connection special attention should be given to such areas of planning and policy as the following:

(a) firm national commitment to full employment, in accordance with the Employment Policy Convention and Recommendation, 1964, and the taking of measures designed to promote employment-oriented development in rural and urban areas;

(b) the progressive extension of other economic and social measures to alleviate poverty wherever it exists and to ensure family living standards and income which are such as to make it unnecessary to have recourse to the economic activity of children;

(c) the development and progressive extension, without any discrimination, of social security and family welfare measures aimed at ensuring child maintenance, including children's allowances;

(d) the development and progressive extension of adequate facilities for education and vocational orientation and training appropriate in form and content to the needs of the children and young persons concerned;

(e) the development and progressive extension of appropriate facilities for the protection and welfare of children and young persons, including employed young persons, and for the promotion of their development.

3. Particular account should as necessary be taken of the needs of children and young persons who do not have families or do not live with their own families and of migrant children and young persons who live and travel with their families. Measures taken to that end should include the provision of fellowships and vocational training.

4. Full-time attendance at school or participation in approved vocational orientation or training programmes should be required and effectively ensured up to an age at least equal to that specified for admission to employment in accordance with Article 2 of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973.

5. (1) Consideration should be given to measures such as preparatory training, not involving hazards, for types of employment or work in respect of which the minimum age prescribed in accordance with Article 3 of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, is higher than the age of completion of compulsory full-time schooling.

(2) Analogous measures should be envisaged where the professional exigencies of a particular occupation include a minimum age for admission which is higher than the age of completion of compulsory full-time schooling.

II. Minimum Age

6. The minimum age should be fixed at the same level for all sectors of economic activity.

7. (1) Members should take as their objective the progressive raising to 16 years of the minimum age for admission to employment or work specified in pursuance of Article 2 of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973.

(2) Where the minimum age for employment or work covered by Article 2 of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, is still below 15 years, urgent steps should be taken to raise it to that level.

8. Where it is not immediately feasible to fix a minimum age for all employment in agriculture and in related activities in rural areas, a minimum age should be fixed at least for employment on plantations and in the other agricultural undertakings referred to in Article 5, paragraph 3, of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973.

III. Hazardous Employment or Work

9. Where the minimum age for admission to types of employment or work which are likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons is still below 18 years, immediate steps should be taken to raise it to that level.

10. (1) In determining the types of employment or work to which Article 3 of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, applies, full account should be taken of relevant international labour standards, such as those concerning dangerous substances, agents or processes (including ionising radiations), the lifting of heavy weights and underground work.

(2) The list of the types of employment or work in question should be re-examined periodically and revised as necessary, particularly in the light of advancing scientific and technological knowledge.

11. Where, by reference to Article 5 of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, a minimum age is not immediately fixed for certain branches of economic activity or types of undertakings, appropriate minimum age provisions should be made

applicable therein to types of employment or work presenting hazards for young persons.

IV. Conditions of Employment

12. (1) Measures should be taken to ensure that the conditions in which children and young persons under the age of 18 years are employed or work reach and are maintained at a satisfactory standard. These conditions should be supervised closely.

(2) Measures should likewise be taken to safeguard and supervise the conditions in which children and young persons undergo vocational orientation and training within undertakings, training institutions and schools for vocational or technical education and to formulate standards for their protection and development.

13. (1) In connection with the application of the preceding Paragraph, as well as in giving effect to Article 7, paragraph 3, of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, special attention should be given to—

(a) the provision of fair remuneration and its protection, bearing in mind the principle of equal pay for equal work;

(b) the strict limitation of the hours spent at work in a day and in a week, and the prohibition of overtime, so as to allow enough time for education and training (including the time needed for homework related thereto), for rest during the day and for leisure activities;

(c) the granting, without possibility of exception save in genuine emergency, of a minimum consecutive period of 12 hours' night rest, and of customary weekly rest days;

(d) the granting of an annual holiday with pay of at least four weeks and, in any case, not shorter than that granted to adults;

(e) coverage by social security schemes, including employment injury, medical care and sickness benefit schemes, whatever the conditions of employment or work may be;

(f) the maintenance of satisfactory standards of safety and health and appropriate instruction and supervision.

(2) Subparagraph (1) of this Paragraph applies to young seafarers in so far as they are not covered

in respect of the matters dealt with therein by international labour Conventions or Recommendations specifically concerned with maritime employment.

V. Enforcement

14. (1) Measures to ensure the effective application of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, and of this Recommendation should include—

(a) the strengthening as necessary of labour inspection and related services, for instance by the special training of inspectors to detect abuses in the employment or work of children and young persons and to correct such abuses; and

(b) the strengthening of services for the improvement and inspection of training in undertakings.

