

# TACKLING CHILD LABOUR AND PROTECTING YOUNG WORKERS IN DOMESTIC WORK:

## A RESOURCE MANUAL



International  
Labour  
Organization



**GLOBAL MARCH**

Against Child Labour  
Contra el Trabajo Infantil  
Contre le Travail des Enfants



International  
Programme  
on the Elimination  
of Child Labour  
(IPEC)



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**International Labour Organization (ILO)  
Global March Against Child Labour**

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## Using this manual

This resource manual is intended to support all those wishing to take action against child labour in domestic work and to protect young domestic workers of legal working age. It is designed, in particular, to strengthen the capacity of trade unions and workers' groups, community-based organisations and NGOs to advocate for an end to exploitation and abuse of children in domestic work, and to provide good practice guidance on the best ways of directly assisting these children.

The manual has been prepared as part of the Global March Against Child Labour's *advocacy campaign for the elimination of child labour in domestic work and the protection of child domestic workers of legal working age*. The campaign – while global in nature – involves focused action in three countries; Indonesia, Panama and Togo. Examples from these countries, alongside other practice examples from other locations, are featured in the text.

In addition to providing practical guidance to those planning advocacy and direct assistance with child domestic workers (in sections 3 and 4), the manual also offers suggestions to groups on how they can promote change on some of the wider socio-economic issues affecting them (see section 2). Comic strip dialogues found throughout the text are designed to debunk common myths about child domestic work and provide a starting point for discussions amongst stakeholders, or can be used to stimulate debate amongst participants during capacity building sessions.

References can be found as endnotes at the back of this publication. Details of reports mentioned in this text can be found either in the relevant endnote or in the Resources sections at the end of Part 1 and in each section in Part 2.

# Table of contents

**Acknowledgements**

**Using this manual**

**Glossary of terms**

## **PART 1: The situation**

<b>Section 1: Understanding child domestic work</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Why focus on child domestic work?</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 What do we mean by children in domestic work?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.3 What pushes and pulls children into domestic work?</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.4 Why prioritise child domestic work?</b>	<b>6</b>
1.4.1 Child domestic work is a fundamental human rights concern	6
1.4.2 Child domestic work poses a gender equality challenge	8
1.4.3 Child domestic work can be a trafficking issue	8
<b>1.5 Common features of concern</b>	<b>10</b>
1.5.1 “Like one of the family”: an ambiguous relationship	11
1.5.2 Discrimination and isolation	11
1.5.3 An impediment to education	13
1.5.4 Vulnerability to violence and abuse	13
1.5.5 A hazard to health	14
1.5.6 Moving for work	15
<b>Section 2: Responding to the challenge of child domestic work</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>2.1 Working together to end child exploitation and abuse</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>2.2 Understanding the situation</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.3 Challenging social acceptance of child labour in domestic work</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.4 Legislative action</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.5 Advancing the cause of universal basic education</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>2.6 Promoting decent work for all</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.7 Engaging with child domestic workers as agents for change</b>	<b>33</b>

<b>PART 2: Taking action</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Section 3: Advocating for change for child domestic workers</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>3.1 The purpose of advocacy</b>	<b>39</b>
3.1.1 Undertaking effective and ethical advocacy	41
<b>3.2 What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>41</b>
3.2.1 Setting and selecting objectives	42
<b>3.3 Matching the right advocacy techniques to the right target audience</b>	<b>43</b>
3.3.1 Types of advocacy	43
3.3.2 Who do we need to convince?	44
3.3.3 The message and the messenger	44
<b>3.4 Involving child domestic workers and other children in advocacy</b>	<b>46</b>
3.4.1 Involving children in advocacy: some do's and don'ts	46
<b>3.5 Measuring advocacy progress and impact</b>	<b>47</b>
3.5.1 Monitoring, evaluation and learning	48
<b>Section 4: Direct assistance to children in domestic work</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>4.1 Reaching child domestic workers</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>4.2 Intervening in times of crisis</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>4.3 Working in source areas: prevention and reintegration</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>4.4 Responding to education and training needs</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>4.5 Involving employers</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>4.6 Helping child domestic workers to help themselves</b>	<b>63</b>

## Glossary of terms

Child domestic work (CDW)	Child domestic work refers to children's work in the domestic work sector in the home of a third party or employer.
Child domestic workers (CDWs)	Child domestic workers are persons below 18 years of age who do domestic work under an employment relationship. This term includes children who work in situations proscribed under international and national law (because they are below the minimum legal working age, or undertaking hazardous work, for example), as well as those working in permissible situations.
Child labour in domestic work	Child labour in domestic work refers to situations where domestic work is being performed by children who are below the minimum working age (as defined by international standards and national laws), or who are undertaking hazardous labour or are in a slavery-like situation.
Civil society organisations/groups	In this manual, civil society groups are comprised of community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as other local groups who undertake advocacy on child domestic work and/or which provide direct assistance to child domestic workers.
Global March	Global March Against Child Labour
IDEMI	Instituto para el Desarrollo de la mujer y la infancia
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILO-IPEC	The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973	ILO Convention concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (No.138)
ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No.182)
ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011	ILO Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 2011 (No.189)
ILO Domestic Workers Recommendation, 2011	ILO Recommendation Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 2011 (No.201)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JARAK	The Network of Non-Government Organization for Elimination for Child Labour in Indonesia
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



**PART 1**

# The situation



# Section 1

## Understanding child domestic work

### 1.1 Why focus on child domestic work?

Millions of children around the world – mainly girls – are in paid or unpaid domestic work in households other than their own (ILO, 2013 – see box below). Of these, the ILO estimates that 11.5 million are in unacceptable situations, i.e., in child labour in domestic work either because they are below the legal minimum working age, or are working under hazardous conditions or in circumstances that can be considered as slavery.<sup>1</sup> At a time when the overall number of child labourers is on the decline, the number of children in domestic work shows no sign of decreasing.

Child domestic workers are often hard to help not only because they work behind the closed doors of their employers' homes, but also because societies see what they do not as work but more as filial duty, and – particularly in relation to girls – as important training for later life. These children carry out tasks such as cleaning, ironing, cooking, gardening, collecting water, looking after other children and caring for the elderly. Children doing this work need our attention in particular because of the conditions under which they are working. Many 'live-in' with their employers and are especially vulnerable. Most have no, or insufficient, access to education. Many children report that their daily experience of discrimination and isolation in the household is the most difficult part of their burden. Their situation, and how they got to be there, also makes them highly dependent on their employers for their basic needs, and at times results in physical, psychological and sexual violence. CDWs are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation not only because they are children, and especially girls, but also because they are working in people's homes without being recognised as workers.

#### Global estimates on child domestic work

The most recent global estimates on child domestic work, published by the ILO in October 2013, estimate that there are 17.2 million child domestic workers (5-17 years old) in the world today – over two thirds of whom are girls. Of these 17.2 million, 11.5 million are in unacceptable situations, either because they are below the minimum working age, or because they are in hazardous circumstances (i.e. in child labour in domestic work). While the specific number of children in forced labour and trafficking for domestic work remains unknown, evidence points to significant numbers of children in debt bondage, or who are victims of trafficking and servitude (see sections 1.4.1 and 1.4.3 below).

Source: *Child domestic work: Global estimates 2012*, ILO, October 2013.

In Togo it is estimated that a quarter of all child labourers in the country are in domestic work, and can be as young as seven years old when they start. In Indonesia, it has been estimated that 20%, or two million, of all domestic workers in the country are either below the legal minimum working age, or are under 18 and working in hazardous conditions. In Panama, around 5% of the country's child labourers are domestic workers aged between 9 and 17.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Labour in Domestic Work in Togo*, WAO Afrique and Global March, 2013, and *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Indonesia*, JARAK and Global March, 2014.

# “CHILD DOMESTIC WORK IS BETTER THAN THE ALTERNATIVES”

I HAD A GOOD RESULT TODAY



WHAT HAPPENED?

I FINALLY GOT THAT YOUNG GIRL OUT OF THE FACTORY WHERE SHE WAS BEING EXPLOITED. SHE WAS BEING PAID A PITTANCE AND WAS BADLY TREATED TOO.



SO WHERE IS SHE NOW?

A FRIEND OF MINE NEEDED SOMEONE TO HELP HER AROUND THE HOUSE, SO I SUGGESTED SHE TOOK HER IN.



BUT ISN'T THAT JUST ANOTHER KIND OF EXPLOITATION?

NO, OF COURSE NOT! I'M SURE SHE WILL BE WELL LOOKED AFTER.



WELL, NO — SHE'S NOT REALLY WORKING IS SHE? ISN'T HER FOOD AND LODGING ENOUGH?

WILL SHE BE PAID? AND WILL THEY SEND HER TO SCHOOL?

I DON'T THINK THERE'LL BE TIME...



## 1.2 What do we mean by children in domestic work?

The term 'child domestic work' covers a broad spectrum, from children above the legal minimum working age who are working and going to school, through to situations which can best be described as slavery. There are a host of elements to be considered in deciding if a child is in an acceptable situation or not. The age of the child, the tasks they perform, the hours they work, the hazards, the violence they are exposed to, the isolation they face, their access to education, their level of dependency, their freedom to leave and associate with others, as well as the circumstances which got them there, are all factors – and determine the severity of the situation that the child is in.

It is also recognised that many children – particularly girls – carry significant domestic workloads in their own homes, and face similar issues to child domestic workers. However, while they are often expected to work long and hard and can be denied schooling, their situation is different from child domestic workers in at least one major respect: these children are under the control of adults for whom the child's best interests is, in the main, their primary concern.

According to the ILO, the term **child domestic work** refers to children (i.e. persons below the age of 18) performing domestic work under an employment relationship. This term encapsulates both child domestic work situations to be eliminated, as well as permissible ones.

Unacceptable child domestic work situations, referred to as **child labour in domestic work**, refer to domestic work undertaken by a child below the legal minimum age for work or employment (as defined by ILO Convention No.138 concerning the minimum age for admission to employment), or by a child above the legal minimum age in hazardous conditions or other worst forms of child labour (as defined by the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, No.182).

Where children are legally entitled to work and are not in hazardous situations, their conditions should be protected, in line with ILO Convention No.189 and Recommendation 201 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.

Adapted from: *Ending child labour in domestic work and protecting young workers from abusive working conditions*, ILO, 2013.

One of the biggest obstacles to protection for all CDWs is that their true situation is concealed by being considered 'like one of the family'. Widespread societal acceptance of what CDWs do serves to hide them 'in plain sight' and has resulted in them being amongst the least protected of all children. Their ambiguous status is further blurred in situations where they are found to be working for relatives.

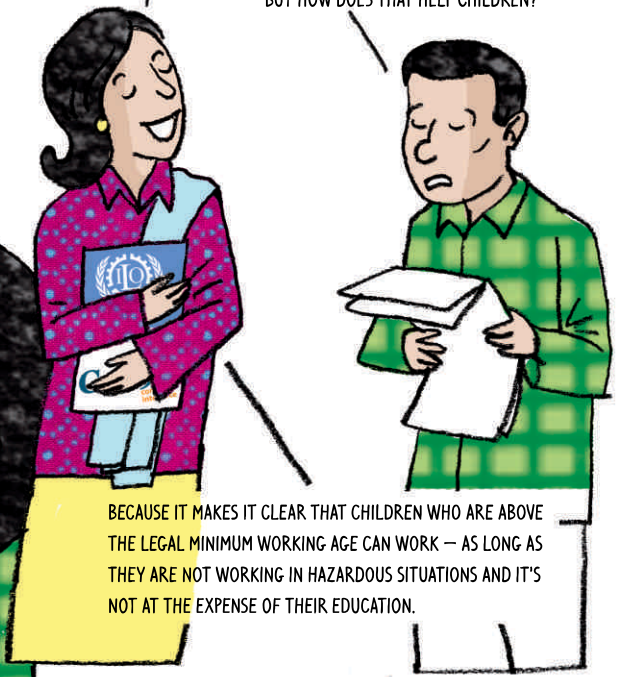
## CONVENTION 189

I'M SO EXCITED! I'VE JUST FOUND OUT ABOUT THIS NEW ILO CONVENTION 189 AND I WANT TO CAMPAIGN FOR ITS RATIFICATION IN OUR COUNTRY



IT'S IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT IS JUST ABOUT DOMESTIC WORKERS, WHO WE KNOW ARE AMONG THE MOST OVERWORKED, UNDERPAID AND UNDER PROTECTED OF ALL.

BUT HOW DOES THAT HELP CHILDREN?



WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT IT? ISN'T IT JUST ANOTHER LAW THAT DOESN'T RELATE TO PEOPLE'S DAILY LIVES?

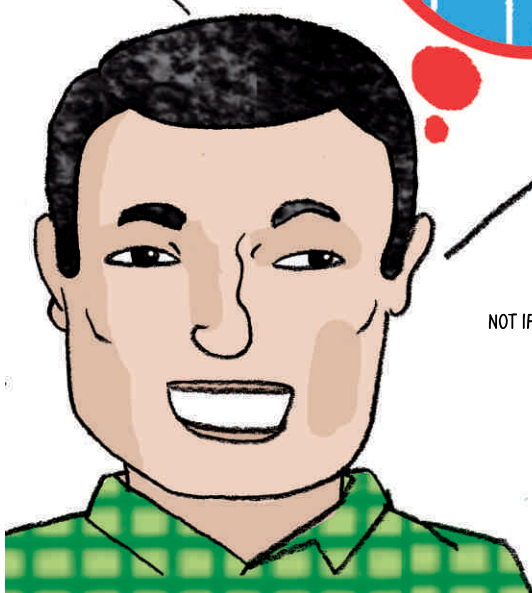
BECAUSE IT MAKES IT CLEAR THAT CHILDREN WHO ARE ABOVE THE LEGAL MINIMUM WORKING AGE CAN WORK – AS LONG AS THEY ARE NOT WORKING IN HAZARDOUS SITUATIONS AND IT'S NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF THEIR EDUCATION.

BUT I THOUGHT THAT ALL CHILD DOMESTIC WORK HAD TO BE BANNED?



IT'S NOT AS SIMPLE AS THAT. ADOLESCENTS HAVE NEVER BEEN BANNED FROM WORKING; IT'S THEIR WORKING CONDITIONS AND SITUATION THAT NEED LOOKING INTO.

OH, I SEE. BUT WON'T IT BE DIFFICULT TO ENFORCE?



NOT IF THERE IS GOOD LOCAL MONITORING IN PLACE...



### Child domestic work and ILO standards on 'decent work for domestic workers'

Article 4 of the ILO's Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (C.189) requires states to: “(1) set a minimum age for domestic workers that is consistent with ILO standards and national law; and (2) take measures to ensure that work performed by domestic workers who are under the age of 18 and above the minimum age of employment does not deprive them of compulsory education, or interfere with opportunities to participate in further education or vocational training.”

Paragraph 5 of C.189's accompanying Recommendation (R.201) highlights the need for States to protect child domestic workers from situations that “...are likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children, and should also prohibit and eliminate such child labour.”

This Recommendation further provides that States “should give special attention to the needs of domestic workers who are under the age of 18 and above the minimum age of employment as defined by national laws and regulations, and take measures to protect them, including by:

- (a) strictly limiting their hours of work to ensure adequate time for rest, education and training, leisure activities and family contacts;
- (b) prohibiting night work;
- (c) placing restrictions on work that is excessively demanding, whether physically or psychologically; and
- (d) establishing or strengthening mechanisms to monitor their working and living conditions.”

## 1.3 What pushes and pulls children into domestic work?

Poverty is the bedrock underlying a child's vulnerability to domestic work. The large majority of CDWs come from poor families and, particularly where social safety nets are lacking, are sent to work to supplement their family's income or simply to lessen the financial burden at home<sup>2</sup>. However, other 'push' factors are also important triggers, such as gender and ethnic discrimination, social marginalisation, a lack of educational opportunities, rural to urban migration, displacement, domestic violence, the loss of close family members as a result of conflict and disease, and familial debt. In some places, particularly in parts of South Asia, it is not uncommon to find children in domestic service to repay family debts.<sup>3</sup>

In Togo, more than half of child domestic workers are so-called 'foster children', who are sent by their families to grow up with extended family members but whose assigned household chores far outweigh the process of social education and life skills to justify their presence in the host family. These children are often treated very differently and in an inferior way to the other children in the household.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Labour in Domestic Work in Togo*, WAO Afrique and Global March, 2013.

Many children have also been compelled to become domestic workers as a result of HIV/AIDS and its consequences. The death or illness of adult family members from the virus can result in children being sent away to live with relatives, or forces the eldest to become providers for themselves and their siblings<sup>4</sup>. Evidence from research on child domestic work in a number of locations – particularly Sub-Saharan Africa – shows that many children in service are orphans, or have lost a parent<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, other complex and fundamental factors, such as the desire to escape from domestic violence, to flee a forced marriage, or because of the cultural motivations of parents to send their girls into 'safe' and suitable situations in advance of married life, also play an important part in pushing children into domestic work<sup>6</sup>.

In Indonesia it has been found that children become domestic workers to improve the family economy and, in many cases, specifically to support their brothers and sisters in school. Their 'choice' of domestic work is due to their low level of educational attainment, affording them few other options.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Indonesia*, JARAK and Global March, 2014.

