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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Report I

## **Child Labour Statistics**

**Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics  
Geneva, 1-10 April 2008**



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE GENEVA

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1. At the 17<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), convened in 2003, a large number of participants emphasized the importance of child labour statistics and commented on their experience in measuring child labour and the complexities involved. Many participants stressed the need to develop an international statistical definition of child labour, including hazardous work, and methodological guidelines to ensure comparability across countries and over time. There was unanimous support from the Conference for the development of a resolution on child labour statistics. Consequently, the question of child labour statistics was placed on the agenda of the next (18<sup>th</sup>) Conference, to be held in Geneva at the end of 2008.
2. This development underlines how important it has now become to have sound, reliable and consistent systems of measurement of the phenomenon of child labour. As was pointed out by the Director-General in the ILO's Global Report on Child Labour in 2006,<sup>1</sup> there has in recent years been a sea change in attitudes towards child labour. The sense of hopelessness and resignation that previously prevailed on the subject; the feeling that, regrettable though it is, there is little that can be done to prevent or eliminate child labour as it is so deeply rooted in poverty and cultural attitudes: these have been replaced by a world-wide consciousness that it is today not only possible but also urgent to eradicate at least the most unacceptable forms of child labour within a short time frame rather than in some indefinite future, and to set in motion an irreversible process leading to the total elimination of the scourge of all forms of child labour. Programmes of action have been launched in many countries to this end, and the international community has mobilized significant efforts and resources – most notably in the framework of the ILO's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) - to support national programmes.
3. It is essential that these efforts be accompanied by programmes of data collection and analysis to make it possible for national authorities and the international community as a whole to measure the nature and extent of child labour; to identify the areas where action is required to tackle it, and particularly where priority action is required to deal with the worst forms of child labour; to monitor progress in the implementation of policies and programmes to combat child labour and to evaluate their effectiveness; and to mobilize public support for such programmes. Many countries have accordingly developed statistical monitoring and information systems on child labour, often with the support of ILO/IPEC's Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC). Based on a significant number of national surveys, SIMPOC has been able to develop a world-wide system to monitor global trends, the results of which are reported in the four-yearly Global Reports on Child Labour. Thus, the Global Report published in 2006 was able to report a decline in the extent of child labour in most regions of the world (although in Africa the relative decrease was far less significant than in other regions). These findings have naturally aroused considerable interest throughout the world, and have given renewed impetus to national and international efforts to combat child labour.
4. Nevertheless, measuring child labour as well as different forms of child labour – both within countries and internationally – is by no means an easy task. Child labour, like many other social and economic phenomena, cannot be measured with a ruler or weighed on scales. Its measurement raises a number of complex conceptual, definitional and methodological issues, and the 18<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians provides an important opportunity to clarify and give guidance on such issues.

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<sup>1</sup> ILO: *The end of child labour: Within reach*, International Labour Conference, 95<sup>th</sup> Session, 2006 (ILO, Geneva, 2006), page viii.

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5. There is first of all the need to clarify the distinction between legal and statistical definitions. Concepts such as “child labour”, “worst forms of child labour” and “hazardous work of children ” have been defined in the legal standards (Conventions and Recommendations) adopted by the ILO over the years, as well as in national laws and regulations (often inspired by ILO standards) in countries throughout the world. These definitions provide the essential legal basis for all national and international action relating to child labour. They draw a clear line between forms of children’s work which are acceptable in national societies and in the international community and those which are not. Such legal definitions are obviously important for enforcement measures, since they provide a basis for action by competent authorities to order a violation to be stopped and to apply sanctions against those responsible. But they do not in all cases readily lend themselves to statistical measurement, and it frequently becomes necessary, for the purposes of statistical measurement, to establish indicators that may differ somewhat from stipulations in national law or international legal standards.
  6. In no circumstances, however, can statistical definitions revise or replace the definitions laid down in national legislation or in relevant ILO Conventions and Recommendations. A clear distinction must at all times be made between, on the one hand, defining child labour or different forms of child labour for the purpose of compiling statistics and, on the other, legal definitions established for the purpose of prohibiting or regulating child labour. Thus, a statistical survey may be based on a wider or narrower definition of child labour than that which is prohibited by law; the information generated by such a survey cannot, of course, be used as a basis for legal action, but it may nevertheless lead to some discussion and possibly action to revise existing legislation and extend the coverage of prohibition.
  7. But while they are different in concept and in practice, law and statistics do not exist in different worlds; they have to support each other. The role of statistics is to reflect and measure economic and social reality as closely as possible. They are an essential tool for policy making, for planning action, for determining the effectiveness of existing legislative and other measures against child labour, or identifying the need for new or revised legislation. Legal definitions of child labour contained in national legislation and in international labour standards or other international instruments should therefore be taken as the starting point in the search for statistical definitions; and statistical definitions should be as close as possible to, and as consistent as possible with, such national legislation or international labour standards, even though it will frequently not be possible to achieve a perfect match between the two.
  8. It is also necessary to distinguish clearly between the statistical needs of decision-makers and policy makers at the national level and those of the international community. International labour standards on child labour provide guidance for national legislation but, as will be seen below, they allow for a wide range of flexibility and exceptions to general prohibitions of child labour, and they leave national legislators – after consulting national organizations of employers and workers – a good deal of latitude to fix precise standards and cut-off points in determining what is to be prohibited. National statistical offices clearly need to tailor the criteria for data collection on child labour as closely as possible to such national laws and regulations. But it is also important to ensure some international comparability (as well as comparability over time) of the data that are generated in different countries, because the progressive abolition of child labour has become a major preoccupation of the international community and progress towards that goal needs to be measured internationally as well as nationally.
  9. The approach in this report is that, especially for countries that have a proactive national policy on the eradication of child labour, a national programme on child labour statistics will be important, and its principal objective should be to provide comprehensive and reliable information concerning child labour that needs to be eventually eliminated. This report and the draft resolution that accompanies it aim to set out standards of good practice for the collection, compilation and analysis of child labour statistics as guidance for countries wishing to update their existing statistical system in this field, or establish a new one. Its provisions should not undermine any

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existing national systems, but at the same time it is hoped that they will lead to a broad acceptance by countries and a consensus on the parameters of a statistical measurement standard for child labour.

- 10.** The report is structured as follows: section 2 introduces the desired measurement objectives; sections 3 and 4 elaborate on the legal and statistical concepts of child labour and their complex inter-relationship; and section 5 expands on building a statistical programme on child labour. Section 6 discusses global estimation processes, while section 7 discusses measurement issues particular to child labour. Section 8 presents and explains the main child labour indicators currently in use. Finally, section 9 provides an overview of key child labour data collection instruments and approaches.
- 11.** The draft resolution concerning statistics of child labour is annexed to this report.

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## 2. BACKGROUND AND MEASUREMENT OBJECTIVES