(2) Emphasis should be placed on the role which can be played by inspectors in supplying information and advice on effective means of complying with relevant provisions as well as in securing their enforcement.

(3) Labour inspection and inspection of training in undertakings should be closely co-ordinated to provide the greatest economic efficiency and, generally, the labour administration services should work in close co-operation with the services responsible for the education, training, welfare and guidance of children and young persons.

15. Special attention should be paid—

(a) to the enforcement of provisions concerning employment in hazardous types of employment or work; and

(b) in so far as education or training is compulsory, to the prevention of the employment or work of children and young persons during the hours when instruction is available.

16. The following measures should be taken to facilitate the verification of ages:

(a) the public authorities should maintain an effective system of birth registration, which should include the issue of birth certificates;

(b) employers should be required to keep and to make available to the competent authority registers or other documents indicating the names and ages or dates of birth, duly certified wherever possible, not only of children and young persons employed by them but also of those receiving vocational orientation or training in their undertakings;

(c) children and young persons working in the streets, in outside stalls, in public places, in itinerant occupations or in other circumstances which make the checking of employers' records impracticable should be issued licences or other documents indicating their eligibility for such work.

ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its 87th Session on 1 June 1999, and

Considering the need to adopt new instruments for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, as the main priority for national and international action, including international cooperation and assistance, to complement the Convention and the Recommendation concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973, which remain fundamental instruments on child labour, and

Considering that the effective elimination of the worst forms of child labour requires immediate and comprehensive action, taking into account the importance of free basic education and the need to remove the children concerned from all such work and to provide for their rehabilitation and social integration while addressing the needs of their families, and

Recalling the resolution concerning the elimination of child labour adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 83rd Session in 1996, and

Recognizing that child labour is to a great extent caused by poverty and that the long-term solution lies in sustained economic growth leading to social progress, in particular poverty alleviation and universal education, and

Recalling the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989, and

Recalling the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 86th Session in 1998, and

Recalling that some of the worst forms of child labour are covered by other international instruments, in particular the Forced Labour Convention, 1930, and the United Nations Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, 1956, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to child labour, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of an international Convention;

adopts this seventeenth day of June of the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine the following Convention, which may be cited as the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999.

Article 1

Each Member which ratifies this Convention shall take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency.

Article 2

For the purposes of this Convention, the term child shall apply to all persons under the age of 18.

Article 3

For the purposes of this Convention, the term the worst forms of child labour comprises:

- (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Article 4

1. The types of work referred to under Article 3(d) shall be determined by national laws or regulations or by the competent authority, after consultation with the organizations of employers and workers concerned, taking into consideration rele-

vant international standards, in particular Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999.

2. The competent authority, after consultation with the organizations of employers and workers concerned, shall identify where the types of work so determined exist.

3. The list of the types of work determined under paragraph 1 of this Article shall be periodically examined and revised as necessary, in consultation with the organizations of employers and workers concerned.

Article 5

Each Member shall, after consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, establish or designate appropriate mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the provisions giving effect to this Convention.

Article 6

1. Each Member shall design and implement programmes of action to eliminate as a priority the worst forms of child labour.

2. Such programmes of action shall be designed and implemented in consultation with relevant government institutions and employers' and workers' organizations, taking into consideration the views of other concerned groups as appropriate.

Article 7

1. Each Member shall take all necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the provisions giving effect to this Convention including the provision and application of penal sanctions or, as appropriate, other sanctions.

2. Each Member shall, taking into account the importance of education in eliminating child labour, take effective and time-bound measures to:

(a) prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour;

(b) provide the necessary and appropriate direct assistance for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labour and for their rehabilitation and social integration;

(c) ensure access to free basic education, and, wherever possible and appropriate, vocational training, for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour;

(d) identify and reach out to children at special risk; and

(e) take account of the special situation of girls.

3. Each Member shall designate the competent authority responsible for the implementation of the provisions giving effect to this Convention.

Article 8

Members shall take appropriate steps to assist one another in giving effect to the provisions of this Convention through enhanced international cooperation and/or assistance including support for social and economic development, poverty eradication programmes and universal education.

Provisions common to ILO Conventions are not reproduced here.

Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190)

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Eighty-seventh Session on 1 June 1999, and

Having adopted the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to child labour, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation supplementing the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999;

adopts this seventeenth day of June of the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999.

1. The provisions of this Recommendation supplement those of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (hereafter referred to as “the Convention”), and should be applied in conjunction with them.

