



International  
Labour  
Office  
Geneva



# WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR



## GO FOR THE GOAL: END CHILD LABOUR

**JUNE 12 2010**

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

#### WHAT IS THE WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR?

The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched the World Day Against Child Labour in 2002 to focus attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it. Each year on 12 June, the World Day brings together governments, employers and workers organizations, civil society, as well as millions of people from around the world to highlight the plight of child labourers and what can be done to help them.

#### WHY IS THIS YEAR'S THEME "GO FOR THE GOAL"?

ILO member States have set the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016. In May 2010, representatives of some 80 countries attended a global Conference on Child Labour in The Hague. The conference discussed the progress made so far, and urgent action points needed to achieve this goal.

This year's World Day also coincides with the opening of the FIFA football World Cup in South Africa. On June 12, many football personalities from around the world will be lending their support to the World Day and to the "Go for the goal" campaign.

#### WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR?

It includes practices such as the use of children in slavery, forced labour, trafficking, debt bondage, serfdom, prostitution, pornography, forced or compulsory recruitment for armed conflict, as well as all forms of work that are likely to harm the safety, health or morals of children, often referred to as hazardous work. While the ILO is concerned with all forms of child labour, its priority is to eradicate such brutal practices.

#### IS THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN INVOLVED IN CHILD LABOUR FALLING?

The ILO will be providing new child labour figures in a report to be issued shortly before the World Day Against Child Labour. The new data is likely to point to some reduction in the global number of child labourers, but also shows that progress is uneven across regions and generally too slow and too little to achieve the 2016 target in time.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY STEPS REQUIRED TO TACKLE CHILD LABOUR?

The root cause of child labour is poverty. The livelihood of many poor families often relies on a child's earnings. The family may also not have enough money to meet education costs, so the children may have to work. Countries that have significantly reduced child labour have also tackled poverty in a decisive way. There are three areas in which actions by government can be crucial:

- \* Programmes must be implemented to tackle family poverty and help children. For example, cash transfer programmes and school feeding programmes tend to promote access to education and reduce child labour.
- \* Ensuring adults have a decent job. This is vital. If adults have a decent job, it is far more likely that their children will not fall into child labour.
- \* Governments must ensure that children below the minimum age of employment receive a good quality education.

## HOW MANY CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE ARE NOT IN SCHOOL AT PRESENT?

According to the most recent estimates from UNESCO, 72 million primary-aged children (of whom more than half are girls) and 71 million children of junior secondary school age are not enrolled in school. Many children who are enrolled in fact do not attend school on a regular basis, so the real "out of school" number is likely to be considerably higher. In too many countries, education is under-resourced. There are simply not enough trained teachers and schools.

## CAN POOR COUNTRIES AFFORD TO TACKLE CHILD LABOUR?

Many countries with high rates of child labour allocate relatively little funding to education. Greater priority must be given to education when budget decisions are made.

The ILO has looked at the costs and benefits of tackling child labour and replacing it with education. It estimates that the benefits outweigh the costs by almost 7 to 1. Investing in education is vital for a country's social and economic development.

## HOW IS THE ILO HELPING CHILD LABOURERS AROUND THE WORLD?

The ILO works with governments and social partners to develop legal frameworks in line with ILO Conventions on child labour and to build national capacity to tackle child labour.

The ILO also works at the local level to help child labourers and communities. This involves supporting partners who seek to protect children from child labour and developing strategies to prevent children from entering work. Special attention is paid to the situation of girls. ILO programmes help poor children access education and in the case of older children, provides them with vocational skills training. The goal is to give children the chance of a brighter future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE : [www.ilo.org/ipec](http://www.ilo.org/ipec)