12. Countries where children may be observed to be at work should develop an adequate system of statistics on child labour. Due account should be taken of specific national needs and circumstances, particularly of the legislation, if any, dealing with minimum age and conditions of work. The system should contribute to the improvement of economic and social statistics in the country, increase public awareness of the situation regarding working children, and provide a suitable statistical base for the various users of the statistics including policy makers. Comprehensive statistical information on child labour, and more widely on working children, would also be useful for developing an appropriate regulatory framework for the protection of the rights and welfare of children by determining the causes and consequences of child labour.
13. An adequate national system of child labour statistics should supply reliable quantitative information on the number of working children in the country, their geographical and sectoral/occupational distribution, age and sex, and other relevant characteristics to the extent possible. Statistics on various socioeconomic characteristics, especially those attributes that are related to the development of the child into a responsible adult member of the society, such as education status and achievements, the time allocated to various non-school activities, the income or expenditure level of the household to which the working child belongs, and important aspects of participation by children in economic activities and its impact, should also be generated to permit the analysis of the economic and social situation of particular groups of working children. The system may, moreover, make available essential data for assisting in the design of intervention policies specifically aimed at combating child labour, and at monitoring and evaluating progress in the implementation of action programmes.
14. In order to fulfil the above objectives, the national programme of statistics should, in principle, cover all major groups of activities that children engage in (mainly study, work, and duties in their own household) in terms of the time spent on each, and also the impact of these activities on different aspects of children's well-being. The programme should be developed to the fullest extent possible in harmony with other national economic and social statistics. It is also important that the information supplied supports the formulation of an informed policy to combat child labour within the country, and assists in the identification and prioritization of the forms of child labour and of the geographical locations that targeted action programmes should address.
15. Overall, the essential and desirable properties of the proposed statistical measurement standard on child labour are therefore that it should:
  - (i) reflect the national concept of child labour as work that children must not engage in;
  - (ii) be amenable to data collection operations for facilitating quantification and characterization of child labour;
  - (iii) be acceptable to member countries and ILO constituents, and
  - (iv) facilitate the comparison of child labour statistics over time and across countries.
16. A certain amount of uncertainty currently surrounds the operational definition of the term child labour. Most of the controversy is founded on the debate as to what constitutes the set of non-school activities by children on the basis of which child labour is identified. The ILO approach for its global child labour estimates, to be discussed in greater detail in section 6, takes *child labour*, for identification

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purposes, as being the total of (i) *a subset of children engaged in economic activities* (i.e. work<sup>2</sup>) and (ii) *those in specific worst forms of child labour not covered by (i)*. There is, however, support from a section of stake-holders and researchers interested in the study of child labour for the adoption of a wider concept of “work by children” that includes certain non-economic activities, such as the unpaid domestic and personal services for consumption within the same household that children frequently engage in (also termed “household chores”). A detailed discussion of child labour measurement issues is contained in section 7.

17. In contrast to child labour, the term “working children” is a broader concept that encompasses most production activities undertaken by children, whether for the market or not, paid or unpaid, for a few hours or full time, on a casual or regular basis, in the organized or unorganized (formal or informal) sector, and whether the activities are legal or illegal; it excludes household chores undertaken in the child’s own household, and activities that are part of schooling. Work in family enterprises and in household-based production activities is included, as is domestic work performed in another household for an employer. To be counted as employed, i.e. as working, a child must have worked for at least an hour on any day during a seven-day reference period.
18. A related issue which requires attention is that, for adult workers and the work force of legal age (above the minimum age for work), the concept of “economically active population” is applied to denote the total of the group of “employed workers” and the group of “unemployed” persons, an unemployed person being defined as one who is not employed but is actively seeking work and is available for work. Labour force statistics also provide numbers on employed and unemployed with reference to the work force of legal age. However, the concept of an “unemployed child” is not the correct terminology, since persons below the minimum age of work cannot legally seek work or be employed. At the same time it is true that many children who are not engaged in any economic activity may want to work and be available for work, if offered. For the purpose of child labour statistics, such children may be termed “children wanting work”. This issue is important in the context of obtaining a complete overview of the potential population of child workers in a country. The “economically active” child is therefore a statistical definition.
19. A national system for statistics of child labour should bear in mind the framework of the existing international labour standards set by the ILO’s Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), together with their respective supplementing Recommendations Nos. 146 and 190, which provide the essential legal basis for most of the national and international action relating to child labour. However, these international labour standards on child labour, while providing guidance for national legislation, also allow for flexibility and exceptions to general prohibitions of child labour. In fact, national legislators, after consulting their national organizations of employers and workers, have significant latitude under Convention No. 138 and Convention No. 182 to fix precise standards and cut-off points for determining what is to be prohibited. Again, the determination of the exact list of hazardous work is left to the determination of the national legislation or authority, even under Convention No. 182 which does not contain flexibility clauses. Accordingly, there can be no unique legal definition of child labour for universal application across countries.
20. This report, to clarify, is concerned only with the establishment of a statistical definition of child labour that is broadly acceptable to countries, and in the following section the implications of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), as well as of Recommendations Nos. 146 and 190, are examined to highlight their implications for the

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<sup>2</sup> The standard definition of “work” is “to be economically active”, based on the standard ILO definition of work as applied to persons of working age, which is linked to the production boundary as determined by the United Nations System of National Accounts 1993 (SNA Rev. 1993). R. Hussmanns, F. Mehran and V. Verma, *Surveys of economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment: An ILO manual on concepts and methods*, may also be consulted.

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statistical measurement of child labour and of permissible work by children. The relevant clauses of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are also noted in this regard.

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### 3. DEFINING CHILD LABOUR LEGAL STANDARDS AND CONCEPTS

21. Child labour is defined by its consequences, and in its essential conceptual form encompasses work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and interferes with their schooling.
22. International legal standards that define child labour are a necessary frame of reference for child labour statistics. This section reviews the three principal international conventions on child labour – the ILO’s Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1989, the ILO’s Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) – and the main legal concepts of child labour that they embody. Together, these conventions provide the parameters for fixing national legal boundaries for child labour and the legal basis for national and international action against it.
23. ILO Convention No.138 contains the most comprehensive and authoritative international standards on the subject of minimum age for admission to work or employment. It calls on Member States to set a general *minimum age* for admission to work or employment not lower than the end of compulsory education, and generally at least 15 years of age (Art. 2, para. 3), and a higher minimum age of not less than 18 years for employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of young persons – usually referred to as *hazardous work* (Art. 3, para. 1). However, there is no international list of *hazardous work*, and the identification of hazardous types of employment or work prohibited up to 18 years has to be determined by the competent national authority after consultation with organizations of employers and workers (Art. 3, para. 2).
24. The Convention contains a number of *flexibility clauses* that are left to the discretion of the competent national authority in consultation with workers’ and employers’ organizations. This means that there is no single legal definition of child labour across countries. Consequently, statistical measurements of child labour consistent with national legislation differ from country to country, as will be seen in subsequent sections. The principal areas of flexibility in the Convention include:
  - (a) *minimum age*. Members whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed may specify a lower general minimum age of 14 years (Art. 2, para. 4), although there are some that choose to set it at 16 years;
  - (b) *scope of application*. Members may exclude from the application of the Convention limited categories of employment or work in respect of which special and substantial problems of application arise (Art. 4, para. 1), although hazardous work may not be excluded (Art. 4, para. 3). Members whose economy and administrative facilities are insufficiently developed may also initially limit the scope of application of the Convention (Art. 5. para. 1) other than in a core group of economic activities or undertakings (Art. 5. para. 3);<sup>3</sup>
  - (c) *light work*. National laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons 13 to 15 years of age which is (a) not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and (b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their capacity to

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<sup>3</sup> Namely, mining and quarrying; manufacturing; construction; electricity, gas and water; sanitary services; transport, storage and communication; and plantations and other agricultural undertakings mainly producing for commercial purposes, but excluding family and small-scale holdings producing for local consumption and not regularly employing hired workers.

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benefit from the instruction received (Art. 7). The lower age limit for light work can be 12 for developing countries (Art 7. para. 4)

(d) *other exceptions*. Legally speaking, other exceptions may also be permitted, e.g. for the purpose of vocational training and orientation, or for children's participation in artistic performances in accordance with Convention No. 138. However, these have usually not been reflected in statistical surveys of child labour so far.

**25.** ILO Convention No. 182 supplements Convention No. 138 by emphasizing the urgent focus on the worst forms of child labour requiring immediate action. Convention No. 182 makes no distinction between developed and developing countries and applies to all children, where a *child* is defined as an individual under the age of 18 years (Art. 2). For the purposes of the Convention, *worst forms of child labour* comprise: (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, as well as forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties; and (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children (Art. 3).

**26.** The activities referred to under Art. 3(a) to (c) of Convention No. 182 are commonly termed *unconditional worst forms of child labour*.<sup>4</sup> Activities covered in Art. 3(d) are commonly termed *hazardous work* and echo the concept on hazardous work contained in Convention No. 138 (Art. 3). Convention No. 182, Article 4, also states that the exact types of hazardous work referred to under Article 3(d) shall be determined nationally by the competent authority after consultation with organizations of workers and employers, taking into consideration relevant international standards, and in particular ILO Recommendation No 190.