I. Programmes of action

2. The programmes of action referred to in Article 6 of the Convention should be designed and implemented as a matter of urgency, in consultation with relevant government institutions and employers’ and workers’ organizations, taking into consideration the views of the children directly affected by the worst forms of child labour, their families and, as appropriate, other concerned groups committed to the aims of the Convention and this Recommendation. Such programmes should aim at, *inter alia*:

- (a) identifying and denouncing the worst forms of child labour;
- (b) preventing the engagement of children in or removing them from the worst forms of child labour, protecting them from reprisals and providing for their rehabilitation and social integration

through measures which address their educational, physical and psychological needs;

(c) giving special attention to:

- (i) younger children;
- (ii) the girl child;
- (iii) the problem of hidden work situations, in which girls are at special risk;
- (iv) other groups of children with special vulnerabilities or needs;

(d) identifying, reaching out to and working with communities where children are at special risk;

(e) informing, sensitizing and mobilizing public opinion and concerned groups, including children and their families.

II. Hazardous work

3. In determining the types of work referred to under Article 3(d) of the Convention, and in identifying where they exist, consideration should be given, *inter alia*, to:

- (a) work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- (b) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;
- (c) work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
- (d) work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;
- (e) work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

4. For the types of work referred to under Article 3(d) of the Convention and Paragraph 3 above, national laws or regulations or the competent authority could, after consultation with the workers’ and employers’ organizations concerned,

authorize employment or work as from the age of 16 on condition that the health, safety and morals of the children concerned are fully protected, and that the children have received adequate specific instruction or vocational training in the relevant branch of activity.

III. Implementation

5. (1) Detailed information and statistical data on the nature and extent of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date to serve as a basis for determining priorities for national action for the abolition of child labour, in particular for the prohibition and elimination of its worst forms as a matter of urgency.

(2) As far as possible, such information and statistical data should include data disaggregated by sex, age group, occupation, branch of economic activity, status in employment, school attendance and geographical location. The importance of an effective system of birth registration, including the issuing of birth certificates, should be taken into account.

(3) Relevant data concerning violations of national provisions for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date.

6. The compilation and processing of the information and data referred to in Paragraph 5 above should be carried out with due regard for the right to privacy.

7. The information compiled under Paragraph 5 above should be communicated to the International Labour Office on a regular basis.

8. Members should establish or designate appropriate national mechanisms to monitor the implementation of national provisions for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, after consultation with employers' and workers' organizations.

9. Members should ensure that the competent authorities which have responsibilities for implementing national provisions for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour cooperate with each other and coordinate their activities.

10. National laws or regulations or the competent authority should determine the persons to be

held responsible in the event of non-compliance with national provisions for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

11. Members should, in so far as it is compatible with national law, cooperate with international efforts aimed at the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency by:

(a) gathering and exchanging information concerning criminal offences, including those involving international networks;

(b) detecting and prosecuting those involved in the sale and trafficking of children, or in the use, procuring or offering of children for illicit activities, for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;

(c) registering perpetrators of such offences.

12. Members should provide that the following worst forms of child labour are criminal offences:

(a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;

(b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; and

(c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties, or for activities which involve the unlawful carrying or use of firearms or other weapons.

13. Members should ensure that penalties including, where appropriate, criminal penalties are applied for violations of the national provisions for the prohibition and elimination of any type of work referred to in Article 3(d) of the Convention.

14. Members should also provide as a matter of urgency for other criminal, civil or administrative remedies, where appropriate, to ensure the effective enforcement of national provisions for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, such as special supervision of enterprises which have used the worst forms of child labour, and, in cases of persistent violation,

consideration of temporary or permanent revoking of permits to operate.

15. Other measures aimed at the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour might include the following:

- (a) informing, sensitizing and mobilizing the general public, including national and local political leaders, parliamentarians and the judiciary;
- (b) involving and training employers' and workers' organizations and civic organizations;
- (c) providing appropriate training for the government officials concerned, especially inspectors and law enforcement officials, and for other relevant professionals;
- (d) providing for the prosecution in their own country of the Member's nationals who commit offences under its national provisions for the prohibition and immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour even when these offences are committed in another country;
- (e) simplifying legal and administrative procedures and ensuring that they are appropriate and prompt;
- (f) encouraging the development of policies by undertakings to promote the aims of the Convention;
- (g) monitoring and giving publicity to best practices on the elimination of child labour;
- (h) giving publicity to legal or other provisions on child labour in the different languages or dialects;
- (i) establishing special complaints procedures and making provisions to protect from discrimina-

tion and reprisals those who legitimately expose violations of the provisions of the Convention, as well as establishing helplines or points of contact and ombudspersons;

- (j) adopting appropriate measures to improve the educational infrastructure and the training of teachers to meet the needs of boys and girls;
- (k) as far as possible, taking into account in national programmes of action:
 - (i) the need for job creation and vocational training for the parents and adults in the families of children working in the conditions covered by the Convention; and
 - (ii) the need for sensitizing parents to the problem of children working in such conditions.