Children are also 'pulled' into domestic work as a result of economic uncertainty, as well as by the widespread belief that the move will offer an opportunity for better living conditions, and by siblings and friends already working in households. The increasing participation of women in the labour force has meant a considerable demand for domestic help – with many employers opting for younger workers because they are cheaper and considered to be more compliant<sup>7</sup>. In some countries, many older children themselves take the decision to leave home and seek work – often with the intention of continuing their education<sup>8</sup>.

**Child domestic workers in Panama described five ways in which they had been 'pulled' into domestic work:**

- Outsiders or better-off individuals (including teachers) working in rural and indigenous communities asking for young people to work for them;
- Encouragement from friends, sisters, aunts or other family members already doing domestic work to join them;
- Radio or newspaper advertisements calling for domestic workers in the capital;
- Family members or close friends promising jobs in the city;
- Intermediaries who refer children to employment agencies.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Panama*, IDEMI and Global March, 2013.

## 1.4 Why prioritise child domestic work?

Child domestic work – in its many forms – is the consequence of many complex and connected social, economic and developmental factors. However, understanding the practice as a development challenge alone neglects its association with wider patterns of abuse and inequality – making it a fundamental human rights concern, a gender equality challenge, as well as a trafficking issue.

### 1.4.1 Child domestic work is a fundamental human rights concern

Internationally, the situation of many child domestic workers who are underage or in hazardous conditions still goes unrecognised as a form of child labour, which is why international legal standards such as the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182) continue to play a critical role in drawing attention to the situation and provoking national action.

Meanwhile, the exclusion of domestic workers – including children of legal working age – from coverage under national labour laws remains widespread, systematically limiting their rights and protections and denying them access to legal redress<sup>9</sup>. Typically, domestic workers are still debarred from essential conditions taken for granted by other workers, including paid annual leave, working time controls, minimum wage coverage and maternity protection<sup>10</sup>. Domestic work is among the lowest paid of any occupation, with domestic workers usually earning less than half, and sometimes no more than 20 per cent, of average wages<sup>11</sup>.

Children who are legally entitled to work are particularly vulnerable to exploitation due to their age and their status as children. Many are additionally vulnerable as a result of their movement from rural locations to urban centres, as evidenced by recent research showing that working child migrants are worse off in a variety of ways compared to non-migrant working children<sup>12</sup>.



### When child domestic work becomes slavery

Many thousands of child domestic workers in a number of countries are considered to be in **debt bondage** (when a child enters domestic service in exchange for money for a third party, or in repayment of an outstanding debt)<sup>13</sup>. For example, families in agricultural bonded labour in Pakistan and Nepal are often still required to send a daughter to the landlord's family to be a domestic worker. Cases also remain widespread of parents pledging children into individual bondage as domestic workers in exchange for money to survive, or for some exceptional expense<sup>14</sup>.

For many years the ILO's Committee of Experts on the Application of the Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) has presented various manifestations of child domestic work as **forced labour**, and more recently as a **worst form of child labour**. This includes children who are obliged to work long hours without pay and who experience restricted freedom of movement, children who are sold into domestic service by their parents, those who are trafficked for the purpose of domestic work, as well as children in various traditional systems of domestic servitude<sup>15</sup>. For example, in 2011 the CEACR observed that, "...the Committee has been commenting for many years on the situation of hundreds of thousands of *restavek* children who are often exploited under conditions that qualify as forced labour. It noted that in practice many of these children, some of them only 4 or 5 years old, are the victims of exploitation, are obliged to work long hours without pay, face all kinds of discrimination and bullying, receive poor lodging and food and are often subjected to physical, psychological and sexual abuse. In addition, very few of them attend school<sup>16</sup>.

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC), 1989, outlines the full range of rights of all children under the age of 18 – providing a useful benchmark for determining the extent to which child domestic workers are actually being abused, or are vulnerable to violations of their rights. Analysing child domestic work in this way reveals the many rights that are actually or potentially infringed, including (Article numbers in parenthesis):-

- The right to non-discrimination, on grounds of ethnic or social origin, birth or other status (2);
- The right to be cared for by his or her parents (7);
- The right to preserve identity, nationality, name and family relations (8);
- The right to maintain regular contact with parents if separated from them (9);
- The right not to be illicitly transferred abroad (11);
- The right to express views in all matters affecting her/himself (12);
- The right to freedom of association (15);
- The right not to be subject to unlawful attacks on her/his honour and reputation (16);
- The right to be brought up by parents or guardians whose basic concern is the child's best interests (18);
- The right to protection from physical or mental ill-treatment, neglect or exploitation (19);
- The right to benefit from the highest attainable standard of health and access to health care services (24);
- The right to social security, including social insurance in accordance with national law (26);
- The right to conditions of living necessary for his or her development (27);
- The right to education (28);
- The right to rest, leisure, play and recreation (31);
- The right to protection from economic exploitation and from performing any work that interferes with education or is harmful to his or her mental, spiritual or social development (32);
- The right to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (34);
- The right to protection from abduction, sale or trafficking (35);
- The right to protection from cruel or degrading treatment, and arbitrary deprivation of liberty (37).

That so many aspects of child domestic workers' situation are actual or potential child rights violations underlines the case for action on their behalf – whether they are enduring extreme exploitation and abuse or being denied an education, health care and proper rest. At the same time, and despite the many efforts, there remains a considerable gap between recognition of these rights and making them a reality for children. Even the concept of child rights remains unknown to the vast majority of parents and employers<sup>17</sup>.

### 1.4.2 Child domestic work poses a gender equality challenge

Another important lens through which to view child domestic work is that of gender. It is evident that the practice is hugely gender-biased, in large part due to deep-rooted societal beliefs of domestic work as fundamentally the domain of women and girls<sup>18</sup>.

Inequalities in access to education mean that by the time girls reach the minimum age of employment many are already at a distinct social and economic disadvantage<sup>19</sup>. When it comes to adolescent girls – many of whom are domestic workers – the prevailing view amongst parents is often that schools are unsafe places because of the exposure to sexual harassment both in school and on the journey, furthering the widespread belief that schooling is an irrelevance for the future role of girls as wives and mothers<sup>20</sup>. In many cases their lack of education and the ability to develop other skills leave young domestic workers with few options other than continuing; but also, their experiences of domestic work absorbed during that time stay with them and may serve to strengthen their low self-esteem and inertia.

“My name is Cristina (*name changed*), I am 15 years old and I have three brothers who go to school. My family depends on what my father earns from subsistence agriculture (...) I have to walk two hours from where the bus drops me to get to the community – that’s how I did my studies until the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. I started working when I was 14; a person who works in my community offered me a job so I could continue my studies, but they treated me badly in there (...). The girls who I lived with there fought with me, they beat me, they even made me cry – so I had to leave. I live with strangers at the moment. My mother found the place. I do work like sweeping, as a junkwoman, cooking, washing... but I don’t get paid. What worries me is that I am not good in Spanish and I feel sad. I don’t feel good where I am now – I live apart from my parents and I have always been used to living with them.”

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Panama*, IDEMI and Global March, 2013

The inferior and marginalised position of girls in society compounds the problems they face in the labour market. Information about, and opportunities for, training and the development of skills are limited and all too often push girls towards the learning of low-paid ‘female’ skills (such as beauty and child-care courses) which simply reinforce societal expectations of their role. Apprenticeships are also largely gendered, and tend to benefit boys more than girls<sup>21</sup>.

Extending to domestic workers the protections that are available to other workers is likely to go a long way to addressing the decent work shortfalls for this vulnerable group. Providing domestic workers, including adolescents legally entitled to work, with stronger rights and recognising them as workers would help to combat gender-based discrimination, and also discrimination on the grounds of race, national extraction or caste that is often apparent in the sector<sup>22</sup>.

### 1.4.3 Child domestic work can be a trafficking issue

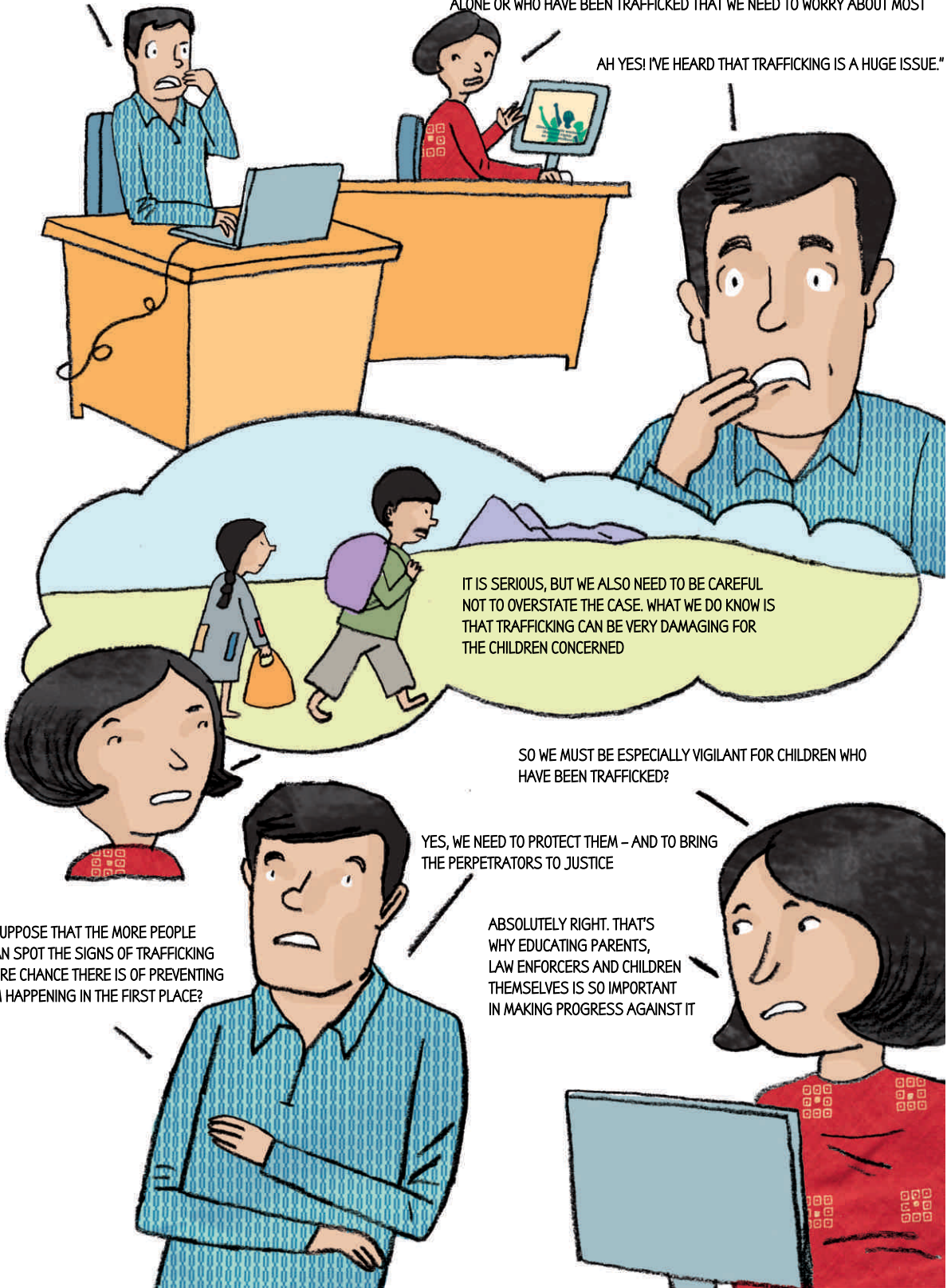
Although the recruitment and movement of child domestic workers may, initially, appear as voluntary, it can, through the involvement of intermediaries, become trafficking. At its simplest, child trafficking can be described as the process of recruiting a child for the purpose of exploitation<sup>23</sup>. In many cases, intermediaries broker the deals between parents and employers for the child’s services, and transport the children to their employing families. Some intermediaries deceive or coerce the child or her parents – who are fed false promises about the working conditions, opportunities for education and about what life for the child will be like. This means that the way in which significant numbers of children enter domestic service can legitimately be described as trafficking.

# TRAFFICKING OR MIGRATION?

MY GOODNESS, THIS REPORT SAYS THAT THERE ARE SO MANY CHILDREN 'ON THE MOVE' THESE DAYS. HOW CAN WE KEEP THEM ALL SAFE?

WE CAN'T – BUT REMEMBER THAT CHILDREN MIGRATE FOR MANY DIFFERENT REASONS AND WE SHOULDN'T ALWAYS SEE IT AS A PROBLEM. IT'S THOSE WHO ARE TRAVELLING ALONE OR WHO HAVE BEEN TRAFFICKED THAT WE NEED TO WORRY ABOUT MOST

AH YES! I'VE HEARD THAT TRAFFICKING IS A HUGE ISSUE."



IT IS SERIOUS, BUT WE ALSO NEED TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO OVERSTATE THE CASE. WHAT WE DO KNOW IS THAT TRAFFICKING CAN BE VERY DAMAGING FOR THE CHILDREN CONCERNED

SO WE MUST BE ESPECIALLY VIGILANT FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN TRAFFICKED?

YES, WE NEED TO PROTECT THEM – AND TO BRING THE PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE

AND I SUPPOSE THAT THE MORE PEOPLE WHO CAN SPOT THE SIGNS OF TRAFFICKING THE MORE CHANCE THERE IS OF PREVENTING IT FROM HAPPENING IN THE FIRST PLACE?

ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. THAT'S WHY EDUCATING PARENTS, LAW ENFORCERS AND CHILDREN THEMSELVES IS SO IMPORTANT IN MAKING PROGRESS AGAINST IT

Trafficked children are more vulnerable than other child workers to severe physical and psychological abuse. Long working hours, heavy loads, exposure to dangerous tools and toxic substances, fear and intimidation, violent punishment and sexual abuse expose trafficked child domestic workers to severe physical and psychological harm. Any attempt to refuse demands made on them, disobey, protest or escape, may result in severe punishment. Trafficked children may be treated as criminals instead of victims, denounced to the authorities, arrested, and detained.

From: *Ending child labour in domestic work and protecting young workers from abusive working conditions*, ILO, 2013.

Sometimes it is the children themselves who take the initiative to migrate and who themselves approach recruiters. Although such children may be more aware of what they will be doing, they are generally unaware of the hardships that they are likely to face. Invariably, children trafficked for domestic work are totally dependent on the trafficker for their well-being – particularly during any transportation process. In trafficking situations, the children's isolation and separation from family and community is commonplace. Sometimes children in domestic work situations will end up in places where they have no legal status and do not speak the language, making them especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

### Preventing the recruitment of underage domestic workers in Indonesia

In Indonesia, where 55% of child domestic workers have been found to be recruited by employment agencies, important efforts have been made to curb the recruitment of children as domestic workers. The enactment of Law No.13/2003 (Labor Act) involves regulations to prohibit the employment of children and the protection of minors from hazardous work and other worst forms of child labour. Criminal sanctions have been established for transgressors, including up to five years imprisonment. In 2005, the Association of Domestic Worker Suppliers (APPSI) – which represents agencies involved in supplying domestic workers to private households in the Greater Jakarta area – was helped to implement a policy of non-recruitment and non-placement of children younger than 15 years old, despite the biggest demand from their clients being for children between 13 and 16 years of age.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Indonesia*, JARAK and Global March, 2014 and *Give Girls A Chance: Tackling child labour, a key to the future*, ILO, 2009.

There are many examples of links between child domestic work and trafficking in countries across the world. In a recent example, the ILO's Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations noted (in relation to the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182) that Ethiopia “*is one of the top ten countries of origin for children trafficked from Africa, and that every year thousands of women and girls are reported to be trafficked from Ethiopia to the Middle East. It also noted that [...], poverty-stricken Ethiopians sell their children for as little as US\$1.2 to traffickers for use in prostitution, domestic work, or as weavers and professional beggars*” (emphasis added). The Committee further noted that, “*...out of the large number of children engaged in the worst forms of child labour, many of them are victims of internal trafficking*”. In another example, research has established that a principal motive for the trafficking of children into the United Kingdom each year is for “domestic servitude”, and that many of these children are subsequently used for sexual exploitation<sup>24</sup>. In some cases, traffickers use a job as a domestic worker as the lure into the sex trade and other forms of exploitation, as in the Philippines<sup>25</sup>.

## 1.5 Common features of concern

Despite the many and varied manifestations of child domestic work in different contexts, there are a number of important similarities in the circumstances and experiences of these children which are cause for particular concern, and which require considered responses at national and international levels.

### 1.5.1 “Like one of the family”: an ambiguous relationship

Even though many parents know that their child will be working, parents will often place them with a new family, not as a 'worker', but as a 'daughter'<sup>26</sup>. The informality of this arrangement suits both the parents and employers, in that it allows continuation of the parental pretence that their child is being cared for in a family environment, while encouraging employers to believe that they are assisting the child and her family. However, it usually works against the interests of the child by disguising an exploitative arrangement and masking violence and abuse.

While the assumption that all employers have exploitative intentions is an over-simplification, the customary belief by parents that sending their children away to be brought up by other 'better off' families will provide their children with a better life is based more on hope than reality. At the same time, evidence indicates that many employers rely on the labour provided by these children as much as these children are dependent on their care.

In some societies, the idea that the child domestic worker's employer is a benefactor has been legitimised by the description of this relationship as 'adoption' by strangers or 'fostering' by extended family members – practices which still prevail in parts of Asia and Latin America, as well as across much of sub-Saharan Africa including, in some cases, in branches of extended families resident in industrialised countries. Characterising child domestic work situations as 'adoption' or 'fostering' creates the perception of caring kinship relations and community support for raising children, while in reality concealing their potential vulnerability to child labour in domestic work<sup>27</sup>.