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<sup>4</sup> The term "unconditional worst forms of child labour (UWFCL)" was first introduced in the ILO Global Report on Child Labour 2002 to distinguish between "hazardous work" and other worst forms of child labour, by denoting the latter as UWFCL. See ILO/IPEC, *A future without child labour*, Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (ILO, Geneva 2002), paragraph 31, page 11.

<i>Table 1. Child labour in accordance with international legal standards</i>					
Case 1: National legislation contains provision relating to light work	CHILDREN'S WORK AND EMPLOYMENT				
	Non-hazardous work			Worst forms of child labour (WFCL)	
	Forms of work excluded under Convention No. 138 flexibility clauses	Light work	Other non-hazardous forms of work	Hazardous work	Unconditional WFCL (trafficked children, children in forced and bonded labour, armed conflict, prostitution and pornography and illicit activities)
Children below minimum age specified for light work					
Children within the age range specified for light work					<b>CHILD LABOUR</b>
Children at or above the general minimum working age					
CHILDREN'S WORK AND EMPLOYMENT					
Case 2: National legislation does <u>not</u> contain provision relating to light work	CHILDREN'S WORK AND EMPLOYMENT				
	Non-hazardous work			Worst forms of child labour (WFCL)	
	Forms of work Excluded under Convention No. 138 flexibility clauses	Light work	Other non-hazardous forms of work	Hazardous work	Unconditional WFCL
Children below the general minimum working age					<b>CHILD LABOUR</b>
Children at or above the general minimum working age					

27. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognizes the child's right to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development (Art. 32.1). In order to achieve this goal, the UNCRC calls on States Parties to set minimum ages for admission to employment, having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments (Art. 32.2).
28. Table 1 depicts the basic elements of child labour embodied in these three principal international legal standards. It illustrates how legal categories interact with age ranges in establishing the boundaries of child labour for effective abolition. Among young children below the minimum age for light work, child labour encompasses all work and employment with the exception of those

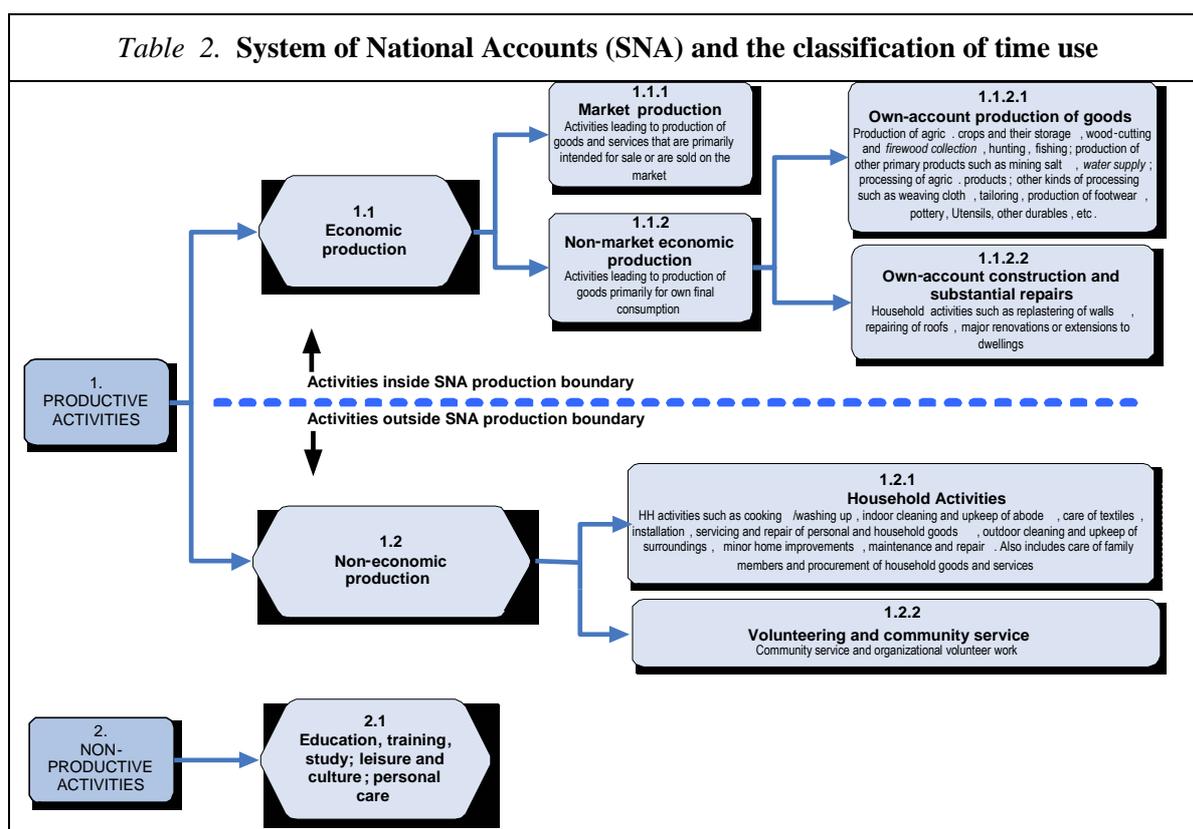
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forms excluded under Convention No. 138 flexibility clauses. Among children in the age range specified for light work, child labour constitutes all employment and work except excluded forms and light work. For children at or above the general minimum age, child labour consists of hazardous work and of its other worst forms. In cases where countries have not exercised the Convention No. 138 flexibility clause on light work, the boundaries for child labour are simpler: namely, all employment and work except forms excluded for children below the general minimum working age, and hazardous work and other worst forms of child labour in the case of children at or above the general minimum working age.

- 29.** The three international legal standards also point to general criteria for drawing boundaries for child labour. Foremost among these is the “nature” of the work, or the “circumstances” in which it is performed. The criteria provide a basis for assessing “likely harm” to the health, safety or morals of the child (Convention No. 138, Art. 3, para. 1, Convention No. 182, Art. 3(d), and UNCRC, Art. 32.2). Among young children, these criteria are needed to inform decisions concerning what, if any, forms of work should be excluded by the exercise of Convention No. 138’s flexibility clauses. Among children in the middle age range, they are also needed to inform decisions concerning what constitutes “light work” as opposed to other forms of work. And among older children, they are needed to distinguish hazardous work. For all age groups, indicators of the nature of work, its circumstances and its harm are needed for prioritizing and targeting policy interventions, and for monitoring progress.
- 30.** Child labour (slated for abolition) should therefore reflect the engagement of children in undesirable activities and could fall into the following categories:
- i) labour that is performed by a child who is *under the minimum age* specified for that kind of work (as defined by national legislation in accordance with accepted international standards), and that is thus likely to impede the child’s education and full development;
  - ii) labour that jeopardizes the health, safety or morals of a child, either because of its nature or because of the conditions in which it is carried out, known as *hazardous work*.
  - iii) the *unconditional worst forms of child labour* which are internationally defined to encompass children (persons below 18 years of age) in slavery, trafficking, debt bondage and other forms of forced labour, forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict, their use in prostitution and pornography, and illicit activities.
- 31.** Accordingly, collecting information on (a) children’s age and (b) the nature of work performed by children in terms of these three broad criteria – whether or not it is light work, classified as other non-hazardous work or defined as hazardous work or other worst form of child labour – should therefore be a primary objective of a national statistical programme on child labour.
- 32.** The issue of the range of data that a national statistical programme on child labour should collect is considered in section 5. First of all, however, it is first necessary to establish the basic statistical concepts and terms concerning the use of children’s time, and this is the subject matter of section 4.