16. Enhanced international cooperation and/or assistance among Members for the prohibition and effective elimination of the worst forms of child labour should complement national efforts and may, as appropriate, be developed and implemented in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations. Such international cooperation and/or assistance should include:

- (a) mobilizing resources for national or international programmes;
- (b) mutual legal assistance;
- (c) technical assistance including the exchange of information;
- (d) support for social and economic development, poverty eradication programmes and universal education.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989. It entered into force 2 September 1990.

Below are the main provisions of the Convention dealing with education, child labour, and the worst forms of child labour. ((MARGIN: For the entire text of the Convention, please refer to: <http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>))

Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

- (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
- (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
- (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
- (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
- (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular ac-

count shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

- (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
- (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
- (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
- (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

Article 30

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Article 31

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

Article 32

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:

- (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
- (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
- (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

Article 33

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.

Article 34

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

- (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
- (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

Article 35

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

Article 36

States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Article 37

States Parties shall ensure that:

- (a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age;
- (b) No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;
- (c) Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age. In particular, every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so and shall have the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;
- (d) Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority and to a prompt decision on any such action.

Article 38

1. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.
2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities.
3. States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen

years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.

4. In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.

Appendix 2: Glossary

Active learning: a process of learning new ideas, skills and attitudes through what we do at work or in other situations. It is about learning from doing, performing, and taking action. The action can be either mental (e.g. reflection) or physical (e.g. case study). It uses such devices as games, simulations, introspection, role-playing, etc.

Adoption of a Convention or Recommendation: what the International Labour Conference does when it endorses such an instrument by a 2/3 majority vote.

Bonded labour: a situation arising from a pledge by a debtor of his or her personal services or those of someone under his or her control as security for a debt. Those in bonded labour find it often impossible to extricate themselves from their situation, and may be trapped indefinitely. Many children are given as a collateral for a loan by their parents and become trapped in bonded labour.

Casual labour: work occurring at irregular or infrequent intervals, or occasionally. For example, contractors in plantations frequently employ children as cheap casual labour, who may engage in dangerous tasks.

Child: a person below 18 years of age.

Child labour: work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It depends on the child's age, the type of work performed, the conditions under which is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries.

Control group: a group of people that are as similar to the sample group as possible, but differ from them according to one key factor. By using the same research tool(s) with the sample group and the control group, it is possible to compare data and check how this factor relates to other characteristics of the sample group.

Convention: international treaty, subject to ratification by States. Countries that ratify a convention become legally bound by it and are obligated to carry out its requirements.

Curriculum: a programme of study that details what students should learn, how they are to learn it, what the teacher's role is, and the context in which learning and teaching will take place.

Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: declaration adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1998, which highlights the importance of respecting the most fundamental labour rights in the context of globalization. These include the right to freedom of association and to collective bargaining, the abolition of forced labour, non-discrimination in employment and occupation, and the effective abolition of child labour. All ILO Member States are under an obligation to respect, to promote and act upon the child labour conventions in good faith – even if they have not yet ratified them – and to make their best efforts to abolish child labour.

Demand: see Market

Developed country: one of the wealthiest nations in the world. Typically, the list of developed countries includes those in Western Europe, the USA, Canada, Japan, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. However, the concept is blurry (see developing country).

Developing country: one of the economically less developed countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, with common characteristics, such as distorted and highly dependent economies devoted to producing primary products for the developed world; traditional, rural social structures; high population growth; and widespread poverty. Nevertheless, it includes countries on various levels of economic development.

Discretionary income: income left over after fixed or unavoidable expenses have been paid. In the context of child labour, this refers to the role that earnings play in middle or upper income households, where the proceeds of children's work are not all earmarked for necessities.

Domestic service, also domestic work: work performed traditionally by women that includes a

wide variety of tasks in the household, such as looking after children, preparing food, house cleaning, washing and ironing, and caring for the sick. Child domestic service is mainly done by young girls, who are often subjected to sexual, physical and verbal abuse.

Economic activity: most productive activities, whether for the market or not, paid or unpaid, for a few hours of full time, on a casual or regular basis, legal or illegal. To be counted as economically active in a survey, a child must have worked for at least one hour on any day during a seven-day reference period.

Employers' organizations: term used to refer to any grouping of employers in the defence of their interests.