#### 'Placement' and 'Confiage'

In Togo and Benin, where the vast majority of CDWs live-in, a distinction has been found between those who had decided to live with their employers and those who had been 'placed' to work for extended family members by their parents, a longstanding cultural practice known in Togo as 'placement' and 'confiage' in Benin. While CDWs in both instances reported similar problems, it was found that the cultural dictates of 'placement' and 'confiage' meant that those children felt particularly compelled to stay, whatever the circumstances. This has resulted in them continuing to suffer in abusive and exploitative households. Such “placement” for domestic work has also been recorded, for example, in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Mali.

From: *Small grants, big change: Influencing policy and practice for child domestic workers*, Anti-Slavery International, 2013 and *Combatting trafficking in children for labour exploitation in West and Central Africa: Synthesis report*, ILO, 2001.

### 1.5.2 Discrimination and isolation

Significant power inequalities exist between child domestic workers and their employers. For a start the child is a child, probably a girl. She is far from home, in unfamiliar surroundings, and with little or no support network. She is likely to be from a family with fewer economic resources than the employing family. She may be of a different ethnic origin (usually one which is seen as of lower status), or from a group considered to be inferior in local social hierarchies, and she is likely to lack basic education which makes it more difficult to protect her rights<sup>28</sup>.

Child domestic workers often report that the discrimination and isolation that they experience in the employer's household is the most difficult part of their burden. A study in Bangladesh found that it was 'neither the verbal or physical punishments, nor the possible lack of material goods or even food, that upset [child domestic workers] the most; it was the discrimination, exclusion, disrespect, ingratitude, and other assaults on their emotional needs that truly hurt them'<sup>29</sup>. Even if their relationship with members of the household is good, these relationships are not on equal terms. A typical example of this discrimination is that the employer's children go to school, whilst the child domestic worker cannot. Child domestic workers often have to eat separately from their

## WE ARE LOOKING AFTER HER, WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

GOOD AFTERNOON MADAM. THANK YOU FOR SEEING ME



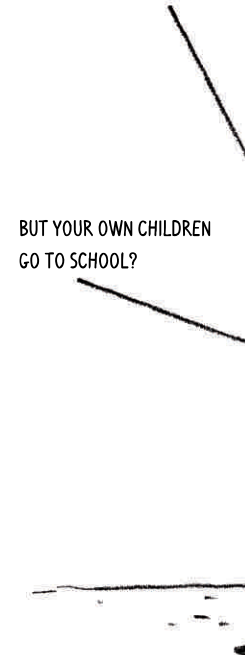
WELL, I HAVEN'T REALLY GOT THE TIME.  
WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT THAT CHILD IN  
YOUR HOUSE?

WHO? OH, MY COUSIN'S CHILD! YES, WE HAVE  
TAKEN HER IN. MY COUSIN WANTED US TO TAKE  
CARE OF HER



SO HOW IS SHE GETTING ON AT SCHOOL?



SHE DOESN'T HAVE TIME  
FOR SCHOOL

BUT YOUR OWN CHILDREN  
GO TO SCHOOL?



OF COURSE! THAT'S DIFFERENT.  
WE HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR THEM

HOW SO? SHE GETS A ROOF OVER  
HER HEAD AND SHE HAS A BETTER LIFE  
HERE THAN BACK IN THE VILLAGE.  
SHE SHOULD COUNT HERSELF LUCKY THAT  
SHE'S WITH US

ISN'T THAT UNFAIR?



employing families, eat leftovers or food of inferior quality, and sleep in the kitchen or on the floor of their employer's children's room<sup>30</sup>.

Denying child domestic workers their rights – including the right to an education and to play – is even more hurtful since when they often live side-by-side with those who do enjoy them. Many studies note the distress of CDWs who take their employer's children to school or the park, but are not allowed to join in<sup>31</sup>. This inferior treatment not only has negative consequences for them, but also for other children in the employers' household, who grow up with a sense of innate superiority over others.<sup>32</sup>

### 1.5.3 An impediment to education

Many studies have shown how child domestic work directly impedes the child's right to education – to their individual detriment and to the detriment of society as a whole<sup>33</sup>. School attendance rates are particularly low amongst girls in domestic service<sup>34</sup>. Most child domestic workers attach great importance to becoming educated and, in some cases, they and their parents consider that becoming a domestic worker is a way of continuing their studies<sup>35</sup>. In reality, their situation is, quite often, a serious obstacle to studying. This may simply be because employers do not allow them to go to school or training, or go back on an initial promise to do so.<sup>36</sup>

Even when CDWs are given the opportunity, the long working hours and requirements of their job often make it impossible to take up education. In Peru, for example, some children persevere with night schools, but report that they have little time for homework and are frequently tired, which has made it difficult to progress.<sup>37</sup> Similar issues are common elsewhere, where the requirements of school, in addition to the burden of domestic work duties, results in late and irregular attendance and in being unable to concentrate.<sup>38</sup>

According to ILO-IPEC in Togo, the rate of school attendance is almost 90% amongst those who are working, but is only 10% amongst child domestic workers. One boy explains why: *“School is a hassle if you are a child domestic worker. My grades are not good despite my efforts. I have no time to do my homework.”* One of his teachers confirmed that the boy regularly dozed in class.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Labour in Domestic Work in Togo*, WAO Afrique and Global March, 2013.

The inflexibility of the formal education system is seen as another obstacle to continuing their education, as is the poor teaching quality in some schools and the difficulty in affording school books, equipment, uniform, and in paying school fees. Many CDWs also end up dropping-out during the school year because of these problems, and are discouraged from returning to formal education because of the need to earn money for their families.<sup>39</sup>

### 1.5.4 Vulnerability to violence and abuse

The largely hidden nature of child domestic work is particularly worrying. While cases of poor treatment regularly appear in the press, evidence suggests that these are just the tip of the iceberg. The fact that the work takes place within the confines of a private home means that abuse very often goes unseen and unreported.<sup>40</sup>

The child's isolated situation and her ambiguous role in the employers' household makes her particularly vulnerable to physical, verbal and sexual abuse. If violence does occur, her dependency on her employer for basic needs, her sense of duty to her parents to make the situation work out, or her fear of the consequences of speaking up makes her far less likely to report it.<sup>41</sup> Regular violence or its threat routinely leads to a loss of self-esteem and a self-perpetuating cycle of abuse can develop, which results in abused child domestic workers feeling unable to challenge the situation.<sup>42</sup>

There are a number of similarities with regard to the incidence and range of violence against CDWs, although differences exist in

local manifestations of violent behaviour towards these children. For example, in some countries research has indicated that girls tend to suffer more from verbal bullying and boys more from physical violence. In a 2006 study of 500 CDWs in West Bengal, for example, it was found that 68% had faced physical abuse, with almost half suffering severe abuse that had led to injuries. 86% had experienced emotional abuse. The study also found that nearly a third of families had no idea where their daughters were working, with 27% admitting they knew that they were being beaten and harassed.<sup>43</sup>

In Indonesia, many child domestic workers have experienced violence of all kinds. Physical violence included beating – either by hand or with an object. Psychological violence took the form of shouting, being offensive and humiliating. Sexual harassment was often experienced, in the form of forced hugging and kissing, groping, squeezing, threatening and attempted rape. Violence was experienced from a range of employing family members, including both male and female employers, their children, and grandparents.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Indonesia*, JARAK and Global March, 2014.

Sexual violence towards CDWs, due to their vulnerability and isolation, is not uncommon. For example, in Haiti *restavèk* girls are sometimes called *la pou sa*, a Creole term meaning 'there for that'. They are accepted sexual outlets for the men or boys of the household<sup>44</sup>. In West Bengal a study indicated that a third of CDWs had their private parts touched by members of their employing family. Twenty percent had been forced to have sexual intercourse<sup>45</sup>. In El Salvador, an ILO-IPEC study showed that more than 15% of CDWs who had changed their employers had done so because of sexual harassment or abuse.<sup>46</sup>

### Child domestic work and the street

All around the world, several connections have been identified between child domestic work and the street. For example, evidence across parts of West Africa has shown that child domestic workers may spend a significant amount of time each day working on the street as part of their duties. Girls working as market porters or selling their employer's produce on the street are a particular example of this.

It has been reported that sexual violence perpetrated by employers can result in child domestic workers running away or – particularly in cases of pregnancy – being forced out of the employer's home, with children ending up working and sometimes also living on the street. Returning home is often difficult not only because of the sometimes hundreds of miles separating child domestic workers from their own homes, but also because of the shame of their situation. In these instances, domestic work typically becomes a precursor to street-based sexual exploitation, since so few other options exist.<sup>47</sup> A study in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) established that more than a quarter of girls being commercially sexually exploited were former child domestic workers – many of whom had previously been sexually abused by members of their employing family.<sup>48</sup> Similar findings have been reported in El Salvador.<sup>49</sup> In the Philippines, the promise of a job as a domestic worker is the lure for many of the children and young women trafficked to Manila who later find themselves in street-connected commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>50</sup>

From: *Policy Briefing: Child Domestic Work and the 2013 World Day Against Child Labour*, Children Unite, 2013.

#### 1.5.5 A hazard to health

Domestic work can be hazardous both because of the tasks undertaken and because of the conditions of work. In its most recent General Survey (2012) the ILO's Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations noted that child domestic workers constitute a 'high-risk group', and were concerned by the effect on their physical health associated with, amongst other things, long hours, poor food, overwork and hazards implicit in their working conditions.<sup>51</sup>



Child domestic workers regularly perform a variety of tasks, such as carrying heavy loads (including water, laundry, fuel and other children), handling toxic household chemicals, gardening, farming and working with knives, hot pans and irons. This can be exhausting and dangerous, particularly for younger children and for those already fatigued by long working hours and lack of sleep.<sup>52</sup>

In Indonesia it was reported by the ILO that CDWs perform the same amount of work as adult workers, which is inappropriate to their physical capacity and stamina. The study also commented that the long hours of work and little time for rest, recreation or socialising impacted on these children's mental, physical, social and intellectual development.<sup>53</sup> In Guinea, Morocco and several other countries, Human Rights Watch has documented young girls working for between 12 and 18 hours a day, seven days a week.<sup>54</sup> An ILO-IPEC survey of child domestic workers in Viet Nam found that 36% had been sick or injured during their service, with a higher percentage among the younger workers (between the ages of nine and 14). Common illnesses reported by these children domestic workers included coughs and respiratory problems, headaches, back pain and wounds.<sup>55</sup>

More recently, concern about the health impacts of child domestic work has shifted to include aspects of their psychosocial well-being. In its reports on the situation of CDWs in El Salvador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Morocco and Togo, Human Rights Watch found that, almost without exception, interviewees suffered some form of psychological abuse. It concluded that 'employer abuse, combined with isolation at the workplace, excessive work demands, and financial pressures may contribute to intense anxiety and depression'.<sup>56</sup>

It is important to consider the impact of these physical and psychosocial hazards on child domestic workers alongside the many other ways in which this kind of work can breach their fundamental rights, such as access to education and health care, the right to rest, leisure, play and recreation and the right to be cared for, to be free to move and to have regular contact with their parents and peers (UNCRC). These factors combined can have an irreversible impact on the development, health and well-being of children.<sup>57</sup>

### 1.5.6 Moving for work

The majority of child domestic workers move long distances, often hundreds of miles, away from their own families and into employers' households. This mostly rural to urban (and sometimes cross border) movement is part of a wider pattern taking place in many settings – a trend which is set to continue as a result of economic imperatives, conflict, state failure, natural disasters, and environmental and resource pressures.<sup>58</sup> Children 'on the move' for domestic work are doing so under varying circumstances and for many reasons. Some may take the decision to migrate, others are displaced, while others have been trafficked (see section 1.4.3). Children forced to migrate alone are by far the most vulnerable group of children affected by migration and/or trafficking, and child domestic workers constitute a particularly important part of this group.<sup>59</sup>

#### The child migration context in Panama

The families of children in domestic work, living in areas of poverty and extreme poverty, unemployment and lack of work alternatives, accept the need for their daughters and sons to migrate. This they do – forced by the critical economic situation of their families or in an effort to continue their studies as a way of improving their lives – because their home environment is so devoid of opportunities.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Panama*, IDEMI and Global March, 2013.

A 2011 study of child migrants in child labour conducted by ILO-IPEC and Child Helpline International in Kenya, Nepal and Peru found that migrant working children (many of whom were child domestic workers) appeared to be worse off than local working children in a variety of ways. In the main, they had to work longer hours, were paid less, denied food more, had greater exposure to hazards, were more prone to violence and were more likely to be unable to leave their employer' households.<sup>60</sup>

Child domestic workers living far from their families often find the resulting lack of contact as difficult to bear. Some have reported that their employers make matters worse for them by deliberately isolating them from their families and limiting their opportunities for communication and visits. In a study in Tanzania, a third of CDWs stated that they were not allowed to have visitors or to visit their parents or relatives - and the numbers were higher amongst CDWs who were working in the capital city Dar es Salaam, who reported being more isolated in terms of social networks than those working closer to home.<sup>61</sup>

## Section 2

# Responding to the challenge of child domestic work

Galvanised by discussions surrounding the development of ILO Convention 189, opinion is coalescing amongst governments, ILO's social partners, international agencies and civil society around the need for concerted action to continue and strengthen ongoing efforts to promote decent work for domestic workers and to eliminate child labour in domestic work. It is now commonly accepted that child domestic work below the general minimum age for employment, or in a situation considered to be a worst form of child labour, should be prohibited and prevented. At the same time, young domestic workers of legal working age should be protected from abusive working conditions.

Our greater understanding of child domestic work and the interplay with child labour and the domestic work sector is helping to ensure a more considered response to this complex practice. As we know, child domestic work is not simply a labour, children's rights or gender issue; it relates to a range of policy areas such as legislative action and enforcement, social protection, education, vocational training and health, amongst other things.

It is also clear that child domestic work cannot be seen in isolation from the social and cultural milieu in which it exists, and is the product of many inter-connected factors both within and between countries. The situation of many child domestic workers not only constitutes a serious violation of their rights, but remains an obstacle to the achievement of many national and international development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, Education for All, poverty reduction and the ILO's decent work agenda.<sup>62</sup> As a result, child domestic work requires responses that cut across policy boundaries and which involve a variety of voices, both within and outside national governments.

### 2.1 Working together to end child exploitation and abuse

Cooperation is critical to effective action to eliminate child labour in domestic work, to protect young workers from abuse and exploitation and to promote decent work for all domestic workers. Governments and their institutions, trade unions, civil society groups, and international organisations have all played their part in giving greater visibility to the issues and problems of domestic workers, in stimulating positive developments in national law and policy, and in mobilising support for the ratification and the effective application of Convention 189. However, we could all do more. While the issue is firmly on the international agenda, there are still too few practitioners focusing on child domestic workers and on the domestic work sector nationally and locally. Identifying and encouraging more organisations to take up the issue, including groups of domestic workers themselves, is critical – not only to reach and assist more children, but also to support regulatory, policy and advocacy efforts.

## WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

I'VE HEARD THAT THERE IS ANOTHER GROUP THAT IS ALSO WORKING WITH CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS

YES, I KNOW ABOUT THEM – BUT WE DON'T REALLY TALK. I'M NOT SURE I AGREE WITH THE WAY THEY DO THEIR WORK



YOU DON'T EVEN MEET? SURELY YOU'D BOTH BE STRONGER BY WORKING TOGETHER – AND YOU COULD INFLUENCE THEIR PRACTICE TOO



IT'S JUST THAT WE ARE BUSY AND THEY ARE DOING THEIR OWN THING. WE JUST COME FROM VERY DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES, SO WHAT'S THE POINT?

THE POINT IS THAT CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS NEED ALL THE HELP THEY CAN GET! I BET YOU COULD SAVE SOME TIME AND MONEY IN THE LONG RUN BY SHARING YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND HOW YOU DO THINGS. YOU NEVER KNOW, YOU MIGHT EVEN LEARN SOMETHING!



WELL, I SUPPOSE I COULD GIVE THEM A CALL...



### **Trade unions, civil society groups and the Global March Against Child Labour**

Trade unions bring unique knowledge and competence to bear when it comes to the world of work. They are in the vanguard of attempts to organise domestic workers and are also in a good position to influence national and international policy – especially when it comes to education, social protection and employment. Through their members, teachers' organisations are particularly important in efforts to prevent child labour in domestic work and to protect children through school-based initiatives.

Community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations of all sizes are at the forefront of direct assistance to child domestic workers. Reaching deep into the heart of communities they are also key to influencing parents and employers, and play a critical role in changing societal attitudes that serve to push and pull children into domestic work.

The *Global March Against Child Labour* brings these key players together in an international network that works towards the shared development goals of eliminating and preventing all forms of child labour and ensuring access by all children to free, meaningful and good quality public education. In mobilising its constituents, the Global March also engages with the United Nations, international and inter-governmental agencies. It has been a long standing partner of the ILO, particularly its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), as well as UNICEF and others.

Stronger country-level partnerships between international bodies including ILO, UNICEF, UNHCHR, UNESCO, UNODC and the World Bank, could also help bolster efforts on the issue; as would support from civil society organisations working on issues relating to child domestic work such as girls' education, the commercial sexual exploitation of children, trafficking in persons, violence against children, adolescent and sexual health and early marriage, as well as those working more broadly on human rights and economic and social development issues.