#### 4. CLASSIFYING CHILDREN’S TIME USE AND PRODUCTION: STATISTICAL STANDARDS AND CONCEPTS

33. The United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA Rev. 1993) provides a common frame of reference and conceptual basis for classifying children’s time use in general and their involvement in production in particular. *Production* is defined as all activities falling within the *general production boundary*, that is, any human controlled activity resulting in an output capable of being exchanged. *Non-production activities* are those for which this condition does not hold, and include such items as education, leisure and rest.
34. As depicted in table 2, the production boundary in the SNA Rev. 1993 is more restricted than the general production boundary, in that it excludes activities performed by household members in service to the household and its members. These production activities outside the SNA Rev. 1993 production boundary are defined as *non-economic production*, and comprise items such as cleaning, preparing meals and care of other household members. Production falling within the SNA Rev. 1993 production boundary is defined as economic production. *Economic production* is a broad concept covering all market production and certain types of non-market production (principally the production of goods for own use). It includes forms of work in both the formal and the informal sector, as well as forms of work inside and outside family settings. The approach to child labour measurement should be anchored in SNA Rev. 1993, and therefore the concept of economic production provides the main framework for the purpose of child labour measurement.



35. *Market production* involves activities leading to the production of goods and services which are intended for sale or are sold on the market. *Non-market economic production* refers primarily to the production of goods for own use, and includes common children’s activities such as water and fuel wood collection. Some of the output from market production may be retained for own

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consumption or capital formation. *Non-economic production* usually involves activities leading to the production of unpaid domestic and personal services primarily for use within the child's own household, and is non-economic in nature.

36. Statistical concepts developed for measuring the adult labour force,<sup>5</sup> when applying directly to child labour measurement, must occasionally be treated with care. The concept of unemployed person, for instance, is inappropriate in the context of children, since persons below the minimum age of work cannot be legally employed or be considered to be available for employment. Following from this, the concepts of economically active population, usually active population and currently active population (that is, labour force) require caution when applied to children, in that they encompass both employed and unemployed persons. Standard industrial and occupational classifications, developed with the adult labour force in mind, might be inadequate at times to capture with precision the complete range of children's production activities. In such instances, approximations would have to be judiciously exerted, especially (as will be observed in section 6) in the task of translating the list of prohibited hazardous work by children into the standard industrial and occupational classifications.
37. These concerns point to the need for statistical language for child labour measurement different from that used in measuring the adult labour force (while remaining within the broad SNA Rev. 1993 framework). *Working children* (those children engaged in economic production) might be a better term than economically active, to which "currently" and "usually" could be added to reflect the length of the reference period. Reference periods, in turn, are relevant in light of the fact that many forms of children's economic production are seasonal in nature. The term *children in non-economic production* could be utilized for those who provide unpaid domestic and personal services for consumption within the same household (also called household chores). *Children wanting work* could be applied to reflect children not at work in economic production, but who want to work and thus a group at risk of becoming child labourers.
38. Terms are also needed to reflect how children's time is divided between production (and in particular economic production) and schooling. *Students in economic production* might be used to reflect children combining only economic production with schooling, and *non-students in economic production* might be used to reflect children only at work in economic production without attending school or performing non-economic activities. There may also be a category of *idle children* who are neither attending school nor engaged in economic or non-economic production. The possibility of *non-students engaged in only non-economic production* and not going to school should be taken into account, while there could be also be a category of *children who only attend school*. Child groups could also consist of *students doing both economic and non-economic production*, and of *non-students in both economic and non-economic production*.
39. A more detailed discussion of the statistics that should be collected under a national child labour statistical programme to facilitate appraisal and analysis of the child labour situation is provided in section 8 of this report.

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<sup>5</sup> As reflected, inter alia, in the Resolution Concerning Statistics of the Economically Active Population, Employment, Unemployment and Underemployment, adopted by the 13<sup>th</sup> ICLS (October 1982).

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## 5. BUILDING A STATISTICAL PROGRAMME ON CHILD LABOUR

40. The principal objective of child labour statistics is to provide comprehensive and reliable information concerning child labour that needs to be eliminated. This section sets out minimum standards of good practice as guidance for countries needing to strengthen their existing statistical programme in this field or to establish a new one.

### 5.1 General considerations

41. Countries, in particular those in which children are observed at work or in employment, should develop an adequate programme of statistics on child labour.
42. The programme should be developed within the broad framework of the international legal standards detailed above. Particular reference should be made to the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190), Paragraph 5, which specifies, inter alia, that: (1) "detailed information and statistical data on the nature and extent of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date to serve as a basis for determining priorities for national action for the abolition of child labour, in particular for the prohibition and elimination of its worst forms as a matter of urgency", and (2) "as far as possible, such information and statistical data should include data disaggregated by sex, age group, occupation, branch of economic activity, status in employment, school attendance and geographical location..."
43. A national programme of statistics on child labour should inform national deliberations concerning what forms of children's work and employment are covered by national laws on child labour, are targeted and prioritized in action programmes and are monitored against progress benchmarks. A child labour statistics programme should also help improve understanding of the array of factors underlying the child labour phenomenon and guide the design of policies and programmes addressing them. Some of the core elements needed in a national statistical programme for (a) identifying child labour and (b) diagnosing its causes and consequences are discussed below. Methodological issues with regard to collecting data for these indicators are examined in section 9.

### 5.2 Identifying child labour

44. The identification of child labour within a given national setting is by no means straightforward. International legal standards accord national legislators (in conjunction with national organizations of employers and workers) considerable flexibility in setting precise standards and cut-off points for determining which forms of children's work and employment should constitute child labour for eventual elimination. Informed decisions on these matters by the competent authority require comprehensive and reliable statistical data on child labour. The effective targeting and prioritizing of policy interventions relating to child labour, and the proper monitoring of their impact, also depend on adequate child labour statistics.
45. A national statistical programme on child labour has an important role in generating statistical information on child labour for all of these purposes. Deriving from the previous discussion on legal concepts, particularly important in this context is information on the "nature" of work children perform, on the "circumstances" under which they perform this work, and on how work might "harm" health and development. Indicators relating to nature of work, circumstances and harm therefore should be core elements of a national statistical programme on child labour. A statistical programme should also provide baseline information on the reference child population engaged in what Convention No. 138 terms "work or employment", of which child labour is a subset. General guidelines and considerations for collecting statistics relating to each of these core elements are presented below.

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### 5.2.1 Involvement in employment or work

46. The common practice is to use economic production as a proxy for the concept of “employment or work” contained in ILO Conventions on minimum age. As detailed above, economic production includes all market production and non-market economic production as defined by the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA Rev. 1993). In line with the international definition of employment, one hour of work during a (one-week) reference period is typically taken as sufficient for classifying a child as at work, although national statistical programmes might also consider collecting data on children’s work using higher time thresholds. Children temporarily absent from work (due to illness, vacation, etc.) would also be considered as part of the group at work, but children not engaged in economic production but wanting work would not be considered as part of this group. Information on children seeking work should nonetheless be collected separately as a group that is at risk of child labour.
47. National statistical programmes might distinguish between children at work applying a one-week reference period and children at work in economic production applying a 12-month reference period, adapting the concepts of “currently active population” and “usually active population” used in measuring the adult labour force, in light of the seasonal nature of many forms of children’s economic production. The division of children’s time between economic production and school is also of interest in child labour measurement. National statistical programmes in this context should consider data collection in sufficient details to allow compilation of statistics that distinguish *students* at work from *non-students* at work. Statistical programmes might also consider reporting on children in neither activity, another group at particular risk of becoming child labourers.
48. Legal standards on child labour do not rule out *a priori* any form of children’s productive activity from consideration. This means that statistical programmes may consider collecting information on children’s *non-economic* production as well as their economic production. Information on non-economic production is relevant in the light of a growing body of empirical evidence suggesting that these activities absorb a considerable amount of children’s time and can interfere with their rights to education and leisure. Concern has also been expressed that the exclusion of non-economic production – principally the domain of girls in most societies – may result in gender biases in child labour estimates. As with other forms of children’s production, decisions as to whether non-economic production should be considered as child labour rests with national authorities. In order to inform such decisions, however, it is worth extending national statistical programmes on child labour to include data collection on the common non-economic productive activities of children.