Equilibrium: an economic situation in which no decision-maker has an incentive to alter its behaviour. One common example occurs when the amount that sellers wish to sell at existing prices equals the amount buyers wish to buy, on the assumption that only current-period outcomes are taken into consideration.

Fair trade: trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering a larger share of the benefits from trade to marginalized producers and communities. What makes fairly traded products different are the guidelines under which they are produced, often including a guarantee that no child labour is involved in production.

Forced labour: "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily" (Article 2 of the Forced Labour Convention No. 29). ILO Convention No. 29 protects workers from some of the worst forms of exploitation and requires countries to adopt means of abolishing forced labour. ILO Convention 105 prohibits forced labour used for political purposes, as a way of disciplining workers, as a punishment for taking part in a strike or as a means of racial, social, national or religious discrimination.

Formal education: the system of formalized transmission of knowledge and values operating within a given society, usually provided through state-sponsored schools.

Formal sector: The total number of businesses in an area, region or country, whose activities are registered with the government. Such registered activities include the number of employees it has and how much revenue it produces. In the urban economies of developing countries the formal sector absorbs relatively few people, so that many people have to work in informal sector activities.

Fourth World Conference on Women: convened by the UN General Assembly in Beijing in 1995, brought together Heads of State to agree on joint action around 11 issues: the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women, unequal access to and inadequate educational opportunities, inequalities in health status and unequal access to and inadequate health care services, violence against women, effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process, inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels, insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote women's advancement, lack of awareness of and commitment to internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights, insufficient mobilization of the mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society, and lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment.

Gender: a social category, referring to a set of learned social differences and expectations regarding girls and boys, women and men. These can vary widely within and between cultures.

Gender differences: allocation of tasks between men and women, boys and girls according to traditional or cultural perceptions of the ability or suitability of each to perform them. There are differences in the work girls and boys perform, and there are differences in the risks and consequences of this work as well.

Hazardous work: work which jeopardizes children's health, safety or morals because of the nature or the number of hours worked. Children in hazardous work comprises all those up to the age of 18 years. It concerns work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse; work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces; work with danger-

ous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads; work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health; work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

HIV/AIDS: Human Immunodeficiency Virus – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. HIV gradually attacks and destroys the immune system, leaving the infected person vulnerable to other illnesses and infections. AIDS is the last stage of HIV infection. The virus is transmitted through body fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal fluids and breastmilk. Children everywhere are affected by the spread of the virus – directly by its impact on themselves and their family members, and indirectly by its influence on the wider social and economic environment in which they live.

Industrialized world: The ensemble of developed countries. In these countries, child labour is not a thing of the past; it still exists, although in lesser measure.

Informal sector: the part of the economy that includes the income-generating activities carried out by the majority of the urban poor. It includes all unregistered commercial and non-commercial enterprises (or economic activities) without a formal organizational structure, but generally displaying the following characteristics: family ownership, small scale of operation, labour intensive and adapted technology, reliance on indigenous resources, etc. It is the sector in which working children – especially those in developing countries – tend to be concentrated. They tend to have no job security, receive no payment if they are injured or become ill, and can seek no protection if they are maltreated by their employer.

International Labour Conference: the yearly meeting of tripartite delegations of member States of the International Labour Organization.

International Labour Standards: Conventions and Recommendations adopted by the International Labour Conference, covering a broad range of matters in the field of social and labour matters.

International Labour Office: Permanent secretariat of the International Labour Organization, controlled by a Governing Body consisting of representatives of governments, workers' and employers' organizations of the ILO member states.

International Labour Organization (ILO): founded in 1919 to advance social justice and better living conditions throughout the world. In 1946 it became the first specialized agency associated with the United Nations. It is a tripartite organization: workers' and employers' representatives take part in its work with equal status to that of governments. The number of ILO member States is 176 as of 1 July 2003.

International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC): The ILO's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour works towards the progressive elimination of child labour by strengthening national capacities to address child labour problems, and by creating a worldwide movement to combat it. Its priority target groups are bonded child labourers, children in hazardous working conditions and occupations and children who are particularly vulnerable, i.e. very young working children (below 12 years of age), and working girls.

Labour demand: the quantity of labour, as measured in numbers of workers or in time units, that enterprises (public and private) wish to employ at a given set of wage rates.

Labour market: a system consisting of employers as buyers and workers as sellers, the purpose of which is to match job vacancies with job applicants and to set wages.

Labour supply: refers to the supply of workers, hours or effort for the production of goods and services, and is determined by the size of the population, the proportion able and willing to work, and the compensation, in money or other forms, offered by employers.