### **The '12 by 12' Campaign**

The '12 by 12' Campaign is an International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) initiative to mobilise workers around the world to push their governments to ratify the ILO Domestic Workers Convention (C.189) and to enact laws ensuring decent work for domestic workers. Significantly, the campaign is a close partnership between the international and national trade union movements, including domestic worker organisations, and migrant rights groups, international NGOs and funding partners which share the objective of securing basic labour rights for domestic workers above the legal minimum working age, including on issues of the right to organise, pay, working hours, days off and social security benefit. The 12 by 12 Campaign has mobilised unions and workers in about 80 countries so far. Global March is a partner of the 12 by 12 Campaign.

For more information, see: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/domestic-workers-12-by-12.html>

### What you can do to strengthen action to combat child labour in domestic work

- Unions, teachers associations and civil society organisations should look beyond their individual networks to develop regular joint information-exchange and action forums on child domestic work issues at national and local levels;
- Partnerships are needed between child rights groups and women's organisations on domestic work issues – due to the gendered nature of domestic work and the close linkages with the discrimination, control and domination of women;
- Information exchange and networking is particularly important amongst unions, civil society and the authorities when it comes to actions relating to rescuing and withdrawing abused children, healthcare, legal action and reintegration;
- Religious institutions should use their networks to identify and protect child domestic workers, and campaign for respect for children's rights.

## 2.2 Understanding the situation

There has been significant progress since the 1990s in our understanding of child domestic work, and there now exists a range of situational analyses, policy-oriented country studies, good practice reports and 'how to' materials on the issue (see 'Selected global resources' box at the end of this section for some key examples). However, despite the recent emergence of global domestic work estimates, at local levels the numbers of children in domestic work and in the sector in general, remain largely guesswork.

Continuing to improve our data collection methods and statistical tools to better assess unacceptable forms of child domestic work, as well as youth employment in domestic work, is a must. Advancing our methods for capturing and monitoring the number of child domestic workers as well as the main trends in their working and living conditions is key to designing sound policy and action responses.

### The state of research in Panama

The only in-depth study on child labour in domestic work in Panama dates back to 2002 and an update is required on the state of child labour in domestic work in the country from a children's rights and gender perspective. Its results must be widely disseminated and serve as the basis for tackling the issue.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Panama*, IDEMI and Global March, 2013.

Given the current focus on domestic work as a sector, new research on child domestic work should build upon wider research efforts relating to children's rights and domestic workers more generally. In addition, more material like this resource manual, which aims to strengthen cooperation and partnerships, should be produced and disseminated with a view to sharing knowledge and practical experience among key stakeholders, including governments, workers groups, employer bodies and civil society organisations.

### ILO tools to assist policy-making on child domestic work

ILO-IPEC has prepared a number of technical and policy tools as part of its effort to address knowledge gaps and to develop policy and practical responses on the child domestic work issue. This includes a range of reports which share good practice and lessons learned, including a 2013 global report entitled *Ending child labour in domestic work and protecting young workers from abusive working conditions*. Guidelines on the design of direct action strategies to combat child labour in domestic work provide guidance, based on ILO-IPEC experience, to assist in devising prevention, protection and reintegration strategies and actions to support child domestic workers.<sup>63</sup> A briefing pack on hazardous child domestic work aims to assist policymakers, trade unions, employers' organisations and other stakeholders involved in discussing and deciding on hazardous work in the country context.<sup>64</sup>

ILO's Inclusive Labour Markets, Labour Relations and Working Conditions Branch (INWORK), earlier the Conditions of Work and Employment Branch (TRAVAIL) has also developed tools relating to domestic work issues, including a number of Policy Briefs on Domestic Work which aim to stimulate and inform policy debates about advancing decent work for domestic workers. The series provides information on terms and conditions of employment in domestic work, policy issues and different views on these issues, and varied approaches to addressing them around the world.

For more information see: [www.ilo.org/ipec](http://www.ilo.org/ipec) and [www.ilo.org/domesticworkers](http://www.ilo.org/domesticworkers)

### What you can do to enhance understanding of child domestic work

- When analysing the situation of child domestic workers, remember that it is not just a child labour issue. It relates to a range of human rights concerns and is connected to gender issues, migration and trafficking, youth employment and the situation of adult domestic workers;
- Good quality and up-to-date data and research should be used to support advocacy efforts and other interventions on the issue, and should inform the actions of unions and civil society groups.

## 2.3 Challenging social acceptance of child labour in domestic work

A key concern about child domestic work is the physical and cultural invisibility of the practice, which conspire to make these children both 'out of sight' and 'out of mind'. In recent years a lot of emphasis has been placed on challenging deeply-rooted beliefs that child domestic workers are treated 'like one of the family', through a host of awareness raising, campaigning and public education activities.

Efforts to transform social attitudes in source and destination communities are a continuing priority. More targeted advocacy is particularly important in order to address the still widespread acceptance of child labour in domestic work and the beliefs amongst employers and parents that these situations represent a protective and healthy environment for children – especially girls. Advocacy is also needed with influential groups, including politicians, opinion-leaders, civil servants, social partners, community and religious leaders, civil society organisations and the mass media in order to encourage the necessary social cohesion to change mindsets.

At the same time, measures to improve the visibility of and access to child domestic workers are crucial to protecting them from harm. This requires the development of systems to identify where child domestic workers are (for example through local registration schemes), as well as in the systematic monitoring of their well-being, such as through house visits and dialogue with employing families. Engaging with, and not alienating, employers has been shown to be a key strategy in curbing the exploitation and abuse of many child domestic workers.

In **India**, the National Domestic Workers' Movement promotes the registration of child domestic workers of legal working age – also issuing child domestic workers with an identity card.

From: *Making it work: how to protect young domestic workers from exploitation and abuse*, Children Unite and Anti-Slavery International, 2010.

### What you can do to challenge prevailing attitudes of child labour in domestic work as safe and acceptable

- Raise the consciousness of employers and destination communities (in addition to parents and communities of origin) on children working in other people's homes, on how they should be treated, as well as on gender equality;
- Make child domestic workers more visible. Doing so ensures that their situation can be monitored more easily and that they can be reached and contacted more simply. Campaign to make registration of child domestic workers who are entitled to work mandatory. As trade unionists, take steps to organise domestic workers and make visible their situation within your union;
- Teachers groups: encourage your members to look out for child domestic workers in the classroom, support their education and put them in touch with groups who can assist them;
- Children and young people: engage with your peers to raise awareness of these issues and build empathy and solidarity with child domestic workers;
- Trade unions which are active in rural and agricultural areas (which are often source communities for child domestic workers): help to prevent child labour in domestic work through awareness-raising, education and training.

## 2.4 Legislative action

In many countries child domestic work remains unrecognised, and it has been international legal standards such as the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) which have drawn attention to the situation and been instrumental in getting the issue onto national agendas.

National and local legal provision for these children is not only vitally important in setting minimum standards for their protection, but also because it can assist in giving their situation greater visibility. At the same time, from a public policy point of view, the inclusion of domestic workers in labour law can make a substantial contribution to the creation of decent work opportunities and in the professionalisation of the domestic work sector as a whole.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, it should be understood that legislative and regulatory action to ensure decent work for domestic workers more generally, to protect young domestic workers and to advance the elimination of child labour in domestic work, is interrelated and mutually reinforcing. In this regard, a 2012 ILO toolkit *Effective protection for domestic workers: A guide to designing labour laws* is particularly useful: available from [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org).



## WHAT'S THE POINT IN CHANGING THE LAW?

I HEARD YOU ON THE RADIO THE OTHER DAY

WAS I ANY GOOD?

YOU SPOKE WELL, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU ARE SPENDING SO MUCH TIME TRYING TO CHANGE THE LAW

WELL, WE NEED MINIMUM STANDARDS TO STOP THE EXPLOITATION OF ALL OF THESE CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS



BUT NO-ONE WILL TAKE ANY NOTICE — THIS PRACTICE IS SO INGRAINED, IT'S PART OF OUR CULTURE. A FEW RULES ON A BIT OF PAPER AREN'T GOING TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE

I AGREE THAT CHANGING THE LAW WON'T CHANGE THINGS BY ITSELF, BUT IT'S AN IMPORTANT SYMBOL OF INTENT — AND IT DOES GIVE US SOMETHING TANGIBLE TO HOLD PEOPLE TO ACCOUNT



BUT NO-ONE WILL KNOW ABOUT IT — THEY'LL ALL JUST IGNORE IT.

NOT IF WE DON'T LET THEM...



**Panama's** Executive Decree No.19 of 12 June 2006 includes a list of the worst forms of child labour, which recognises domestic work in private households, both under live-in and live-out arrangements, as a potentially hazardous activity, particularly when it involves limited rest, long hours, and care of persons or property.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Panama*, IDEMI and Global March, 2013.

In West Africa, for example, where thousands of children are trafficked across borders for domestic service (as well as being internally trafficked), a number of bilateral agreements have been negotiated between countries (often with the assistance of multilateral agencies such as ILO, IOM and UNICEF) to curtail the flow.

In South and South-East Asia, local regulation efforts in some countries have burgeoned in the face of legislative inertia at national level. However, in the Philippines, a 20 year struggle for a national law resulted in an *Act Instituting Policies for the Protection and Welfare of Domestic Workers* (better known as the Magna Carta for Household Helpers) on 24 January 2013. The law sets out to protect domestic workers from exploitation and abuse, and to improve their working conditions by taking steps to formalise the labour relationship between worker and employer.

#### **Legislative action by Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), India**

The Delhi Private Placement Agencies (Regulation) Bill – introduced in response to a BBA petition – is in its final stages before becoming law in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. This regulation ensures that private agencies providing domestic workers cannot do so without a licence, which stipulates that the domestic workers they supply must be above the age of 18 and must not be charged any fees for their placement. Agencies are also required to maintain a register of the workers they have placed and the particulars of who they have been placed with.

The regulations are designed to stop the recruitment of minors like Sunita (name changed), who was trafficked from her home in Assam to Delhi, where she was sold to a placement agency – ending up exploited without pay for two-and-a-half years. Unable to return home, Sunita's plight came to the attention of BBA in 2013, which has taken up her case.

Source: Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA).

The ratification of ILO Convention No. 189 and its implementation, along with the provisions in its accompanying Recommendation No. 201, is a critical step in promoting decent work conditions for domestic workers of all ages, including young workers of legal working age. Recognising domestic work as “real work” in national labour and social policy creates a guiding framework and entry point for tackling and eliminating child labour in domestic work and for better protection of young domestic workers. In recent years, some Central and Latin American countries have been at the forefront of efforts to legislate to protect domestic workers, including children. Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, Guyana, Italy, Mauritius, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Philippines, South Africa and Uruguay have all ratified the ILO's Domestic Workers Convention since its adoption in 2011 (as at May 2014).

### **The Philippines and local ordinances**

A local ordinance is a piece of legislation on a specific subject of regulation, whose power of enforcement is limited only to the community or political unit of the local law-making body that passed it. In the Philippines, Quezon City passed a local ordinance in 2004 that calls on all barangays (districts) in the city to register domestic workers, especially child domestic workers, so that a profile of domestic workers can be established as a reference for the menu of services for domestic workers. Registration is seen as a concrete way to transform the “invisible existence” of domestic workers to visibility by identifying them and their workplaces. The City of Makati made a similar move in 2006 by adopting an ordinance for the kasambahays (domestic workers) that requires all districts to register domestic workers. These ordinances also provide for establishment of hotline mechanisms and the promotion of social security coverage for domestic workers in their localities.

Source: *Decent Work for Domestic Workers in Asia and the Pacific, Manual for Trainers*, ILO, 2012.

However, legislation is not a panacea, and must be part of an integrated approach which includes the necessary policy action to protect all domestic workers. To be effective, laws and policies must be promoted through preventive measures and, where necessary be enforced by appropriate penalties. Countries need to develop measures that both tackle child labour in domestic work and identify and register young domestic workers when they can legally work. Evidence also indicates that finding and developing locally adaptable methods for systematic monitoring of child labour and youth employment situations in domestic work should be emphasised, and accessible complaint mechanisms established. States should also ensure that children in exploitative situations and those who are working legally have access to justice and legal redress

### Codes of conduct

In **Sri Lanka**, The National Child Protection Authority conducted a study into child domestic work, and, as part of the outcome, a task force developed a Code of Conduct for employment of young domestic workers. The Code covers such issues as occupational hazards from which young employees should be protected; working hours; holidays and leave; registration of employees, including their consent and that of their parents to the employment; the obligations of employers; and terms of payment including right to a minimum salary. Two lawyers also worked on a proposed amendment to the law governing the employment of persons aged between 14 and 18 years.

In **Togo**, a voluntary Code of Conduct has been developed for the employment of child domestic workers covering the following areas:

- Minimum age: No working child should be under the age of 14 years;
- Working conditions, hazardous work and working environment: There should be a contract which stipulates tasks, hours, wages and conditions that will provide a healthy working environment;
- Methods of recruitment, responsibility of parents and communities: The need for parents to understand that traffickers' promises concerning their children are false, and that employment far from home without family contact will hurt their children;
- Education and vocational training of the child: All employment of children must compulsorily include the education of children of school-going age and professional training for those who have finished school.

In 2011, the **Zambia** Federation of Employers (ZFE) prepared a code of conduct for employers of domestic workers (including individuals and commercial entities) to promote decent work in the sector. Developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and the Federation of Free Trade Unions of Zambia, the code establishes the decent work principles to be followed by employers of domestic workers. Backed up with reference to relevant Zambian labour laws, the code covers areas including the minimum age for admission to employment and the special protection of young workers, working hours, duties, wages, sick leave, maternity benefits. The code also advises drawing up a mutually agreed employment agreement/ contract which specifies the terms and conditions of work, such as salary, rest days, medical benefits and the scope of the duties involved.

From: *Making it work: how to protect young domestic workers from exploitation and abuse*. A briefing sheet prepared by Children Unite and Anti-Slavery International, 2010 and the Zambia Federation of Employers: Code of conduct for employers of domestic workers in Zambia, ZFE, 2011.

### What you can do to support ratification and enforcement of law

- Campaign for ratification and implementation of ILO's Domestic Workers Convention, as well as the provisions in accompanying Recommendation 201;
- Promote the development of national and local regulation for all domestic workers, including young workers of legal working age;
- Labour supply and placement agencies should develop and implement codes of conduct within their businesses and industry to promote the observance of minimum age laws and improve hiring practices so as to avoid exploitation;
- Encourage the development of child protection policies within your own organisations and in others to ensure that the treatment of children is in accordance with local laws and best national and international practice;
- Companies: develop, disseminate and enforce a code of conduct for your staff and contractors on the employment of child domestic workers.

## 2.5 Advancing the cause of universal basic education

Two-thirds of the 774 million people in the world of 15 years and over who cannot read and write are female and almost two-thirds of illiterate children under 15 are girls – indications of the continuing lack of relative value placed on girls' education in many settings (UNESCO, 2013). We know that educating girls is not only critical to their own life chances, but also to the successful development of the societies in which they live. That educating girls is one of the most effective ways of tackling poverty is now an established fact. Conversely, child labour in domestic work not only prevents children from acquiring the skills and education they need for a better future, it also perpetuates poverty and affects national economies through losses in competitiveness, productivity and potential income.

### Education and ILO Convention No.189

Children trapped in child labour in domestic work from a very young age are likely to have had no or insufficient access to education. At the same time, child domestic workers above the legal minimum age have a reduced chance of continuing with education. Convention No. 189 calls on member States to take measures to ensure that work performed by domestic workers under the age of 18 and above the minimum age of employment does not deprive them of compulsory education, or interfere with opportunities to participate in further education or vocational training.

Source: [www.ilo.org/childlabour](http://www.ilo.org/childlabour)

Schools, colleges and training establishments provide the most sustainable alternative to child domestic work. They are also a point of contact for some child domestic workers combining work with education, and a channel through which child domestic workers employed in the houses of school-attending students can be reached.

Every effort is needed to make schooling attractive, useful, and financially possible for girls from low-income families. Parents need to receive encouragement from multiple sources to keep their girls in school; and schools need to be girl-friendly in the many ways that will enable parents to make that choice. For example, schools need separate toilet and washroom facilities for girls; staff have to be counselled to behave appropriately towards girls in their classrooms, with appropriate sanctions, and to protect them from sexual harassment from boys. Parent-teacher associations and student clubs can promote girl attendance in their communities, and safety during walking to school and back. 'Girl-friendly schooling' needs to be systematically linked to other programmes, including those to prevent trafficking of girls into CDW or sex work, and to future career opportunities for girls.

From: Black, M. *Comic Relief Review: What are the best ways to develop effective strategies and approaches to reach and support Child Domestic Workers?* Comic Relief, 2011.

## LET'S PRIORITISE EDUCATION

I'M SHOCKED! DID YOU KNOW THAT TWO-THIRDS OF PEOPLE WHO CAN'T READ AND WRITE ARE FEMALE?