### 5.2.2 Nature of work

49. A detailed breakdown of children’s production by its various defining features is necessary to understanding the nature of children’s work as well as to locating where child workers are found in the economy. A number of broad distinctions are useful in this context for national statistical programmes on child labour. Within economic production, distinctions by industry based on the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC Rev. 3) and by occupation based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88 and ISCO-08) provide a standardized picture of the nature of children’s involvement in the measured economy. Information on occupations and industries should be collected, if and wherever possible at the four-digit level, in order to offer more detail on the specific nature of children’s work. A distinction by the status in employment (that is, employee/wage earner, own-account worker, employer, member of producers’ cooperative, unpaid family worker, persons not classifiable by status) can offer additional insight into how children’s economic production is carried out.
50. Clearly distinguishing children’s non-market production that falls within the SNA production boundary, i.e. economic production, is also important for national statistical programmes on child labour. Although the dividing line is often thin, many common forms of children’s non-market

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production (for example, own-account water collection, fetching fuel wood, flour milling, bottling, dressmaking and tailoring, production of baskets and mats, and the preservation of meat and fish, etc.) technically fall within the SNA production boundary and therefore constitute economic production by nature. Statistical programmes should collect complete information on these non-market production activities as well, to prevent underestimation of children's involvement in economic production.

### **5.2.3 Circumstances of work**

- 51.** Statistics on circumstances of work across occupations and industries are especially needed for the identification of hazardous forms of work. ILO Recommendation No. 190 of 1999, even though it is intended to guide the national legal determination of what should be prohibited for the under-18s as hazardous work, offers useful guidance to national statistical programmes in this context. Paragraph 3 of the Recommendation calls for particular consideration to be given to the following circumstances:
- (a) work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
  - (b) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;
  - (c) work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
  - (d) work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health; and
  - (e) work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.
- 52.** National statistical programmes could consider collecting information on those elements in the Recommendation No. 190, Paragraph 3, and other work conditions that are identified nationally as potentially hazardous.
- 53.** National statistical programmes should also collect detailed information on working hours as an important proxy for the potential harmfulness of work. While limited light work is not necessarily detrimental to a child's health and need not interfere with formal education, long working hours, on the other hand, are likely to have more serious health and developmental consequences on the child. Long hours mean greater exposure to workplace hazards and less time available for children to exercise their rights to education and leisure.
- 54.** Information of child labour in the so-called "unconditional worst forms"<sup>6</sup> are an especially important, and especially challenging, component of a national statistical programme on child labour. These forms of child labour constitute fundamental violations of human rights, and obtaining information to facilitate their elimination is therefore an immediate priority. Standard household survey methodologies, however, are ill suited to capturing these forms of child labour, as households are reluctant to report the involvement of their children in them, even when they are aware of this involvement and their children still belong to the household. Their identification therefore requires different data collection approaches, as is explained in section 9.

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<sup>6</sup> That is, all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery; the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; and the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities.

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#### **5.2.4 Negative consequences of work**

- 55.** Information on actual harm to children caused by work is needed to help identify hazardous forms of work and the boundaries of light work. National statistical programmes on child labour in this context should collect information on the impact of work both on health and safety and on the educational implications (the international legal standards also mention spiritual, moral or social development outcomes, but these are beyond the realm of empirical measure with current tools).
- 56.** Reports of work-related ill-health and injury are one common measure of the impact on health. But the relationship between children's work and health is complex and often difficult to discern empirically, and this and other similar indicators are imperfect at best. The negative impact of children's work on health, for example, may be obscured by the selection of the healthiest children for work. Health perceptions may also differ from one population group to another, and levels of reported illness among working children and non-working children may be affected by different levels of consciousness of illness. Much of the relationship between child health and work is dynamic (that is, current health is affected by past as much as present work, and current work affects future as much as present health), a fact not captured by measuring reported illness over a short period. This is an area where further methodological work is required.<sup>7</sup>
- 57.** Measuring educational impact is especially relevant in the context of Convention No. 138 stipulations relating to light work, which state that this work should not "prejudice attendance at school ... or the capacity to benefit from the instruction received", and in the context of the UNCRC, which calls for children's protection from work that "...interferes with their education". Numerous standard education indicators (for example, rate of late entry, attendance rate, repetition rate, drop-out rate, and educational attainment) can be used to afford an insight into the impact of work on children's ability to enrol and survive in the school system. More specialized indicators from school-based surveys can provide further information on the special challenges faced by working students (for example, attendance regularity, rate of tardiness, test scores, homework completion and after-hours study).
- 58.** Table 3 presents suggested core indicators relating to the reference population of working children and to the nature, circumstances and harmfulness of work. They are elements that are needed in a national statistical programme on child labour to guide national deliberations on what constitutes child labour and, on this basis, to construct country-specific estimates of child labour incidence and its distribution across regions, industries and occupations.

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<sup>7</sup> For a more complete discussion of measurement issues around child labour and health, see: O. O'Donnell, F. Rosati and E. Van Doorslaer: *Child labour and health: Evidence and research issues*, UCW Working Paper (Florence, January 2002).

<b>Table 3. A national statistical programme on child labour: Core indicators for identifying child labour</b>			
<b>Reference child population in work or employment</b>	<b>Core statistical indicators for identifying child labour</b>		
	<b>Nature of work</b>	<b>Circumstances of work</b>	<b>Harmful consequences of work</b>
1. Economic production - one-week reference period, various work-time thresholds - 12-month reference period - student/ non-student  2. Non-economic production - one-week reference period, various work-time thresholds	1. Economic production [can be measured] - market (4-digit occupation and industry classifications, status in employment) - non-market (4-digit occupation and industry classifications, status in employment) 2. Non-economic production (principal activities) [can be measured] 3. “Unconditional worst forms” [cannot currently be measured with known statistical methods] - all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery - the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances - the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities.	1. Working hours 2. Exposure to physical, psychological or sexual abuse 3. Work underground, under water, at dangerous heights and in confined spaces 4. Work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads 5. Work in an unhealthy environment (exposure to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to the child’s health) 6. Work under particularly difficult conditions (long hours or during the night, or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer)	1. Work-related injury and illness 2. Rate of late entry 3. Attendance rate 4. Repetition rate 5. Drop-out rate 6. Education attainment 7. Learning achievement

### 5.3 Analysing child labour

59. Of particular relevance for purposes of analysis and policy design are indicators of the underlying causes of child labour. As most children (excluding those that live on their own) exercise little control over the use of their time, determining why children work requires investigating why parents choose to engage their children in work rather than sending them to school or leaving them idle at home. This, in turn, calls for information on the wide variety of child-, household- and community-related factors known to influence parents’ decisions. Table 4 presents core indicators in this regard. The range of suggested variables underscores the fact that child labour is a complex phenomenon that cuts across policy boundaries; education, labour markets, capital markets, social security and income distribution all play an important role. A national programme of statistics therefore requires the collection of information in all of these areas.