Light work: the work that is not hazardous to the child's health or development and does not hinder the child's education. Light work that is compatible with a child's schooling may be allowed from age 12.

Manufacturing: sector that comprises establishments engaged in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances,

or components into new products. In developing countries most of these production units are small and labour-intensive, meaning that most operations are done by hand rather than machines. The children usually work indoor under strict surveillance

Market: a mechanism or institution which brings buyers and sellers together to determine what will be exchanged and what prices. In the case of child labour, the market includes those who provide child labour (supply of child labour), such as the households the children live in, and those who utilize it (demand for child labour).

Migrant: an itinerant worker who travels from one area to another in search of work.

Minimum Age Convention No. 138: adopted in 1973, the Minimum Age Convention requires ratifying countries to pursue a comprehensive national policy to eliminate child labour, and to set minimum age levels for admission to employment, and for light work and hazardous work.

Minimum working age: with the aim of abolishing child labour, national legislation should fix minimum age levels at which children can enter into different kinds of work. Within limits, these ages may vary according to national social and economic circumstances. The general minimum age for admission to employment, as prescribed by Convention No. 138, should not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and should not be less than 15 years (developing countries may fix it initially at 14 years).

Minority: an ethnic, racial, religious, or other group having a distinctive presence within a society; but also a group having little power or representation relative to other groups within a society.

Mobility: movement between different social and or economic positions within a stratification system.

Non-formal education: any organized educational activity outside the established formal school system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identifiable learning objectives. Non-formal or transitional education programmes can enable former child workers to “catch up” with their peers who began their schooling at the appropriate age. However, there

should always be a strong link between such rehabilitation programmes and the formal education system, since the latter will ensure opportunities for further education and employment.

Opportunity cost: The value of the best alternative foreclosed by a course of action. The opportunity cost of eliminating child labour will typically be the contribution the child labourer could have made to her household had she continued working. The opportunity cost of child labour is the lost investment in human capital formation, i.e. education.

Output: a measure of the production achieved by a productive unit over a specified period of time. This can be counted directly in goods production; it must sometimes be inferred in the service sector.

Part-time work: employment on a regular and voluntary basis for hours substantially shorter than the standard hours. Unlike in developing countries, children’s work in developed countries is often part-time and varies with their school hours and the economic cycle.

Payment “in kind”: payment in the form of food or goods rather than money, which is common for children who work in the informal sector.

Peer group: a group of people of about the same age, social status, political affiliation, or the like, regarded as forming a sociological group sharing a common set of values.

Policy: plan or course of action, as of a government, political party, or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters.

Poverty: want or scarcity of means of subsistence. There is no single measure of poverty; it is unclear what measure should be used above all the others, and across all societies. Moreover, poverty has many dimensions beyond a mere lack of income and expenditure, and children have their own perception of it. There is a link between child labour and poverty: the more poverty the more child labour, and vice versa.

Poverty line: arbitrary division, usually based on income, which divides the poor from the non-poor. There is considerable controversy about how this line should be determined. One method is to determine the minimum income required to purchase a basket of goods and services

thought to be necessary to maintain a minimum standard of living. Another alternative is to look at expenditures on the basic necessities of food, shelter and clothing. A third method would be to assert that a family is living in poverty if its income is less than 50% of the median family income, adjusted according to family size.

Primary education: elementary education given to children from the time they first attend school until enter secondary education or complete their compulsory schooling.

Productivity: the rate at which goods or services are produced, measured in output per unit of labour.

Purposive sampling: targeting specific individuals for a research project who are known to have crucial information or to be opinion leaders.

Rapid assessment (RA): methodology intended to provide relevant information in a relatively quick and cost efficient way to serve as an essential tool for public awareness, programming and in-depth research. It is ideally suited for obtaining detailed knowledge of the circumstances of working children by means of discussions and interviews. RA uses background desk reviews, key informants, observation, semi-structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews and conversations. Its output is primarily qualitative and descriptive and is an effective way to gather information on the often hard-to-access worst forms of child labour.

Ratification: a solemn undertaking by a State formally accepting the terms of a Convention, thereby becoming legally bound to apply it. The country must, if necessary, adopt new laws and regulations or modify the existing legislation and practice to support the Convention. It must apply the Convention not only in law but also in practice, and provide reports on its application to the International Labour Office.

Recommendation: an ILO instrument not open to ratification but which lays down general or technical guidelines to be applied at a national level. It often provides detailed guidelines to supplement principles set out in a Convention, or it may provide guidance on subjects which are not covered by a Convention.

Rural areas: characteristic of farming or country life. On a global scale, far more children work in rural than in urban areas, thus the activities most working children perform are in fields and on farms. Some work with their families and live at home; others go out to work for employers.