I KNOW! I'M AMAZED THAT OUR GOVERNMENT DOESN'T SPEND MORE ON EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY SINCE EVERYONE KNOWS THAT EDUCATING GIRLS IS A REALLY IMPORTANT WAY OF TACKLING POVERTY

IT'S THE GIRLS THEMSELVES THAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT. WITHOUT AN EDUCATION THEY'LL BE STUCK IN CHILD LABOUR AND HAVE NO PROSPECTS

YES, BEING IN SCHOOL PROTECTS THEM FROM EXPLOITATION TOO — AS LONG AS IT'S OF GOOD QUALITY, IS TRULY FREE FOR ALL, AND IS EASY TO ACCESS

I AGREE — AND SCHOOL FACILITIES NEED TO BE GIRL-FRIENDLY TOO



In addition to seeing education as a tool for advancement, a 2008 study in India indicates that education is a key factor in protecting child domestic workers, 'because it denotes the support of their parents, community and teachers and allows them to participate, grow and have aspirations'.<sup>66</sup> A recent study has also found that child domestic workers who are unable to attend school are more likely to suffer from poor psychosocial health, particularly low self-esteem, than those who do.<sup>67</sup>

Boys, and girls arrive in urban centres with a strong interest in studying but without any money to cover their fees, transport, material, uniforms, food, clothing or accommodation. These are very substantial expenses and the only way of covering them – at least in part – is by being a domestic worker. As it is against the law, they usually say they don't work there, they only help out.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Domestic Labour in Panama*, IDEMI and Global March, 2013.

As a result, more accessible and better quality schools are important in ensuring that education is a realistic and attractive option for child domestic workers and their families. In addition to building more schools, schools must be made truly free to students and their families. Attention is also needed in many settings on improving teacher training, curriculum reform, the recruitment – as relevant – of more women teachers, upgrading school facilities for girls in particular, and the tackling of discriminatory attitudes which put girls off coming to school in the first place.

#### **What you can do to push for quality basic education**

- All of us should be promoting and advocating for free quality education for all, which is publicly funded and publicly regulated. It should be provided on the basis of equality of access and opportunity for all, should be inclusive and instil concepts of equality, tolerance and respect for diversity;
- Children: demand access to quality education in the places you live – it is your right and will help to avoid the need to migrate in search of better educational opportunities;
- To support child domestic workers in education, we must pay particular attention to issues relating to gender, and, in particular, gender-stereotyping and gender-based impediments to participation in education;
- Teachers groups can organise local and national campaigns and events involving pupils, parents and teachers to demand the right to education for all.

## 2.6 Promoting decent work for all

Child labour in domestic work is not simply an abuse of children's rights but constitutes a serious challenge to ensuring decent work for adults. Where legislation or enforcement falls short of protecting children, or prevents domestic workers from organising, the potential for exploitation is significant.

Children removed from exploitative situations need education and vocational training opportunities to help them in securing decent work in the future. At the same time, labour markets need to function better for young workers of legal working age looking for domestic work. This is important so that parents and carers can see the benefit of an education for their children's future work prospects, and thereby avoid sending them to work prematurely. Finding decent work opportunities for adults also lessens the pressure on families to have children working.

In **Cambodia**, trade unions have joined together to form an Inter-Union Committee for Child Labour. A confederation-wide policy on child labour in domestic work was developed to raise awareness of the issue among trade union members and to indicate its commitment to tackling abuses. Included in the 10-point policy are commitments to: not employ child domestic workers younger than 15 years, and to create healthy and safe working conditions for older children; assist child domestic workers under-15 years to go to school, and over-15's into vocational training; report abuses against child domestic workers to the relevant authorities and to local service providers, and; help monitor the policy's effective implementation.

From: *Making it work: how to protect young domestic workers from exploitation and abuse*, Children Unite and Anti-Slavery International, 2010.

ILO Convention No. 189 has galvanised the domestic workers movement, both in encouraging trade unions to take up the issue and by fostering links between domestic workers' organisations and other organisations and structures in the trade union movement.<sup>68</sup> But the Convention also presents trade unions in particular with several key challenges, not least of how to reach and support the organisation of domestic workers who are out of sight in private homes. Another principal challenge is to deal with the significant numbers of young workers in domestic work who are above the legal minimum working age but below the age of 18. Not only do these young workers, when they can legally work, have a right to organise and be represented by their own organisations, but their age and high dependency on their employers increase their vulnerability and the need to ensure they are protected at work.

Young domestic workers of legal working age should be able to enjoy the same rights to decent work as their adult counterparts. They have a right to decent youth employment. Nonetheless, their status as under 18s and their vulnerable situation require close attention, especially regarding: the continuation of their education and training; and the identification, prohibition and elimination of types of domestic work that by their nature or the circumstances in which they are carried out may be hazardous to them. These require, among other things, the adoption of strict limits to their working hours, prohibition of night work, and the need to establish mechanisms to monitor their working and living conditions.

There are now a number of pioneering efforts on which to draw and there are many lessons to be learned from the recent developments in self-organisation of domestic workers.<sup>69</sup> One such lesson is the importance of providing space for members to participate meaningfully in the design and implementation of activities for their fellow domestic workers. Advice from experienced domestic workers can prove very useful to younger workers – for instance in passing on their “tricks of the trade” for raising difficult subjects with an employer. In South Africa, for example, the leaders of the South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers' Union (SADSAWU) take time out with the younger workers to explain different techniques for talking to an employer.<sup>70</sup>

Employers of domestic workers and their organisations also have a critical role to play in identifying child labour situations in domestic work and in protecting young workers of legal working age – for instance by developing and implementing codes of conduct in their businesses and for their staff, which promote decent work for domestic workers and the observance of minimum age laws.



## ORGANISING CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS



I HEARD YOU'VE HELPED SOME YOUNG WORKERS SET UP A GROUP

YES, IT'S GOING WELL. THEY ARE REALLY GETTING A LOT OUT OF MEETING UP, SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES AND WATCHING OUT FOR EACH OTHER.



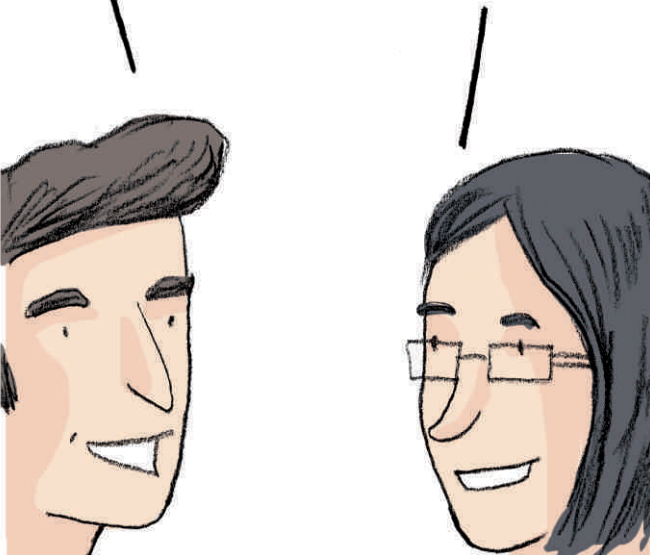
BUT SHOULDN'T YOU BE FOCUSING ON ORGANISING ADULT WORKERS? THESE CHILDREN SHOULDN'T BE WORKING ANYWAY, THEY SHOULD BE IN SCHOOL.

BUT WON'T GETTING A BETTER DEAL FOR ADULTS HELP THE CHILDREN IN THE LONG RUN?

BUT THEY ARE LEGALLY ENTITLED TO WORK, AND THEY'VE GOT JUST AS MUCH RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED AS OTHER WORKERS. I WANT OUR UNION TO SUPPORT THEM — HELP THEM NEGOTIATE BETTER CONDITIONS.

YES IT WILL, AND WE NEED TO HELP ADULT DOMESTIC WORKERS TO ORGANISE TOO. BUT AS YOUNG WORKERS THEY NEED OUR EXTRA SUPPORT.

GOOD POINT, I HADN'T THOUGHT OF IT LIKE THAT.



### The International Domestic Workers' Network

Despite growing recognition of the need to assist domestic workers to organise, many – including young domestic workers of legal working age – face legal, administrative and practical barriers to claiming their rights to organise into fully-fledged trade unions. As a result, many domestic worker organisations exist without official recognition. However, many are independent, membership-based organisations that have democratic decision-making processes and promote an agenda for achieving legal and social change for domestic workers.

Since 2009, the International Domestic Workers' Network (IDWN) has linked these groups and provided them with an international presence, playing a crucial role in discussions at the ILO around the development of Convention 189. At present, the IDWN spans more than 50 countries and has coordinators on every continent; and in October 2013, the IDWN became IDWF, International Domestic Workers Federation.

Adapted from: *Domestic workers across the world*, ILO, 2013.

Written contracts are one important way of regulating the employment of domestic workers and formalising their protection. Efforts to develop model employment contracts for domestic workers, including young domestic workers, should be encouraged and pursued. Model contracts should include specific clauses aimed at protecting young workers. Such clauses should pay special consideration to their specific protection requirements, including social protection, as well as to their right to compulsory education and to participate in further education or vocational training.

Many initiatives in **Latin America** have focused on the need for written contracts for domestic workers, for granting full employment rights, and fulfilling obligations according to the labour laws. Proper terms of employment include the legal minimum salary, days off on Sundays and Festivals, and stipulations for holidays and visits home.

In **Colombia**, a protection centre for women and families has developed a guide for domestic workers on all aspects of domestic employment, including pensions, social security, and health care entitlements.

In **Honduras**, as soon as a domestic worker becomes known to a local children's centre, a note is sent to her employer explaining the project and inviting her to participate. Although few employers accept the invitation, those that do take part in training sessions dealing with the rights of domestic workers, along with their duties and obligations as employers.

From: *Making it work: how to protect young domestic workers from exploitation and abuse*, Children Unite and Anti-Slavery International, 2010.

### What you can do to promote decent work for all domestic workers

We all have a part to play in organising workers and protecting children;

- Organising and mobilising adult domestic workers should be a trade union priority, as they are key to identifying child domestic workers in exploitative situations. In particular, trade unions should strengthen existing domestic workers' associations or support their self-organisation where they do not exist;
- Groups should focus on what they are best at and freely share their expertise: for example, trade unions are experts in collective bargaining and labour law, and are experienced in advocacy and monitoring; teachers' organisations are well placed to implement education programmes for child domestic workers and their families; civil society groups have expertise in identifying and assisting exploited children and often have excellent access to communities where they are to be found;
- Trade unions and teachers organisations can mobilise their branches and groups to act as watchdogs in sending and destination areas, and transport unions can monitor and protect children in transit;
- Trade unions, NGOs and others should develop contact points for advice and support to domestic workers of all ages.

## 2.7 Engaging with child domestic workers as agents for change

The right of children to participate in decisions affecting their lives is enshrined in the UNCRC and in ILO Convention No. 182. It requires a shift from adult perceptions of children simply as passive victims of child labour, abuse and violence, towards understanding them as citizens and individuals capable of responding to their situations and problems.<sup>71</sup>

Child domestic workers have regularly, and in numerous ways, demonstrated themselves to be central agents of change in their own lives, and in the lives of children in similar situations. When young domestic workers are informed about their rights, as children, as females, and as workers, positive personal growth and empowerment can take place.

The right of child domestic workers to associate freely is also a key aspect of their participation, as well as representing a very tangible way of reducing their isolation and supporting their protection from workplace abuses. In a number of countries - in addition to domestic workers' unions - self-help groups and associations of young workers are actively engaged in advocacy and mutual support to protect their interests.

Invariably, soliciting the views of child domestic workers – including the very youngest – provides an essential perspective on their situation and needs, and produces information with which to target assistance to combat child labour and to promote decent youth employment more effectively. Providing a 'safe space' for these children to articulate their experiences is key, as is assisting them to come together and build their individual and collective capacity for on-going self help and mutual support.

**Stand With Us!**

In 1998, child domestic workers from many countries participated in the physical Global March speaking about their personal experiences and articulating a clear need for recognition of child labour in domestic work as one of the worst forms of child labour in the new ILO convention (now C.182). Similarly, during 2010 and 2011, 419 current and former child domestic workers – facilitated by Anti-Slavery International's project partners – were consulted about the ILO's proposed standards on domestic work (now C.189) and how they could best be protected from exploitation and abuse. Across the project countries these young workers expressed clear views about key provisions of the draft standards, in particular around the right to education, the need for special protection for child domestic workers and the monitoring of CDWs' living and working conditions. These child domestic workers not only helped to secure strong protective provisions for children in the standards, but by participating in the decision-making process, also supported their personal development. Since returning home, a number of those who participated have taken on local leadership roles in advocating for the rights of CDWs.

From: Global March, 1998 and *Small grants, big change*, Anti-Slavery International, 2013.

**What you can do to promote the right of CDWs to be heard**

- Trade unions can protect young domestic workers and trade union members can be involved in monitoring efforts. A number of trade unions have adopted policies to prevent under-age recruitment and end the exploitation of young domestic workers.
- A starting point for the development of young domestic workers' associations is the provision of space for them to relax and develop friendships. Ensuring a balance between guidance, encouragement, and standing back allows young domestic workers to go at their own pace and to gradually extend the activities of their association beyond social activities and entertainment.
- Young domestic workers can take part in general associations of child workers or of children's groups.

### Selected global resources on understanding child domestic work and policy responses

There are a number of research and policy resources on child domestic work and related issues available from several organisations. These include (most recently):-

- **Claiming Rights:** *Domestic Workers' Movements and Global Advances for Labor Reform*. A joint report by The International Domestic Workers' Network, The International Trade Union Confederation and Human Rights Watch, October 2013. Available from [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org);
- **Child domestic work:** *Global estimates 2012*, (ILO, October 2013). Available from [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org);
- *Ending child labour in domestic work and protecting young workers from abusive working conditions* (ILO, 2013). Available from [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org);
- **Small grants, big change:** *Influencing policy and practice for child domestic workers* (Anti-Slavery International, 2013). Available from [www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org);
- **Home Truths:** *Wellbeing and vulnerabilities of child domestic workers* (Anti-Slavery International, 2013). Available from [www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org);
- **Domestic workers across the world:** *Global and regional statistics and the extent of legal protection* (ILO, 2013). Available from [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org);
- **Achieving decent work for domestic workers:** *An organizer's manual to promote ILO Convention No. 189 and build domestic workers' power* (ILO, 2012). Available from [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org);
- **Effective protection for domestic workers:** *A guide to designing labour laws* (ILO, 2012). Available from [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org);
- **They Respect Their Animals More:** *Voices of Child Domestic Workers* (Anti-Slavery International, 2008) Available from [www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org);
- **ILO-IPEC Interregional Workshop on Child Domestic Labour and Trade Unions: Report** (ILO, 2006). Available from [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org).



**PART 2**

# Taking Action

In the following sections, we will explore the two key ingredients in improving the lives of children in domestic work: advocacy and direct assistance. Each of these ingredients by themselves has the capacity to make a difference to some children's lives but, in combination, can effect permanent positive change for many more. This is because effective advocacy with and on behalf of child domestic workers relies on the foundations laid by the front-line services which reach and protect them, which build their knowledge and confidence, and which develop the trust of parents, employers and duty bearers who surround them. At the same time, while providing valuable benefit to individuals, direct assistance provision without advocacy can never deliver comprehensive sustainable change for all children.<sup>72</sup>

The sections which follow take a 'hands on' approach to advocacy and direct assistance. Based on the experience of dozens of practitioners over many years, this part of the manual will guide you through key elements of effective advocacy and assistance and provide you with practical 'how to' know-how and present a range of good practice principles and tips to strengthen your action to protect these vulnerable children. The *Further Resources* boxes at the end of each section contain information about where to source the key materials upon which the following sections build.



# Section 3

## Advocating for change for child domestic workers

Advocacy is essential if we are to turn individual acts of kindness and concern into lasting change for all child domestic workers, and this section should provide you with the basic material you will need to undertake and improve your advocacy. It draws on a number of useful publications, most notably *Child Domestic Workers - Finding a voice: a handbook on advocacy*, which is freely available to download in English, French and Spanish language versions; and *Raising One Voice: A Training Manual for Advocates on the Rights of Child Domestic Workers*, published by Child Workers in Asia's Task Force on Child Domestic Workers (see Further Resources at the end of this section).

### 3.1 The purpose of advocacy

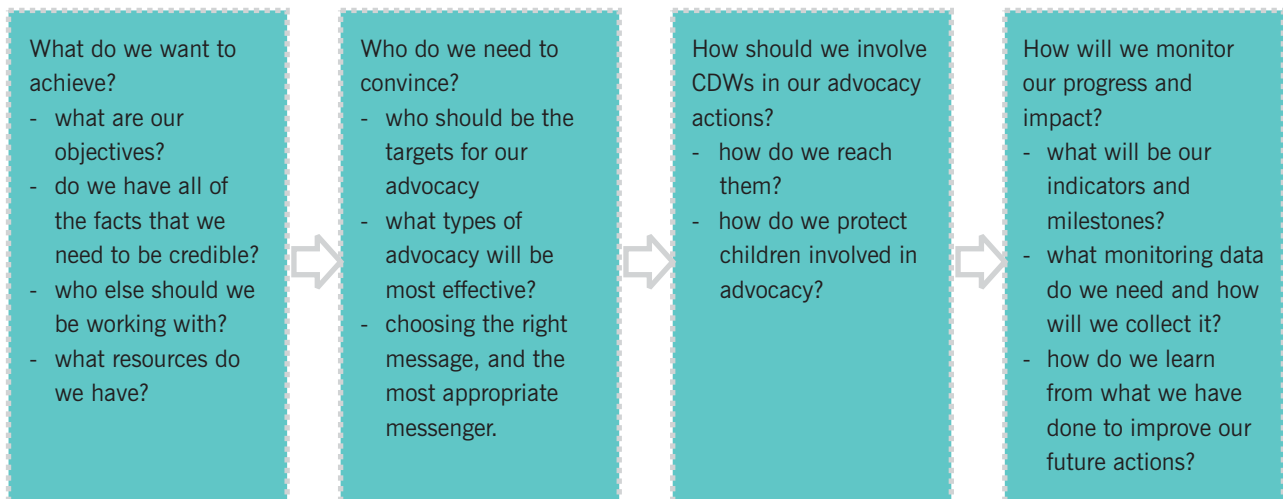
In general, advocacy means any activity intended to raise consciousness among decision-makers and the general public about an issue or a disadvantaged group, with a view to bringing about changes in policy and improvements in their situation.