**Table 4. A national statistical programme on child labour: Core indicators for analysing child labour**

<b>Child-related factors</b>	<b>Household-related factors</b>	<b>Community-related factors</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Age</li> <li>2. Sex</li> <li>3. Birth order</li> <li>4. Ethnic group (<i>optional</i>)</li> <li>5. Relation to head of household</li> <li>6. Orphan status</li> <li>7. Refugee status</li> <li>8. School attendance status</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Residence</li> <li>2. Geographical location</li> <li>3. Education attainment of parents</li> <li>4. Household income/expenditure level</li> <li>5. Employment status of head of household</li> <li>6. Female-headed household</li> <li>7. Household composition/size</li> <li>8. Access to credit</li> <li>9. Access to health insurance</li> <li>10. Exposure to social shocks</li> <li>11. Land ownership</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to early childhood education facility</li> <li>2. Proximity to first- and second-level schooling facilities</li> <li>3. Access to water , electricity and other basic services</li> <li>4. School quality</li> <li>5. Teacher/student ratios</li> <li>6. Presence of female teachers</li> <li>7. School-parent associations</li> <li>8. Out-of-pocket schooling costs</li> <li>9. Youth employment market</li> </ol>

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## 6. STATISTICAL STANDARD FOR GLOBAL COMPARATIVE PURPOSES

60. National statistical standards have to respond to the need of national users who wish to obtain information on the nationally prohibited forms and situations of child labour. Meanwhile, there is also the desire of the global community to measure international child labour trends and seek comparability of data between different countries, and also over time. It is necessary for this purpose to have a set of criteria and cut-offs independent of the differences in national legal rules.
61. The approach adopted by the ILO in its published global estimates of child labour offers one potential way forward in this regard. National statistical programmes might collect data on child labour following this approach for the purposes of global comparison, where necessary in conjunction with a separate national estimate consistent with the outcome of national deliberations (framed within international legal standards) as to what constitutes child labour locally for legislative purposes. The ILO global statistical measure of child labour is described briefly below. Its underlying rationale is elaborated on in the subsequent section in the context of a broader discussion of child labour measurement challenges.
62. The ILO approach to child labour measurement for global comparative purposes is summarized in tables 5a and 5b. As shown in table 5a, excluded forms of work (column 1) are limited to non-economic production. Light work (column 2) is taken as economic production for less than 14 hours per week. Other non-hazardous forms of work included for consideration (column 3) are economic production performed for at least 14 hours per week but less than 43 hours per week. Hazardous and other worst forms of child labour (column 4) are taken as meaning hazardous work in specified hazardous industries and occupations, economic production in non-hazardous industries and occupations that is performed for excessive hours (43 hours or more per week), and the unconditional worst forms of child labour.
63. These categories interact with age ranges in establishing the boundaries for child labour, as discussed above. For children in the “youngest” age range, child labour is taken as all production activity except the excluded forms. For children in the middle age range, child labour is taken as all production activities except the excluded forms and “light” work. Among older children, child labour is taken as hazardous and other worst forms. The age ranges utilized, deriving from ILO Convention No. 138, are 5-11 years, 12-14 years and 15-17 years.<sup>8</sup>
64. With regard to tables 5a and 5b, two issues require attention. In the first place, the estimate of children in the unconditional worst forms of child labour (i.e., trafficked children, forced and bonded child labour, commercial sexual exploitation of children, and use of children for illicit activities in column (2b) of table 5a) can be only approximate, as robust methodologies in this area await development. Secondly, since national lists of hazardous industries and occupations differ, the indicator used to arrive at global estimates of children in hazardous work is the observed overlap among the lists and stipulations concerning hazardous work by children that are provided by the national legislative frameworks, which are assumed to constitute a “core” or “minimal” list of hazardous work prohibited for children. The issue of identifying hazardous work of children is discussed in greater detail in the next section on measurement issues.

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<sup>8</sup> The lower age threshold of five years is used on the assumption that a child below this age is unlikely to have a sufficient understanding of his/ her actions and is too young to be engaged in work (although there could be cases of exploitation and abuse) or to start schooling. The cut-off of 12 years for light work is consistent with the minimum age for light work permitted in less-developed countries. The cut-off of 15 years corresponds to the general minimum age for work or employment specified in Convention No. 138 (although less developed countries may also in this case specify a lower general minimum age of 14 years).

<b>Table 5a. Measurement of child labour for global comparative purposes: ILO approach</b>						
Age group		CHILDREN'S WORK AND EMPLOYMENT				
		(1) Non-hazardous work			(2) Worst forms of child labour	
		(1a) Excluded forms of work	(1b) Light work	(1c) Other non-hazardous forms of work	(2a) Hazardous work	(2b) Unconditional WFCL
Children below minimum age specified for light work	Children aged 5-11 years	Non-economic production			Hazardous work (in specified "hazardous" industries and occupations, 43 or more hours per week in "non-hazardous" industries and occupations)	Trafficked children, forced and bonded child labour, commercial sexual exploitation of children, use of children for illicit activities
Children within the age range specified for light work	Children aged 12-14 years	Non-hazardous economic activity performed for <u>less than</u> 14 hours per week				
Children at or above the general minimum working age	Children aged 15-17 years	Non-hazardous economic activity performed for 14 or more hours per week, but <u>less than</u> 43 hours per week				

<b>Table 5b. Measurement of child labour for global comparative purposes: ILO approach</b>							
CHILD LABOUR							
(a) Children aged 5-11 years in economic activity		(b) Children aged 12-14 years in economic activity, <i>excluding</i> those in light economic activity		(c) Children aged 15-17 years in hazardous work and unconditional worst forms of child labour		(a)+(b)+(c) Total in child labour, 5-17 years	
Percentage of total age group	Number	Percentage of total age group	Number	Percentage of total age group	Number	Percentage of total age group	Number

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## 7. MEASUREMENT ISSUES IN CHILD LABOUR STATISTICS

65. Translating the broad legal concepts contained in the international legal standards into measurable statistical terms involves confronting a number of specific measurement challenges. The most important of these challenges, and how they were addressed in measurement approaches at the global level, are explained below.

### 7.1 Treatment of non-market economic production

66. A few national statistical programmes either do not collect information on common forms of children's non-market economic production (such as fetching water and fuel wood) or collect this information only as part of an aggregate category on "household chores" that spans the SNA production boundary. The exclusion of these activities from consideration as part of economic production leads to an underestimation of children's involvement in economic production and, concomitantly, in child labour. Such national statistical programmes should therefore consider revising their data collection instruments to ensure an accurate distinction between non-market economic production and non-economic production.

### 7.2 Treatment of non-economic production

67. The treatment of non-economic production, particularly of unpaid domestic and personal services by children for consumption within the same household (also called household chores), is one of the most contentious areas of debate in child labour measurement. International legal standards do not rule out *a priori* any form of production activity, raising the question of whether non-economic production should be considered in child labour measurement and, if so, how it should be treated vis-à-vis economic production.
68. Supporters of a wider definition of child labour that includes non-economic activities such as household chores argue that adhering to the narrower definition of child labour as a subset of strictly economic activities carries the risk of gender bias in the data. The reason is that non-economic activities (excluding schooling) by children can be several, but a large proportion is contributed by domestic or personal services that are unpaid and provided by household members within the household, such as housekeeping activities (cleaning, decorating, preparing and serving meals) and caring for children, invalids or old people in their own home. Typically, girls bear a larger share of these tasks than do boys, particularly in low-income developing countries, so that the number of female children who are deprived of schooling because of the time they devote to non-school activities is likely to be undercounted in the more restrictive approach.
69. It is also contended that the vast majority of children perform household chores at least a few hours per week. However, involvement in domestic chores for several hours may have a direct bearing on child welfare, given the fact that long hours spent on household duties may conflict with formal education as much as working in the fields or helping in the family enterprise. For instance, in the case of girls, hours devoted to household chores may be longer than the time that a boy may spend engaged in an economic activity. Thus, economic activities, and household chores, have a common theme in that they both cause children to stay away from the studies, games and leisure that they should be entitled to. While some information on the time spent by children on household chores is collected in most surveys of children, the statistics collected on the time spent and on the classification of such activities is not as precise as it is for "economic activities". There is another important non-empirical motive for treating non-economic production differently from economic production in child labour measurement, which is that the former, performed for reasonable amounts of time, is much more commonly perceived as a normal and even beneficial part of childhood in most societies.