Schooling: the process of being formally educated at an educational institution. There is not a neat inverse relationship between child labour and schooling. Yet, in developed countries children's work is more often combined with schooling. Girls are at particular risk of exclusion from school and comprise around 60 percent of the children worldwide who do not attend primary school.

Secondary education: the second stage of education following primary education, often beginning at age 11 to 13 and ending at age 15 to 18, although the age of children varies greatly between countries.

Slavery: the state of being bound in servitude as the property of a slaveholder or household. The various forms of child slavery and slavery-like conditions defined by Convention No. 182 can occur across different economic sectors and types of activity: the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

Social partners: the term used to refer to employers' and workers' organizations engaged in dialogue or partnership with government in the determination of social and labour policies.

Subsistence level: the level of consumption at which basic needs are met. There is an unavoidable ambiguity in the definition of these needs; they are partly biological and partly social. Below this level prospects for survival, physically and as a functioning member of the community, are compromised. Above it, individuals or households may engage in discretionary spending. (See the definition of discretionary income above.)

Supply: see Market.

Sustainability: sustainable actions meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Time-Bound Programme (TBP): a set of tightly integrated and coordinated policies and programmes to prevent and eliminate a country's

worst forms of child labour within a defined period of time. It is a comprehensive approach that operates at many levels, including international, national, provincial, community, and that of the individual or family. TBP's emphasize the need to address the root causes of child labour, linking action against child labour to the national development effort, with particular emphasis on economic and social policies to combat poverty and to promote universal basic education and social mobilization.

Trade union: see Workers' organizations.

Trafficking: the commercial exchange of people. It is thought that child trafficking has become a billion-dollar-a-year business with an estimated 1.2 million children annually falling victim. The routes and mechanisms for trafficking are increasingly well understood. The subjection of children to forced labour through trafficking has age and gender dimensions.

Transitional education: any form of educational activity designed to (re-)integrate children into the formal school system.

Tripartite: the term used to describe equal participation and representation of governments and employers' and workers' organizations in bodies both inside the ILO as well as at the national and enterprise level.

Urban: relating to or concerned with a city or densely populated area. Child labour occurs in nearly all large cities and towns in the developing world, and also in many in the industrialized world because of the greater availability of children who need to work due to the migration from the rural areas; the result is frequently urban poverty.

Vocational training: activities aiming at providing the skills and knowledge required for employment in a particular occupation, or group of related occupations, in any field of economic activity. Although the minimum age for work is 15 in developed countries, a child can become an apprentice or undergo vocational training at a younger age (often 13 or 14 years).

Workers compensation: monetary compensation for medical expenses or loss of income incurred through job-related injury or illness. It usually also applies to employment-related commuting accidents. It is the most significant occupa-

tional safety and health programme in the USA and other industrialized countries.

Workers' organizations: organization of employees, usually associated beyond the confines of one enterprise, established for protecting or improving the economic and social status of its members through collective action. The presence of adult trade unions can help to minimize the number of children working.

Workforce or labour force: the economically active population. In many countries, adolescents aged 15 to 17 are considered part of the adult labour force, even though they are "children" according to the definition employed in this textbook. Their work is not considered child labour if it is not hazardous or exploitative.

Working conditions: the physical, social and managerial factors affecting a worker's job environment.

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No

182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour: Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour adopted in Geneva in 1999

Worst forms of child labour: Convention No. 182 prioritizes the elimination of: all forms of slavery and practices similar to slavery; the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography, for pornographic performances, and for illicit activities; and work which is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. These forms are not only the most intrinsically harmful, but also the ones performed by the most vulnerable children.


Worst forms by condition: hazardous work requires national determination of what should be prohibited to persons below 18 years of age. These forms of work can be improved; that is, if they currently jeopardize the health and safety of the children who do them, altering the circumstances can in some cases change this.

Worst forms by definition: the unconditional worst forms of child labour are so detrimental that they are often illegal and also unacceptable for adults. They include all those activities whose status as worst forms cannot be altered no matter what is done to improve conditions of work.

Appendix 3: List of Resources and Contact Information

ILO-IPEC


The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour is the department within the ILO that, in cooperation with individual governments, employers' and workers' organizations, other NGOs and relevant parties in society – such as universities and the media – works towards the progressive elimination of child labour.

 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/index.htm>

Among other information, PDF versions of the following documents mentioned throughout the textbook are available on the website:


- *A future without child labour*

Global Report published in 2002 that presents the manifestations, data and causes of child labour throughout the world, as well as proposals for an action plan within the ILO.