Advocacy is not just a publicity campaign. It might take place in public or it might be in private – wherever it seems likely to make a difference. It might include education, or diplomacy, publication of a report, or a celebrity event.

Advocates for social justice have a strong desire and passion to change society for the better. They go beyond wishing that things would change to actually working to create change by putting their words into action. Advocates can be anyone – they might be part of an NGO or a group of workers, or it might be an individual politician, teacher, or child.

Most groups undertake advocacy on behalf of child domestic workers because they recognise that their own resources are far too small to help more than a few. Often these groups realise that, although their help is valuable to the children they reach, their efforts are still just a drop in the ocean. This is what leads them towards undertaking advocacy, with the aim of ultimately helping far greater numbers of children than they could assist on their own.

Below are some of the key questions we must ask ourselves in developing effective and ethical advocacy on child domestic work issues. These questions will be looked at in greater detail in subsequent sections:-



# WE WANT TO MAKE PEOPLE LISTEN!

WE WANT TO MAKE A LOUD NOISE ABOUT CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS.



BUT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT JUST A FEW, OR IS THIS A BIG PROBLEM?



AND ARE THE CHILDREN YOU KNOW PREPARED TO TESTIFY?



### 3.1.1 Undertaking effective and ethical advocacy

Doing advocacy is not a short cut for assisting individual child domestic workers. In actuality, advocacy goes hand-in-hand with providing directly for their needs (service provision). The two types of support are indivisible and interdependent, and neither will create sustainable change without the other.

In practical terms, this means that advocacy should not be undertaken in isolation from a wider programmatic context – which also involves research and practical assistance to children. Providing direct support to child domestic workers lays the foundations for effective advocacy by showing the tangible benefits your organisation is bringing to disadvantaged children and their families. Effective advocacy is also built on a sound understanding of child domestic worker's needs and, to be credible, relies on their involvement. The involvement of child domestic workers is prefaced on being able to reach them and help them to develop the confidence, personal security and skills required to reach out to others.

How you and your organisation is viewed will also have an impact on your advocacy. Some organisations can speak with authority on the issue because they have a long history of working with particular groups. Others are well-known and respected national and international organisations. Again, smaller and more local groups are credible only if they have built up knowledge and expertise about the children they are supporting, which means that good quality research – understanding the situation and needs of child domestic workers – is critical.

#### What makes effective advocacy?

When advocacy is effective, it is usually because:-

- It is based on facts, not assumptions;
- It is authoritative, not sensational;
- It is carefully and strategically planned;
- It involves, and honestly represents, child domestic workers, who speak for themselves whenever possible.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: Finding a voice (A handbook on advocacy)*, 2002.

#### For discussion:

- Why do we want to take action?
- What do we want to achieve through our advocacy?
- Who do we need to convince, and who can we count on for support?
- What types of advocacy will be the most convincing?
- How will we involve children in our advocacy, and how can we best protect them?

## 3.2 What do we want to achieve?

An advocacy strategy begins with establishing goals and objectives based on what you know about the situation of child domestic workers and the problems and issues that have been identified. Your goal (the ideal that you are aiming for) and objectives (specific and measurable achievements that will help you towards your goal) will also be determined to some extent by the kind of group you are and what methods and resources you have at your disposal.

### Advocacy goals

Advocacy goals on child domestic work often include one or more of the following:

- Removing children in child labour in domestic work situations from the workplace
- Improving the terms and conditions of work for children of legal working age
- Preventing the entry of children into exploitative situations
- Reintegrating former child domestic workers into a family-based environment

They may also include:

- Access to education for all child domestic workers
- Organising child domestic workers to support themselves and each other
- Enhancing the well-being and capabilities of CDWs
- Enactment of a law or regulations that protect child domestic workers

You should consider which of these is your primary concern, and which one you are likely to be able to advocate on most effectively. In selecting your goal (or goals), it makes sense to examine your own expertise, information base, and existing interventions. Where child domestic workers themselves have stated their own priorities, these should help guide your decision.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: Finding a voice (A handbook on advocacy)*, 2002.

#### 3.2.1 Setting and selecting objectives

A sound objective is one which is SMART, i.e. **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, **T**imebound. Setting SMART objectives is important to ensure that you are making progress towards achieving your goal(s). They are also important for thinking about the activities you will undertake to achieve them, and the indicators that you will set for measuring how you are doing (see section 3.5). You may find the following checklist helpful in developing and choosing sound objectives<sup>73</sup>:-

1. Does data exist to show that the objective will improve the situation?
2. Is the objective achievable, even with opposition?
3. Will the objective gain mass support? Do people care about the objective deeply enough to take action?
4. Will you be able to raise money or other resources to support your work on the objective?
5. Can you clearly identify the target decision makers?
6. Is the objective easy to understand?
7. Does the objective have a clear timeframe that is realistic?
8. Do you have the necessary alliances with key individuals or organisations to reach your objective? How will the objective help build alliances with other civil society groups, trade unions, leaders, or stakeholders?
9. Will working on the objective provide people with opportunities to learn about and become involved with the decision-making processes?

In developing and prioritising your objectives to meet your goal(s), there are also a whole host of other situation-related factors to consider. Below are some of the most obvious:-

**Age:** If the majority of child domestic workers are 14/15 years old and above, this would suggest that more advocacy effort should be devoted to improving terms and conditions of service than to removing them from employment, and vice versa.

**Recruitment:** Where recruiters, agents or traffickers are active, advocacy may need to focus strongly on prevention, and enforcement.

**The degree of exploitation:** Where children are effectively lost to their parental home and are virtually or actually in slavery, this implies that rescue and reintegration should take a high priority.

**The existence of alternative options:** Advocacy to remove child domestic workers, facing a child labour situation, entirely from the workplace should not be undertaken until there are alternatives awaiting them.

**Child work trends:** Where there are increasing numbers of child domestic workers, either because of commercialisation of the practice, or because of orphanhood from HIV/AIDS, this may affect advocacy priorities.

**Existing social attitudes:** Where the practice of employing child domestic workers is seen as a form of surrogate parenting as opposed to employment, this may also affect advocacy priorities.

#### Advocacy activities and the timeframe

Once you are clear about your goal and objectives, you can think about those activities which will help you towards meeting them. Generally speaking, the more activities that you include in your action plan and the more specific you get in identifying your actions, the easier it will be to come up with the timeline.

## 3.3 Matching the right advocacy techniques to the right target audience

### 3.3.1 Types of advocacy

There are many types of advocacy at your disposal, which are largely dependent on what needs to be said and who needs to hear it and be convinced. Quiet advocacy techniques are those to be used in circumstances where discussion and personal persuasion is likely to work best, and where criticism and confrontation is best avoided. Loud advocacy implies publicity – reaching a wider audience but less personally or directly. It can be more cost-effective in reaching more people, but can also be counter-productive if it ends up alienating those whose views you wish to change. Most advocacy strategies combine elements of both quiet and loud advocacy, which can be mutually reinforcing<sup>74</sup>:-

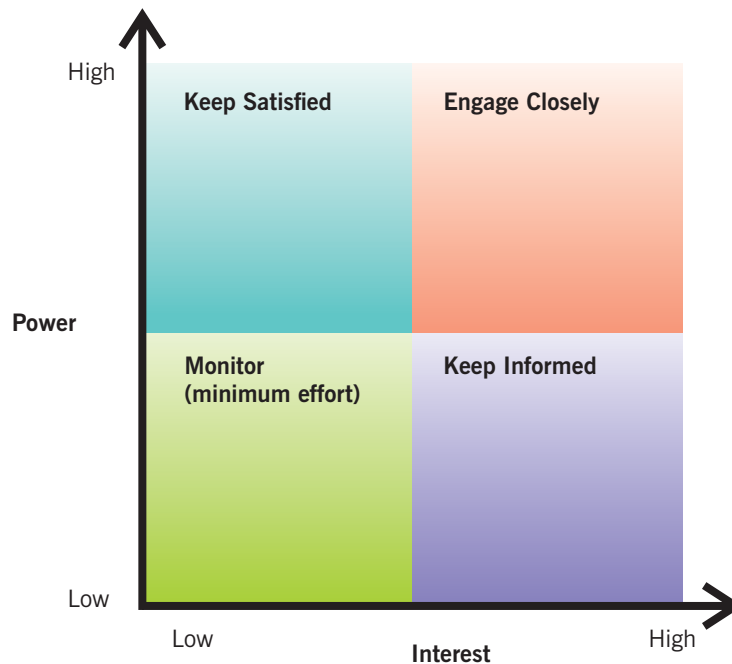
1. **Quiet advocacy** can involve individual and group dialogue with parents, employers and the children themselves, and discussion with other key actors in communities from where child domestic workers originate, and from where they end up. Dramas and role-plays are also examples of the kinds of quiet advocacy which are used to raise awareness amongst community members. In addition, quiet advocacy can also take the form of: (i) self-advocacy or peer advocacy by child domestic workers speaking out for themselves and to each other; (ii) alliances and coalitions, where individuals and groups join forces to advocate.
2. **Loud advocacy** involves media and press campaigning, lobbying and political pressure and grassroots organising. This could include marches and rallies, press events, radio phone-ins, television debates and newspaper articles and advertisements – with the purpose of repeating a message, generating debate and shaming people into action. While lobbying of politicians and officials can be behind the scenes, it can also generate a great deal of publicity, as well as hostility, from those being pressured.

### 3.3.2 Who do we need to convince?

In order to target your advocacy effectively, you will need to think about the **key players** (those who have the power to make decisions which affect the situation of child domestic workers) and **stakeholders** (the wider group of people who have a stake or an interest in the outcome of your advocacy) in your location. These could be institutions, organisations or individuals who are supportive, who are opposed to what you are doing, or who remain to be convinced.

One way of considering who to target is by undertaking a **stakeholder analysis** of some kind. There are many ways of doing this, but it usually involves:-

1. Brainstorming and listing all the key players and stakeholders you can think of;
2. Asking yourselves the following questions of each stakeholder:
  - (a) To what extent does the stakeholder agree or disagree with your advocacy goal and objectives?
  - (b) How importantly does the stakeholder view the issue (Interest)?
  - (c) How influential is the stakeholder over the decision (Power)?
3. Plot your answers on a matrix (like the one below), so that you can determine those stakeholders requiring the closest attention.



### 3.3.3 The message and the messenger<sup>75</sup>

Once you have determined your key advocacy targets you will need to consider what messages you could convey that they will be most convinced by. Choosing the right message for your target audience is really important to changing their attitudes. At the same time, selecting the right messenger is also crucial, as well as the method you use for passing on the information on.

Think about how your messenger (this could be your own organisation, or another person or group that you are using to get the message across) is seen by others - particularly by your target audience - since this will affect the credibility of the message you are trying to deliver. Your message might not be trusted or taken seriously if your messenger is not respected. Put yourself in the mind of your target audience and try to imagine how they would react to your planned message and messenger.

## CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS AS ADVOCATES

NICE GIMMICK! THAT CHILD DOMESTIC WORKER THAT SPOKE JUST NOW REALLY GOT PEOPLE'S ATTENTION.

IT'S NOT A GIMMICK. THIS GIRL HAS LIVED THIS EXPERIENCE. IT'S IMPORTANT THAT SHE GETS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE WHAT SHE KNOWS AND TO HAVE HER SAY.



BUT SURELY YOU TOLD HER WHAT TO SAY?

NO, I HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH HER FOR SOME TIME NOW, AND SHE HAS BEEN TALKING TO OTHER CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE GROUP TO REPRESENT THEIR VIEWS.



BUT SHE MUST HAVE BEEN COACHED, SHE SPOKE SO WELL!

IT'S BECAUSE SHE SPOKE FROM THE HEAR ANYWAY IT'S HER RIGHT TO SPEAK OUT.



Whatever messages you are trying to put across to your audience, they should be **simple**, they should be **easily understood**, they should be **few**, they should be **relevant**, and they should be **persuasive**. This applies whatever messenger or method is selected.

### 3.4 Involving child domestic workers and other children in advocacy

Child domestic workers have a stake in all efforts made on their behalf, and therefore need to be involved in decision-making processes. This is not only because they are key to changing their own lives and those of their peers for the better, but also because it is their right to do so (UNCRC, Article 12). This means that, in practice, the views of child domestic workers should be canvassed and their ideas and opinions taken into account in any advocacy, research or intervention made on their behalf.

Child domestic workers and other children are not only targets of advocacy, but may also be the advocates themselves. Their protection and best interests are of paramount concern and the golden ethical rule to remember when involving children in advocacy is to 'do no harm'.

#### Involving child domestic workers in advocacy

The following are the main gains of involving CDWs in advocacy:

- Authenticity of messages and statements;
- Persuasiveness with audiences of parents and employers;
- Personal development and confidence-building of CDWs;
- Feedback on whether action is appropriate and effective.

...and some of the difficulties:

- CDWs are inaccessible unless already being provided with services;
- Children with low self-esteem have difficulty articulating their views; this may take time;
- Age and maturity have an important influence on their contribution;
- It is important to involve children meaningfully, not symbolically.

The following ethical considerations - do's and don'ts – have been gathered from a variety of sources and are based on the experiences of many organisations who regularly involve children in advocacy. It is important to remember that breaches of these guidelines may not only harm individual children, but could also damage your reputation and credibility, and therefore the impact of your advocacy.

#### 3.4.1 Involving children in advocacy: some *do's* and *don'ts*<sup>76</sup>

- **Respecting children's dignity:**
  - Do not use negative, degrading or stigmatising images of children, either in pictures or in words. For example, communications about children should use pictures that are decent and respectful; children should be adequately clothed and poses that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive should be avoided. Language that implies a relationship of power should also be avoided;
- **Do not make promises to children that you cannot keep;**
- **Do not raise expectations you cannot fulfill;**



- **Permission:**
  - Ask children's permission to use their stories, pictures or participation (not just the permission of adults, even if they are parents);
  - Explain and seek permission, as far as is possible, for the way in which these materials will be used (eg for fundraising, campaigning, abroad or in-country, on websites);
  - Try to ensure that children fully understand the nature and consequences of giving permission, and that the consent they give is informed. This means assessing if the child is in a position to understand, and has understood, the nature and consequences of what is being asked;
  - Respect children's decision if they refuse to be interviewed or photographed;
  - Do not identify individual children or groups of children unless they and/or their carers have given their permission and you can be sure that they will be protected from further exploitation;
- **Accuracy:**
  - Use the best possible information; i.e., that is accurate, not distorting, respectful and truthful;
  - Do not exaggerate, or use unnecessarily emotional language.

#### **And remember the dangers...**

In involving children in advocacy we must avoid the real possibility that children are harmed through their participation. Here are some examples of ways that participation can negatively affect children:

- **Retribution:** adults may exact retribution for the child speaking out. For example, employers may dismiss or physically abuse a child who is identified in an article or photograph;
- **Stigma and shame:** individual children may feel ashamed about having their stories or photographs used to illustrate articles about them as victims. Children can be stigmatised by stories about them that suggest they are all sexually abused, or that they come from poor families;
- **Letting children down:** children are given unrealistic expectations of how their situation might improve as a result of their advocacy, and feel let down as a result;
- **Stereotyping:** stereotypes that should be challenged may inadvertently be reinforced; avoid this.

### **3.5 Measuring advocacy progress and impact**

Changing attitudes and behaviour is at the heart of what advocacy is about – and this is generally a slow process. It is easy to become disillusioned with the pace of change, which is why it is important that you have ways of measuring your progress along the way. This is what indicators are for – they are a means of measuring how you are doing and what effect it is having.

## Indicators

Try to distinguish between **impact indicators** - which measure the impact of your advocacy on the issue it addresses, and **process indicators**, which tell you how your advocacy plan is progressing (i.e which measure what you have been doing). As measuring the direct impact of your advocacy on the situation is often difficult, many of your indicators are likely to be process indicators.

Some indicators may be quite mundane, or be things you would have counted anyway. The numbers of children registering for support, for example, the number of employers enrolled in an association, the number of meetings you have held with local leaders, the number of journalists you have spoken to about the issue, the number of copies of a publication which have been requested from year to year. The collection of this data allows trends to be shown. Although a trend such as the increased numbers of children registering for support doesn't necessarily show a change in employer attitudes, it can be 'indicative' of such a change.

If you collect consistent baseline data about employer attitudes - and other things, such as terms and conditions of work - from children in the programme by the use of questionnaires, the information will be indicative of changes over time.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: Finding a voice (A handbook on advocacy)*, 2002.