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70. Again, the reality of bringing together economic and non-economic activities within the scope of a single definition of work done by children is not an easy task. One reason is that a large proportion of the children would be devoting time to both economic and non-economic activities, but combining economic activity with non-economic activities into a standard measurement of children's work so as to develop a transformation index between the two tasks will call for a great deal of further research. Another factor is that while different types of economic activity may be measured in terms of some notional standard value of production and then compared, for non-economic activities the only possible standardized measure would be based on time use; but comparisons based on time are difficult to establish, as the intensity of effort in a standard time unit among different activities and children (even of same age and sex) would show large variations.
71. While there is also some empirical evidence that children's non-market activities can, at times, interfere with their right to education and leisure, there are at the same time important differences between economic and non-economic production in terms of their composition, intensity and, above all, impact.<sup>9</sup> Data from household survey programmes on child labour indicate that children's involvement in economic production is typically less common than in non-economic production, but that economic production is generally performed more intensely and with greater apparent consequences for their health, safety and education. Child involvement in non-economic production, on the other hand, is much more common, but generally performed less intensely and with fewer apparent adverse effects on health and safety. On the basis that it is the intensity rather than the nature of non-economic production that is the main determinant of its impact on schooling, UNICEF has applied a work-time threshold of 28 hours per week spent in performing household chores, in excess of which the work is considered as child labour under its MICS programme.<sup>10</sup> The empirical analysis to support such a threshold, however, is not robust.
72. Nonetheless, child labour surveys have shown that household chores absorb a considerable amount of children's time.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, one area on which further research and consensus is required is the development of guidance as to how much time spent by a child on household chores may be permissible, beyond which even such a non-economic activity should be labelled as undesirable and therefore potentially as child labour. Given the importance of this matter, national statistical programmes may wish to consider collecting information on the weekly hours spent by children in non-economic production in order to assess its possible effect upon schooling.

### 7.3 Identification of hazardous work by children

73. Data on hazardous work by children form an essential part of child labour statistics, especially for data users who wish to prioritize action against child labour by focusing on the worst forms of child labour.

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, ILO/IPEC and UCW, *Children's non-market activities and child labour measurements: A discussion based on household survey data* (Geneva, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> See [www.childinfo.org](http://www.childinfo.org)

<sup>11</sup> At the 16<sup>th</sup> ICLS in 1998, the concepts, definitions, measurements and classifications of child labour were discussed in depth. The Conference recommended that work of a domestic nature (housekeeping, household chores), performed by children in their own parents' or guardian's household where they actually reside, should be included in the mapping of children's schooling and non-schooling activities, and that "this category should be separately tabulated from children engaged in economic activity". See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/download/16thicls/repconf.pdf>

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74. According to Convention No. 138, Article 3, para. 1, “the minimum age for admission to any type of employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of young persons shall not be less than 18 years.”<sup>12</sup> As to Convention No. 182, Article 3(d) defines as one of the worst forms of child labour “work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children”, while Article 2 defines a as a person under the age of 18. This category of work is usually referred to as *hazardous work*. The important point to note is that both Conventions place upon member States the responsibility of determining what types of employment and work should be considered hazardous, after consultation with organizations of employers and workers. Thus, in terms of legal rules concerning prohibition of hazardous work by children, the international standards expect national legislations to differ one from the other.
75. ILO Recommendation No. 190 supplementing Convention No. 182 suggests a number of elements to be taken into account when determining the legal list of hazardous work at the national level.<sup>13</sup>As a result, most countries now have laws, regulations or some similar official notifications identifying hazardous work from which children under 18 are banned. These legal texts should provide the principal source for national statistical criteria for identifying hazardous work carried out by children.
76. However, these legal prohibitions are not necessarily useful criteria for the purpose of statistical measurement. One way for the legal prohibition to be reflected in statistical measurement criteria is to use industries or occupations as the parameter. The legal prohibition, in certain cases, corresponds to a specific industry or occupation classified according to statistical standards, which renders measurement less complicated by referring to the occupation in which a child is working in terms, for instance, of the codes in the national classification of occupations. Other types of prohibition that relate to dangerous tasks (work with dangerous machinery) that may be carried out in different occupations, or to an unhealthy environment (such as high temperature, level of noise) that may not be inherent in particular occupations would be more difficult to measure, unless a wide range of detailed information can be gathered on each working child’s tasks and working conditions. For the legal determination of prohibited hazardous work for the under-18s, it is not always recommendable to classify an entire occupation as hazardous, for fear of unduly depriving young people of employment opportunities. Thus, the measurement of hazardous work for children involves two steps: (a) the listing of occupations to be counted as hazardous for the purpose of statistical measurement, and (b) the gathering of other information relating to national legal prohibitions which do not correspond to the classification of occupations.
77. The methodology for the ILO’s global estimation of hazardous work by children<sup>14</sup> may offer a useful insight to the manner in which statistical criteria of hazardous work by children could be developed so as to reflect national legal prohibitions of hazardous work. It involves the application of multiple layers of filters to the broader concept of working children in the relevant age group

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<sup>12</sup> Convention No. 138, Article 3, para.3, stipulates that, under certain strict conditions, employment or work from the age of 16 years may exceptionally be authorized “on condition that the health, safety and morals of the young persons concerned are fully protected and that the young persons have received adequate specific instruction or vocational training in the relevant branch of activity”, if the national legislation or competent authority so decides after tripartite consultation. This exception is not a generalized lowering of the minimum age for hazardous work from 18 to 16, but rather a response to a need that exists especially in developed countries, where the authorities wish to allow young workers under protected and controlled circumstances to be trained on the job for tasks or processes listed as hazardous work. Moreover, the option should be limited only to countries where the legal list properly exists and the legal provisions explicitly foresee the exceptional authorization from 16 years of age in accordance with requirements under Convention No. 138. In addition, because the exception depends on conditions of full protection and adequate instruction in advance, much additional information on each situation would be required to assess whether or not those conditions are fulfilled.

<sup>13</sup> See subsection 5.2.3

<sup>14</sup> ILO/IPEC, *Global Child Labour Trends 2000 to 2004*, (Geneva, April 2006).

(under 18 years of age). It includes a procedure for the specification of designated hazardous industries and occupations, and other circumstances to be regarded as constituting hazardous work by children, in particular an upper time threshold in excess of which even permissible work in non-designated industries and occupations by children would be categorized as hazardous. The procedure is as follows:

- i) First, all children economically active within designated hazardous industries with reference to the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) – namely, mining or construction – are counted as children engaged in hazardous work.
- ii) Second, among the economically active children in non-designated industries, those who are in designated hazardous occupations with reference to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) are likewise counted as children in hazardous work.
- iii) Third, among the economically active children in non-designated occupations in non-designated industries, those who have worked above a threshold of working hours (43 hours per week<sup>15</sup>), are also added to the number of children in hazardous work.

78. The above procedure could be refined by national statistical offices, should the available data permit, by including additional filters. For instance, the number of children in hazardous work could include economically active children working less than the threshold hours in non-designated occupations in non-designated industries, where their work comprises *night work* (which needs to be defined by national legislation) or where it is possible from answers to the questionnaires used to classify their *working conditions* as hazardous (e.g., extremely hot, very noisy, unhealthy).

79. For the purpose of its global estimates, the ILO compiled a list of designated hazardous occupations and processes frequently found in the national legislation of a variety of countries regarding the work of children. The list, reproduced in table 6 below, contains some 42 items, combining occupational titles, economic activities and work processes.

<b>Table 6: Hazardous occupations and processes in national legislation<sup>16</sup></b>	
The following occupations or processes have been documented as exposing children to hazards to an extent that countries have prohibited the admission of children under 18 years of age (or a lower age, where indicated) to these occupations or processes by law:	
Work in abattoirs, meat rendering	Work with machinery in motion (operation, cleaning, repairs, etc.)
Work in the aluminium industry (16 years)	Manufacture of matches (16 years)
Work on airport runways	Maritime work
Work with dangerous, wild animals	Mining, quarrying, underground work
Archaeological excavations	Oil prospecting, work in petroleum
Brick manufacture	Work with oxyacetylene blowpipes (16 years)
Cable laying	Work with pedal/crank-operated equipment (16 years)
Care for mentally disturbed persons	Work in salt and brine processes
Carpet weaving (14 years)	Shipbuilding (16 years)
Catering at railway stations (14 years)	Soap manufacture (14 years)
Cinder-picking, clearing ash-pits (14 years)	Work with steam engines and equipment

<sup>15</sup> The 43-hour threshold for weekly hours of work used in the ILO global estimate methodology is set above the mid-point of normal hours of work stipulated in national legislations, mostly in the range of 40 to 44.