 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/decl/publ/reports/report3.htm>


- *Every child counts*

Global estimates report on child labour from 2002 intended to serve both the interested public and professionals in the field of child labour. It includes estimates on economically active children, children in child labour that requires elimination and the extent to which children are engaged in hazardous work and other worst forms of child labour.

 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/others/globalst.pdf>

- *Rapid Assessments*


Reports on a country or geographic area and a specific form of child labour with relevant qualitative and descriptive information – gathered by means of discussions and interviews – of the working and life circumstances of children.

 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/ra/index.htm>

The following publication, also available on the IPEC website, is a useful tool for guiding further reading:

- *Annotated bibliography on child labour*

Assemblage of the literature and research material generated in recent years (mostly from 1995 to 2002) about child labour. Annotations indicate the general content of the materials cited, its source, and a sense of its relevance and importance. While some of the listed publications are in Spanish, French, German, Portuguese and Italian, all annotations are in English.

 http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/publ/biblio/biblio_annotated_2003.htm


Other ILO resources

(All available in English, Spanish and French)


The ILO Department for International Labour Standards and Human Rights tackles the problem of labour conditions involving “injustice, hardship and privation”. Through international tripartite agreement, the standards set guidelines to orient national policy and action.

 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/>

The ILO has an “InFocus Programme on Promoting the Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights of Work”. It is responsible for research, promotional activities, technical cooperation and reports in order to promote the Fundamental Principles worldwide.

 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/decl/declaration/>

GENPROM is the resource of the Gender department in the ILO. It works with a wide range of partners within the ILO and at international and national levels. It routinely promotes gender analysis and is responsible for the global programme on “More and Better Jobs for Women”.

 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/gems/>

The Social Protection department of the ILO works to extend social protection to all groups in society and to improve working conditions and safety and health at work.


 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/>

The Social Dialogue department plays a key role in promoting opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity.

 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/>

International Organization of Employers (IOE)


The International Organization of Employers (IOE) represents the interests of business in the labour and social policy fields. Its mission is to promote and defend the interests of employers in international fora, particularly in the International Labour Organization (ILO), and to this end works to ensure that international labour and social policy promotes the viability of enterprises and creates an environment favourable to enterprise development and job creation.

 <http://www.ioe-emp.org>

In English, Spanish and French

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)


The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) is a confederation of national trade union centers, each of which links together the trade unions of that particular country. It has three major regional organizations, APRO for Asia and the Pacific, AFRO for Africa, and ORIT for the Americas. The ICFTU organises and directs campaigns on the eradication of forced and child labour. Its activities are financed by the fees paid by member organisations.

 <http://www.icftu.org>

In English, Spanish and French

UNICEF


The United Nations Children’s Fund works for children’s rights to protection, education, health care, shelter and good nutrition.

 <http://www.unicef.org>

In English, Spanish and French

The World Bank


The World Bank is a UN specialized agency that brings developing countries finance and/or technical expertise, with the objective of helping them reduce poverty.

 <http://www.worldbank.org>

In various languages.

UCW


Understanding Children’s Work is a joint inter-agency research programme created by the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank. Detailed information on indicators of child labour and status of children over 50 countries, the agency interventions, reports and analysis can be found on its site.

 <http://www.ucw-project.org>

In English.

UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization aims to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication.

 <http://www.unesco.org>

In English, Spanish, French, Russian, Arabic and Chinese

The Global March Against Child Labour

The Global March against Child Labour is a movement that aims to mobilize world-wide efforts to protect and promote the rights of all children, especially the right to receive a free, meaningful education and to be free from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be damaging to the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

 <http://globalmarch.org>

In English.

ECPAT

Ecpat is a network of organisations and individuals working together for the elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking of children for sexual purposes. It seeks to encourage the world community to ensure that children ev-


erywhere enjoy their fundamental rights free from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation.

 <http://www.ecpat.net>

In English, Spanish and French.

Save the Children


The International Save the Children Alliance is the world's largest independent movement for children. It fights for children's rights delivering immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide. Within the Alliance there are 29 national Save the Children offices, and programme work is carried out in more than 120 countries.

 <http://www.savethechildren.net>

In English, Spanish and French.

Child Workers in Asia

Child Workers in Asia (CWA) is a network that brings together over 50 groups/organizations working on child labour in 14 countries. It facilitates sharing of expertise and experiences between NGOs and strengthens their collaboration to jointly respond to the exploitation of working children in the region.

 <http://cwa.tnent.co.th/>

In English.

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ILO Convention No. 138: Minimum Age, 1973

ILO Convention No. 182: Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999

ILO Recommendation No. 190: Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999

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