### 3.5.1 Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Monitoring, evaluation and learning is all about being clear regarding the difference you expect to make, how you will measure this, and learn from what you do. It helps you to increase the efficiency of your advocacy work, and ensure that it is as effective as it can be.

'Monitoring' describes the process of regularly reviewing your activities and checking on your progress. There are many ways of doing this, depending on what activities you are undertaking, who you are targeting, who you are working with and the indicators you have chosen. Monitoring data can be collected via surveys, through interviews and discussions, or by counting the numbers of people involved in your activities, for example. There are several things to think about when considering how to monitor your advocacy work, for example:

- How is your monitoring data being collected and stored?
- Is evidence being collected that you are achieving what you set out to do?
- Are the costs of activities being monitored? Are costs being analysed alongside results?
- Are your advocacy objectives being adapted based on learning?
- Are any of your stakeholders involved in identifying achievements and benefits? How are their perspectives included?

Assessing (evaluating) the impact of your advocacy usually relies on comparing a situation 'before' and 'after'. This requires you to have collected baseline data, which is another reason why – apart from ensuring that you accurately target your advocacy – collecting good quality information (for example through a knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) study) – is so important before you start.

Learning lessons from your work is important, both to inform your future activities and to help others to avoid the same pitfalls. From the start you will need to have thought about **what** you want to learn about and **how** you will collect, store, analyse, apply and communicate what you have learned. Then, as you go along, you will need to gather information on your activities to help you to understand (for example):

**What** difference you are making:

- What has changed? For whom? For how many?

**How** you are making a difference:

- What methods are working? What relationships have we developed and how are they helping or hindering us? What is our role in making change happen?

### Further resources relating to advocacy with and on behalf of child domestic workers

***Child Domestic Workers: Finding a voice (A handbook on advocacy)***, Anti-Slavery International, 2002 (Available to download in English, French and Spanish from [www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org))

***Raising One Voice: A training manual for advocates on the rights of child domestic workers***, Child Workers in Asia (Task Force on Child Domestic Workers), 2005. Available from: [http://www.pstcrrc.org/docs/Raising\\_One\\_Voice\\_A\\_Training\\_Manual\\_For\\_Advocates\\_of\\_CDWs.pdf](http://www.pstcrrc.org/docs/Raising_One_Voice_A_Training_Manual_For_Advocates_of_CDWs.pdf)

***Listen to us! Participation of child domestic workers in advocacy*** Anti-Slavery International, 2013 (Available from [www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org));

***From child labour to children in charge. A handbook on child-led organisation and advocacy on child labour***, Save the Children, 2009. Available from: <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/start/library>

***The communication strategy for child domestic labour, ILO, 2006*** (Available from [www.ilo.org.childlabour](http://www.ilo.org.childlabour))

***Child Labour, Getting the Message Across***, Asian Regional Working Group on Child Labour, 2001  
<http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/start/library>



## Section 4

# Direct assistance to children in domestic work

Community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – often called civil society groups – are frequently at the front-line of actions to reach child domestic workers, provide them with the immediate care they need and the longer term support to move on to a brighter future. They are also central to influencing parents and employers of child domestic workers, and play a leading role in efforts to change social acceptance of the practice.

The activities of civil society groups in many countries to directly protect child domestic workers from exploitation and abuse are striking in their range and scope. They include a variety of locally adapted methods to reach children in domestic work; crisis intervention measures involving rescue, rehabilitation, reintegration; health, trauma and legal interventions; a range of formal and non-formal education and training options; opportunities for recreation and peer interaction; activities to prevent recruitment into domestic service; as well as an array ways of helping children to help themselves and support each other.

This section will examine the range of front-line assistance measures currently provided by civil society groups and will review what lessons can be drawn from this to help future interventions be more efficient and effective. As has previously been noted, direct assistance to individual child domestic workers goes hand-in-hand with advocacy to improve the situation for all. Providing direct assistance in particular lends credibility to groups in their advocacy, as well affording a ready source of knowledge about the situation on the ground. Cooperation between civil society groups and statutory bodies is also a prerequisite for achieving lasting results. For example, collaboration between NGOs, local authorities and community leaders facilitates the identification of child domestic workers, encourages consultative advocacy and activity planning and enables a wider range of people to become involved.

### 4.1 Reaching child domestic workers

The vital first step in assisting child domestic workers is to reach them, although their often hidden situation means that this is no simple task. In addition to reaching them via their parents and employers, groups have managed to make contact with child domestic workers by both direct and indirect routes, including in parks, markets, places of worship, by going door-to-door, via schools, community leaders and through centres, shelters and hotlines. Bus stations or ports where children may arrive in the company of recruiters, are also potential contact locations.

As seeking education opportunities is a key motivation for many children entering domestic work, schools are a logical entry-point for contact. Teachers play a key role in identifying child domestic workers and awareness-raising has been arranged in schools attended by the children of employers – who have proven capable of reaching out to child domestic workers as well as transforming the behaviour of their parents in their own homes.

# REACHING CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS

YOU MUST HAVE QUITE A JOB ON YOUR HANDS. I'VE HEARD THAT REACHING CHILD DOMESTIC WORKERS IS REALLY DIFFICULT.

WELL IT'S TRUE THAT THEY ARE NOT AS OBVIOUS AS SOME OTHER CHILD WORKERS.



IT MUST BE AN IMPOSSIBLE JOB! THEY ARE HIDDEN IN HOUSES, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

WELL, IT'S NOT AS HARD AS YOU THINK — YOU JUST HAVE TO FIND OUT THEIR TIMETABLE.



HOW DO YOU MEAN?

MANY ACTUALLY DO GO OUT — TO MARKETS OR BAKERIES, TO SCHOOL, TO PARKS IN THEIR SPARE TIME, OR TO PRAY. YOU JUST NEED TO KNOW WHERE AND WHEN TO LOOK AND WHO TO ASK.

SO, WHO DO YOU ASK?



ADULT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ARE USUALLY A GOOD START, THEN THERE ARE THE STALLHOLDERS, SCHOOL TEACHERS, PRIESTS...

IT'S EASIER THAN I THOUGHT.

WELL, I WOULDN'T SAY IT WAS EASY...



SUMAPI, a national association of domestic workers in the **Philippines**, combs the parks regularly for potential new members. Since domestic workers tend to come from particular parts of the country, members can easily spot them. They introduce themselves in their own language and start up a conversation, then follow up in the coming days. Newly contacted recruits are also given a group familiarization in the park using special visual aids.

In **Togo**, WAO Afrique has developed a methodology for door-to-door contact to identify households with child and adolescent domestic workers. The first visit by social workers simply involves giving out information on child trafficking, child labour and child rights. Discussion is informal, and includes questions concerning the composition of the household. If it is clear that children are employed, they are invited to come to the centre. If the child is under age, a follow-up visit with official inspectors is conducted to persuade the employer to release the child.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: A handbook on good practice in programme interventions*, Anti-Slavery International, 2005.

Word-of-mouth between domestic workers, who may meet in apartment block stairways and hallways, hanging laundry on common roof-tops, or running errands to fetch milk or bread, also plays an important role in identifying child domestic workers and in spreading the word about finding help.

#### **Reaching child domestic workers through local community structures**

A number of organisations have directly enlisted local officials and community leaders to enable them to reach child domestic workers. For example, WAYS in Kampala, Uganda maintains contacts with community groups, including parish development committees and women's groups, as a way of identifying child domestic workers at risk of abuse.

Kivulini, an organisation based in Mwanza, Tanzania, works closely with leaders at the lowest structure of the local government. The advantage of working through street-level functionaries is that these have right of access to people's homes – no special permit is necessary. Since they know all the local households, they know where young domestics are employed, and whether there is conflict in the household. They are trusted by both employers and domestics.

From: *Ending child labour in domestic work and protecting young workers from abusive working conditions*, ILO, 2013.

#### **Key lessons and discussion points**

The following are some of the key lessons learned from local experience of reaching child domestic workers. They can be used as the starting point for discussion around their needs and how best to assist them:-

- Creating opportunities to reach child domestic workers requires not only determination, but also the use of effective information, education and communications techniques.
- Making contact with child domestic workers outside the household requires considerable sensitivity. A particularly effective method of reaching these children is through contact by another young domestic worker or former child domestic worker.
- Providing child domestic workers with an understanding of their situation and information about their rights, is

essential towards building their confidence and self-respect to take full advantage of opportunities to improve their situation, and that of others.

- Recognising children working in households as workers rather than as 'helpers' or 'relatives' plays an important part in making them more visible and in efforts to improve their situation. For those children who are yet to reach the legal working age, parents and the 'source' communities in which they live must be helped to understand why CDW is detrimental to their children and be supported to take their children back.
- Engaging with the children of employers of child domestic workers can reduce discriminatory behaviour in the home and can be an entry point to enlisting support from employers themselves.

## 4.2 Intervening in times of crisis

All organisations directly assisting child domestic workers have to deal with crisis cases from time to time. Children who have suffered from abuse, violence or gross exploitation need a wide range of service responses, including temporary shelter in a caring setting, professional counselling, legal advice, and longer-term assistance with family and social reintegration. Experience has shown that all such situations are intensive in terms of staff time and resources, but that individual case work remains the only option to assist children effectively.

Since the place of work and the place of residence are one and the same, and the child is often far from home, a child domestic worker who runs away from an abusive employer may have very limited options as to where to go. As a result, child domestic workers in abuse situations may need some form of temporary shelter or a refuge, as well as advice and counselling. These services can be provided by networks of service providers or through establishing alliances with care-providing agencies to ensure young domestic workers receive comprehensive support.

Emergency contact lines – hotlines – are increasingly popular ways of reaching and assisting children in crisis situations. Where young people need emergency assistance telephone hotlines can put them in touch with the right agencies and, if necessary, help organise the rescue of the young person. Such hotlines are resource-intensive, requiring trained staff and close connections with organisations who can be referred to for specialist help.

In **Togo**, "Allo 1011" was launched in 2009 under the auspices of the Ministry for Social Action. "Allo 1011" is a free phone number which operates in the capital Lomé for the protection of children, run by a consortium of a dozen civil society groups who offer support to child domestic workers and other children and specialist – from medical and legal assistance, to family tracing and help with repatriation.

From: *Situational Analysis of Child Labour in Domestic Work in Togo*, WAO Afrique and Global March, 2013.

In cases of serious abuse where the employer is unwilling to let the child leave, it may be necessary to rescue him or her, with the help of relevant law enforcement agencies. The experience of many organisations effecting rescues of child domestic workers is to ensure that the safety and welfare of the child must come first, and must be in line with accepted good practice in child protection.

In **India**, Bachpan Bachao Andolan through its 'victim's assistance' programme has collaborated with the law enforcement agencies to rescue 71 children trafficked to domestic work between January 2011–December 2013, providing them with rehabilitation – medical assistance, shelter, education, and statutory compensation (monetary) under government sponsored schemes. Legal aid is also provided to the children and their families to ensure effective case management and prosecution of errant employers.

From: Bachpan Bachao Andolan, direct communication, 2014.



### Ethical practice in removing child domestic workers from abusive situations

When removing a child from a working environment, no child should be put at greater risk by any action that may be taken. Rescuing a child must be undertaken professionally and ethically, ensuring that:

- All individuals and organisational partners involved in child rescue work, including law enforcement officials, must act within the law and according to the highest child protection standards, as well as relevant local laws;
- As part of planning the removal of children from workplaces, a risk assessment focusing on minimising the risk to children should be undertaken;
- All of those involved in the rescue must be provided with a precise and detailed briefing of their roles and responsibilities;
- Evidence gathering must be undertaken carefully. The success of any later legal action depends on the quality of evidence located and seized;
- Ensure that in case the child is in need of immediate care and protection, concerned law enforcement and social welfare agencies are informed for suitable and necessary action.

When a child is removed from a working environment, appropriate temporary care must be ready. This should include:

- Counselling and health checks;
- Provision of food, clothing, recreation and other necessary care;
- Immediate efforts to trace family members.

### THE GOLDEN RULE: The safety and welfare of the child must always come first

Legal redress of some kind against employers is usually an option (as well as those involved in recruitment, if trafficking is involved), and the form this may take depends on the crime that has been committed, the time it will take, the expense, the willingness of law enforcement authorities to support the action. Legal redress of any kind is a deterrent to check exploitation and abuse, and working in close collaborations with the law enforcement agencies also enhances the capacities of NGOs in case management.

In **Uganda**, a crisis centre has been set up where young people who have run away from home, or who have been withdrawn from domestic work, can stay before the process of rehabilitation, reintegration with their families, or some other solution to their situation has been worked out. Usually they are referred by a local councillor or volunteer, who may provide the bus fare and other help needed to leave their employment. Rehabilitative services at the centre include counselling, medical care, and nutrition; recreation, skills training, peer group work and school placement are also provided.

From: *Making it work: how to protect young domestic workers from exploitation and abuse*, Children Unite and Anti-Slavery International, 2010

In **India**, many NGOs run shelter homes for rehabilitation of children who are victims of child trafficking and child labour, including girls and boys who are rescued and/or withdrawn from domestic work. Bachpan Bachao Andolan runs a short-term rehabilitation home in New Delhi that provides immediate support and access to services for children rescued from child labour and trafficking, and a long-term rehabilitation and training centre in Rajasthan that specialises on needs of victims of child labour, providing quality education, vocational training and skill development. In the several homes run by Prayas across the country, victims rescued and/or withdrawn from domestic work are provided education, health care, counselling and vocational training. In Assam which is a growing hub for trafficking, Global Organization for Life Development runs shelter homes that caters to the needs of girls and women who are victims of trafficking including for domestic work.

From: *Economics Behind Forced Labour Trafficking, Comprehensive Case Studies of Child Domestic Labour and Commercial Sexual Exploitation*, Global March, 2014.

### Key lessons and discussion points

The following are some of the key lessons learned from local experience of crisis intervention with child domestic workers. They can be used as the starting point for discussion around their needs and how best to assist them:

- Those involved with directly assisting child domestic workers should always be prepared to offer appropriate emergency care to children in distress, or referral to a person or body that can;
- Short and medium term care strategies for rescued or runaway child domestic workers need to be thoroughly mapped out in advance. They should include counselling for trauma, as well as assist children to understand their legal options and provide help in planning the future. Strategies should also include mediation with parents, employers and community members;
- Where people are being sensitised to bring cases of under-age employment or abusive treatment to the attention of the authorities, it is important that every effort is made to undertake the task sensitively and retain the co-operation of employers;
- In running a contact line (hotline) for children, remember the need for trained staff, a round-the-clock service, and the necessary contacts for specialist referral. It is unethical to run a hotline which does not provide effective help to distressed children;
- Children who have suffered from abuse, violence or gross exploitation need a range of assistance, including temporary shelter, professional counselling, legal advice and longer-term reintegration support;
- In the case of rescued children who have suffered abuse, it is important that the abuse be taken up with the employer and legal reparations are sought. Careful consultation with the child, her/his family, the police and other advisors should be undertaken before bringing a case to court.

## 4.3 Working in source areas: prevention and reintegration

Intensive work with parents, families and communities of origin is critical in preventing children from entering child labour in domestic work and in ensuring sustainable (re)integration for those needing to return home.

Identifying 'sending' communities and undertaking realistic prevention work requires specific approaches, some of which are common to child labour eradication efforts more generally. This includes maintaining children in school, promoting universal primary education, and enhancing the quality of schooling and of school environments so that children and their parents are motivated to attend. Increasing the family income, especially by women, is another strategic intervention designed to reduce the need for children to work.

### The role of intermediaries

In seeking a domestic worker, prospective employers may approach the child or her family directly or, more often, make use of an intermediary with links to source areas.

The prevailing assumption is that intermediaries are invariably unscrupulous recruiting agents or traffickers with concerns other than the child's best interests. However, some intermediaries that facilitate the movement of older children for domestic work are as likely as not to be their friends and relatives – in other words, people who usually have an interest in protecting them. Indeed, a clear message from child and adult respondents in Liberia, for example, was that travelling with someone the child and parents know and trust is potentially an important protection mechanism.

Several approaches relevant to the protection of child domestic workers who are legally entitled to work are being used by organisations concerned with migration, including: information campaigns and awareness raising for parents and children to provide information about risks and rights; developing ways to make journeys themselves safer, for example by improving travelling conditions; and developing the protective role played by responsible and trustworthy intermediaries, as well as developing the skills and confidence to expose traffickers.

From: *Ending child labour in domestic work and protecting young workers from abusive working conditions*, ILO, 2013.

It is also important to build awareness amongst families and the wider community that the practice of children entering domestic work may not be as beneficial as they had been led to believe. Community dialogues, dramas, radio, poster campaigns and children's clubs in schools have all been used for this purpose. Efforts to curb the illegal activities of recruiters, through community watchdogs such as child protection committees, are also active in many localities.

In **Tanzania**, CHODAWU (the trade union for domestic and allied workers) has adopted the approach of community sensitisation to identify children likely to enter domestic work. An important message to put across to parents and other community members is the vulnerability of girl domestics to abuse and sexual exploitation. Community-based child labour committees are the key to implementing this prevention approach. The members of these committees are elected; they screen and select the children who will receive assistance, provide individual support to the children and monitor their progress.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: A handbook on good practice in programme interventions*, Anti-Slavery International, 2005.

Those organisations concerned with reintegration face a number of challenges – particularly given that most are based in destination towns and cities. Visiting far-off sending areas and mounting activities in those communities requires time, personnel, and long-distance travel. This has necessitated greater collaboration between destination-based organisations (in towns and cities) and community organisations and other groups in rural or peri-urban source areas.

In **Nepal** a 'community rehabilitation' strategy has been adopted which involves placing children with another family in a similar income bracket as their own for a time, until the case is worked out and they can go home. The families are trained in advance and sensitised to child domestic workers' issues. The advantages are that community responsibility towards children and young people is enhanced, low-income families strengthened, and the programme is more cost-effective and sustainable.

From: *Making it work: how to protect young domestic workers from exploitation and abuse*, Children Unite and Anti-Slavery International, 2010.

### Key lessons and discussion points

The following are some of the key lessons learned from local experience of preventing child labour in domestic work and reintegrating former child domestic workers. They can be used as the starting point for discussion around their needs and how best to assist them:-

- Awareness-building with children, parents and among community members generally, is key to preventing illegal recruitment and trafficking;
- Ensuring that child domestic workers maintain contact with their families is not only a protective mechanism for them, but is important for their smooth return home if and when necessary. Additionally, regular dialogue between employers and parents of child domestic workers is also important;
- Where activities cannot easily be undertaken in sending communities because an organisation is city-based, it is important to establish partnerships with local community-based organisations and authorities already working with and through them;
- Reintegration of children back into their own families requires support to relatives as well as to the child. Children being reintegrated need to fully agree to it. Material as well as emotional support can be necessary, and on-going community-based monitoring will be needed.

## 4.4 Responding to education and training needs

Top of the priority list for almost all child domestic workers is the desire to go to school. More than most they understand the value of learning to build successful lives. At the same time, civil society groups and trade unions are aware of the potential of these activities to interact with their peers and improve self-esteem and confidence. However, the negative school experiences of some children have also focused attention on the need to improve teacher training, change discriminatory attitudes, and upgrade school facilities for girls in particular. Non-formal education is commonly provided in cases where formal schooling is not an option, or 'bridge courses' where catch-up classes are necessary to facilitate entry into mainstream education. The scope of these classes range from academic subjects, especially basic reading, writing, and numeracy to complementary topics, such as life skills, creative activity, communications, and other issues not necessarily covered in a formal curriculum.

In Lima, **Peru**, young domestic workers of legal working age attend recreational and self-improvement activities every Sunday at 'La Casa de Panchita'. Complementary educational services are offered: tutoring on school subjects, computer skills, English language classes, leadership workshops, cultural and recreation activities, negotiation skills. The 'casa' also helps to keep domestics in touch with their families in the countryside, by use of free phone calls and mail services.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: A handbook on good practice in programme interventions*, Anti-Slavery International, 2005.

Vocational training is also desired by many domestic workers who are above the minimum working age and who see the opportunity to improve their prospects and seek better paid work. In some cases, training can relate to their current working life, which may help to encourage employers to release them for classes. However, those offering such training – for example in cooking, child-care, laundry and marketing – are mindful of the dangers in simply creating a more productive worker. Development of traditionally 'female' skills, such as in tailoring or embroidery, also risk limiting girls future employment options, but are often appreciated by them because they give some hope of decent employment in the event of leaving domestic service. Training in IT skills is increasingly being provided to boost their options. In providing alternatives to child domestic work, successful schemes are those which assess and adapt training to the local job market.

In Yogyakarta, **Indonesia**, a model of 'alternative education' and skills training has been approved by the Yogyakarta manpower department and the national education ministry which is being replicated in five provinces across the country. The model sets up a special school for domestic workers which aims to improve domestic workers social position and gain them union recognition and employment rights. The school offers training over 3-5 months in critical awareness, and in certain occupational skills. Workers attend both from their places of origin, and from their workplace.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: A handbook on good practice in programme interventions*, Anti-Slavery International, 2005.

### **How can child domestic workers be motivated to learn?**

Many children want to catch up with their education and go to a formal school. They may need 'bridge courses' to facilitate this, and afterschool classes to help keep up and remain motivated. A child-friendly learning environment is important. Old-fashioned didactic methods which simply drill information into children are off-putting, and unsuccessful in enabling children who have had a poor experience of school to flourish. Education offered to CDWs needs to captivate and encourage a desire to learn. The child domestic's learning environment needs to be age and gender-appropriate and the opposite of the household-workplace in which everyone is 'superior' to the domestic and hold power over her.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: A handbook on good practice in programme interventions*, Anti-Slavery International, 2005.

### Key lessons and discussion points

The following are some of the key lessons learned from local experience of education and training interventions for child domestic workers. They can be used as the starting point for discussion around their needs and how best to assist them:-

- It is important to identify useful vocational training alternatives that link skills to available jobs or business opportunities for children above the legal minimum working age;
- Training in skills linked to the existing workplace, such as baking, needlework, embroidery, and early childhood care give young domestic workers who are entitled to work confidence and equip them with extra options which may make it possible to leave an abusive employer or seek better pay;
- For those working adolescents, educational programmes should be designed to match their capabilities, outlook on life, interests, and the practical requirements of the working life. Classes should be conducted in a child-friendly manner so that learning is seen as a useful and desirable activity;
- Employers and parents need to be motivated to allow children to attend. It is important to establish goals for educational programmes, and ensure these are attainable. Where formal schooling isn't viable, these goals should work towards future entry into mainstream education as well as life skills, self-reliance and personal growth in non-academic areas.

## 4.5 Involving employers

Identifying and assisting child domestic workers through engagement with their employers are highly effective and sustainable strategies, but are not easy to do. Efforts in this area – such as going door-to-door to convince employers to allow child domestic workers to attend a centre – are effective, but very time-intensive. In a more recent development, groups of current and former employers are being organised with a view to protecting child domestic workers in their communities.

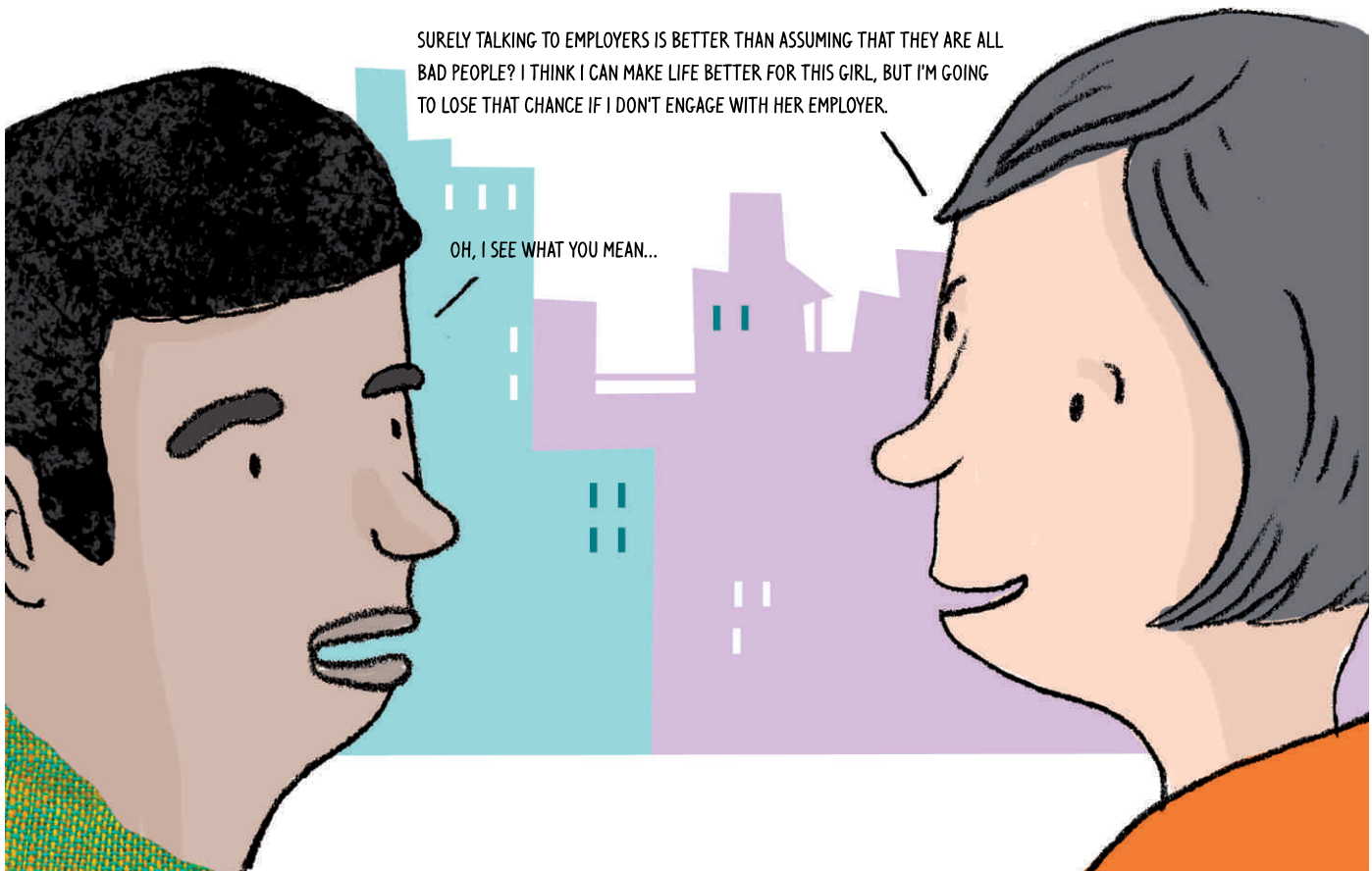
### Tumaini

In 2009, 25 employers (4 men and 21 women) in Tanzania began mobilising their community to assist child domestic workers. Called Tumaini, their first act of collective advocacy was to undertake a street meeting to encourage community members to volunteer. Many employers responded positively, and several hundred employers have so far been reached. Tumaini's message to employers is that 'child domestic workers are part of the family because we all depend on each other'. As a result: employers should be aware of the rights of child domestic workers and of their responsibilities towards them; communities should take responsibility and take action where there is abuse and; the voice of children should be heard so that families and communities are safer.

Alongside advocacy towards employers, Tumaini assists these children to raise their voice and claim their rights, and provides activities to support them. Employer and community awareness of children's rights have resulted in improved employer/child domestic worker relations, underpinned in many cases by work agreements which are sanctioned by, and passed in the presence of, community leaders who also take responsibility for monitoring their implementation. These agreements have not only improved wages and other conditions for those children who are entitled to work, but have resulted in a notable change in employer behaviour. Reported cases of mistreatment of child domestic workers have been reduced from an average of five or six per month to two or less.

From: *Small grants, big change*, Anti-Slavery International, 2013

## ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYERS



Public information campaigns can help to reinforce messages that children below the minimum working age must not be used in domestic work, and that those legally entitled to work must be properly protected against workplace abuses.

Weekly radio slots in **Haiti** raise issues relating to the situation of child domestic workers. In **Malawi**, a radio soap opera has been used to get the message across to employers about the need to change their behaviour. In **Kenya** and the **Philippines** organisations have created awareness about the situation faced by child domestic workers through national and local radio programmes. Child and adult domestic workers are invited to speak on these programmes about the difficulties they face and on what listeners can do to improve their situation.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: A handbook on good practice in programme interventions*, Anti-Slavery International, 2005.

### Accessing child domestic workers by engaging with employers

In Dhaka, Bangladesh, a systematic process for accessing CDWs in apartment blocks in likely locations has been developed by Save the Children Denmark. The 'ten steps' of CDW contact includes surveying, leafleting and inviting employers to a preliminary meeting, and leads to the establishment of, and enrolment of CDWs in, a community-based learning centre; this may be in the basement or garage space of the apartment block. Several of these centres then become connected to a 'socialisation centre' at which health, counselling, vocational training and legal support for CDWs are based, as well as support for employers. This model of integrated CDW contact and support, starting with house-to-house visits, has been effectively used in Dhaka, and also to some extent in Kolkata.

Cold calls on homes and apartments asking questions about domestic work arrangements may be resented by householders and has mixed results. Hence the preferred route in West Bengal is to use the formal schools as entry point. In Dhaka, however, the ten-step strategy has led to the development of employer groups who persuade other employers to allow their CDWs to attend a class or enjoy other opportunities external to the household. This shows that it is possible to engage employers as key actors for positive change; but the process of converting them to this role is not easy. The approach will not be practicable unless a city location is found where CDWs are sufficiently common for employers to live near each other and mingle socially. It then requires identification of 'positive deviants': child-friendly and compassionate employers prepared to act against the social grain. Older domestic workers employed in the same or neighbouring houses can also play a part in such CDW support networks.

From: *Comic Relief Review: What are the best ways to develop effective strategies and approaches to reach and support Child Domestic Workers?* Comic Relief, 2011.



### Key lessons and discussion points

The following are some of the key lessons learned from local experience of involving employers. They can be used as the starting point for discussion around how best to engage with employers for the benefit of child domestic workers:-

- Engaging with employers is an essential component not only in improving the situation of child domestic workers of legal working age but also in sustaining these gains;
- When contacting employers it is important not to alienate them, but instead to engage constructively, or the child domestic workers in their households may suffer. Attempts to reach child domestic workers through employers must, therefore, be positive and friendly;
- Improvements in the situation of child domestic workers who are entitled to work are most sustainable in places where responsible employers are assisted to come together, form groups and be trained to uphold the rights of CDWs.

## 4.6 Helping child domestic workers to help themselves

Child domestic workers have, in numerous ways, demonstrated themselves to be central agents of change in their own lives, and in the lives of children in similar situations. A critical prerequisite for this is to ensure that children in these situations are informed about their rights.

In **Peru** a training methodology on rights has been developed by Asociación Grupo de Trabajo Redes (AGTR) for use in schools that uses interactive role-play techniques which has proved successful with domestic workers. Young domestic workers can also receive counselling on job-related issues at a local centre for domestic workers and follow-up on violations of rights is offered.

Adapted from: *Child Domestic Workers: A handbook on good practice in programme interventions*, Anti-Slavery International, 2005.

The right of child domestic workers of legal working age to associate freely is also a key aspect of their participation, as well as representing a very tangible way of reducing their isolation and supporting their protection from workplace abuses. A starting point for the development of young domestic workers' associations is the provision of space for them to relax and develop friendships. Ensuring a balance between guidance, encouragement, and standing back allows young domestic workers to go at their own pace and to gradually extend the activities of their association beyond social activities and entertainment.

In a number of countries, self-help groups and associations of young domestic workers are actively engaged in advocacy and mutual support to protect their interests.

**Wote Sawa, Tanzania**

*Wote Sawa* is a youth-led group of current and former child domestic workers in Mwanza, Tanzania which exists to empower child domestic workers to advocate for their own rights and live free from all forms of abuse, sexual violence and exploitation. So far, *Wote Sawa* has recruited and trained several hundred current and former child domestic workers to form a network of advocates – who meet quarterly to discuss arising issues and decide on strategy. The group also assists its members to develop their skills in finding alternative employment. Through its members it has rescued and counselled a number of abused child domestic workers, engages with local officials on the development of by-laws to protect child domestic workers and regularly participates in radio discussion programmes and in the press. *Wote Sawa* has also been at the forefront of efforts to establish the Tanzania Domestic Workers Coalition, which was formally registered in 2012.

From: Children Unite and Wote Sawa, direct communication, 2012. In World Day Against Child Labour (WDAKL) 2013.

**Child domestic workers speak out**

Several local organisations undertook consultations with more than 400 current and former child domestic workers (female and male) in over 20 locations in Benin, Costa Rica, India, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Tanzania and Togo. In the many individual interviews and group discussions which took place, child domestic workers provided a clear insight into their situations, as well as their views about the kinds of help and support they need most - and what interventions protect them best from abuse and exploitation.

Results indicated that the interventions which are having the most positive impact for child domestic workers are those which seek to: maintain or re-establish contact between the child and her/his close relatives; intervene directly with their employers in a non-confrontational way; establish and support groups of domestic workers to help themselves; encourage child domestic workers back to education and to retain them in education by catering to their specific needs. Findings also highlight that the most effective interventions are those which focus on assistance to build the individual and collective capacity of child domestic workers to help themselves, and which systematically involves them in planning and implementation.

From: *They Respect Their Animals More: Voices of Child Domestic Workers*, Anti-Slavery International, 2008.

### Key lessons and discussion points

The following are some of the key lessons learned from local experience of helping child domestic workers to help themselves. They can be used as the starting point for discussion around their needs and how best to assist them:-

- Engaging child domestic workers of legal working age in reaching out to others not only permits greater project reach, but brings tangible benefit to the individuals concerned. Child domestic workers have expressed their personal pride, the increased respect from others, and the official recognition that comes from their involvement in assisting other children;
- Child domestic workers involved in delivering services can gain valuable personal benefit and key advocacy skills by doing so – in particular by developing their knowledge, confidence and status to become effective advocates;
- Sustaining the participation of child domestic workers depends on a balance between their engagement in advocacy and activities which support their own personal development. Personal development activities can take many forms, depending on the interests and needs of the individuals concerned;
- Children's participation requires a substantial time commitment from those involved, particularly those children who are involved in leadership roles. Children need to understand and consent to this, and employers and parents need to be engaged to support this participation.

### Further resources relating to direct assistance to child domestic workers

Anti-Slavery International: *Child Domestic Workers: A handbook on good practice in programme interventions*, 2005

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