<sup>16</sup> ILO/IPEC, *Global Child Labour Trends 2000-2004*, op.cit., Annex 3, p.50.

Work with circular saws, other dangerous cutting machines	Street trades Work in sugar mills (16 years)
Work in commercial agriculture	Work in tanneries
Work in construction, demolition	Work in textile industries (specific tasks)
Work in crystal, glass manufacture	Operating vehicles
Domestic services (16 years)	Underwater work
Work in entertainment establishments (night clubs, bars, casinos, circuses, gambling halls)	Work in water and gas industry
Excavation work	Work with heavy weights and loads
Work with fire brigades, gas rescue services	Welding and smelting of metals, metalworking
Forestry work	Work at courts, prisons, probation officers

80. The ILO also compiled for its global estimates a list of 24 groups of hazardous agents and products that have been subject to legal prohibition in a number of countries, and a short list of hazardous physical environment conditions (respectively, tables 7a and 7b).<sup>17</sup>

<i>Table 7a: List of hazardous products and agents</i>		
Products and agents banned by law in a number of countries as hazardous for child workers		
Alcohol production, sale	Compressed air/gas	Mercury
Asbestos	Electricity	Paints, solvents,
Benzene	Explosives	Pathogenic agents
Bleaching and chlorine	Fumes, dust, gas, other	Potassium, sodium
Cadmium	Infra-red, ultraviolet rays, etc.	Radioactive substances, etc.
Cement	Lead/zinc metallurgy	Rubber
Chemicals	Manganese	Tar, asphalt, bitumen
Chromium	Marble, stone, gypsum	Tobacco (i.e. <i>bidi</i> making)

<i>Table 7b: List of physical environment conditions</i>		
Physical environment conditions that may be pose hazards for child workers:		
Thermal stress (heat, cold)	Abnormal or lack of light	Ergonomic hazards
Vibration and noise	Increased or decreased air pressure	Accident hazards
Inadequate ventilation		

81. Thus, the measurement of hazardous work by children may first be based on a list of industries and occupations deemed hazardous for children, based on national legislation or other documentation on child labour where it exists.<sup>18</sup> Where such a legal list of hazardous work does not exist, reference may be made to the Paragraph 3 of ILO Recommendation No. 190 quoted above; it may also be useful to refer to the classification codes of hazardous occupations used by the ILO global estimates, or to the information on common elements of legal prohibitions gathered for that

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> For instance, if a country is still in consultation concerning the legal determination of a hazardous work list, even a draft list awaiting finalization may be of guidance for statistical measurement.

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purpose. Those industries and occupations designated as hazardous then have to be defined in statistical terms by relating them to the most relevant specific industry and occupation codes of the corresponding national and/or international classification systems. While for industries, national correspondence to the international standard industrial classification of all economic activities (ISIC Rev.3) may be sufficient, national statistical offices should code occupations by correspondence to the most recent international standard classification of occupations (ISCO-08). Furthermore, in reporting the data on hazardous work by children, national statistical offices should indicate the level at which the hazardous industries and occupations were coded.

82. One element for the identification of hazardous work referred to in ILO Recommendation No. 190 that lends itself to objective measurement is work for long hours. National legislation concerning labour often includes provisions setting an upper time threshold for work by children under a certain age. Above that threshold, even otherwise permissible work in non-designated industries and occupations by children who are above the minimum working age would be categorized as hazardous, and national statistical offices should use the threshold for the statistical identification of “hazardous work”.
83. Concerning the circumstances or conditions in which the work is carried out in a particular setting at a specific instance by the working child, which also have an important bearing on the health and safety of working children, the issue is more complex than one of translating elements into ISIC or ISCO codes or a number of working hours. The collection of data on the hazardous substances, processes and work situations included in this category would have to be based on the inclusion of specific questions in the questionnaires used in household or other surveys. In fact, this is the greatest challenge to the objective measurement of hazardous work, as fixed and quantifiable objective standards for measuring hazardous working conditions do not exist. In addition, it is highly unlikely that quantitative information on such elements as temperature, noise level or vibrations at the workplace would be available in the circumstances where child labour usually occurs. Certain types of legal prohibition of hazardous forms of work do not correspond to particular occupations, and an ISCO classification code cannot therefore be attributed to them.

#### 7.4 Identification of light work

84. Light work is difficult to define in statistical terms. ILO Convention No. 138, Article 7, stipulates that light work should (a) not be harmful to a child’s health and development and (b) not prejudice attendance at school and participation in vocational training nor the capacity to benefit from the instruction received. The exclusion of hazardous work from light work is obvious from this legal definition, but determining other forms of work that should or should not fall within the confines of light work is much less clear-cut.
85. In the absence of detailed information on the health impact of work in most contexts, one approach would be to use the educational impact of work as the main criterion for distinguishing light work. But even with this simplification, there are different possible ways forward. The most straightforward would be to define the group in *non-light* work as all children in economic activity *not* attending school, but it could be argued that this approach would be too broad in that it would classify all non-student working children as child labourers whereas clearly not all would be out of school *because* of work. Moreover, Convention No. 138’s definition of light work also excludes work that interferes with children’s ability to benefit from classroom instruction, suggesting that the economic activity performed by children attending school should not be overlooked altogether from consideration as non-light work. Indeed, empirical evidence from a number of countries

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indicates that involvement in work has a significant negative effect on student learning achievement.<sup>19</sup>

- 86.** An alternative approach would be simply to distinguish light from non-light work on the basis of work-time thresholds applied to all working children, regardless of their school attendance status. There are some empirical grounds for this approach, in that research shows that work intensity affects both school attendance and performance, two of the key criteria for light work set out in Convention No. 138. The ILO follows this approach for its global child labour estimates and defines light work as any form of economic production that is performed for less than 14 hours a week that is not hazardous. The 14 hour cut-off point is supported by another ILO Convention, the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932 (No. 33), which sets two hours per day, on either school days or holidays, as the maximum for light work from the age of 12 years.<sup>20</sup> Again, this is an area where further research is required, and national statistical programmes should consider collecting detailed information to enable an analysis to be made of the impact of work on school attendance and performance, in order to permit a refinement of statistical criteria concerning light work.

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<sup>19</sup> In Cambodia, for example, the World Bank, using test score data from a nationally representative survey of primary schools, reported that work had a significant detrimental effect on learning achievement. Estimated models for literacy and numeracy test scores (including children, parental, household and schooling characteristics) indicated that working every day before going to school reduced literacy and numeracy test scores of Cambodian fourth-graders by about nine percentage points in both cases. World Bank: *Cambodia: Quality basic education for all* (January, 2005)

<sup>20</sup> Article 3, para. 1, of the Convention states that “Children over twelve years of age may, outside the hours fixed for school attendance, be employed on light work (a) which is not harmful to their health or normal development; (b) which is not such as to prejudice their attendance at school or their capacity to benefit from the instruction there given; and (c) the duration of which *does not exceed two hours per day on either school days or holidays*, the total number of hours spent at school and on light work in no case to exceed seven per day” (emphasis added).

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## 8. CHILD LABOUR INDICATORS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

### 8.1 Child labour indicators

- 87.** Demand for data on child labour stems from the needs of various government departments, the social partners, researchers, the donor community, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders. The purpose for which the data is required may therefore vary significantly between the users, and hence the scope of the data required to meet each specific demand, and the detail in which the information should be reported, also varies considerably. Nevertheless, there are key variables that run across the different requirements and are essential for understanding the phenomenon of child labour. These variables are broadly of two categories: first, information on the incidence and nature of child labour, which assists in identifying the dimensions of the problem; and second, information on the causes and consequences of child labour, which is crucial for designing intervention programmes to eliminate child labour.
- 88.** The more pervasive and complex the child labour situation is in a given country, the larger will be the scale of data requirements. However, since child labour statistics are relatively new, some countries may lack the technical and financial resources to collect such information even at periodic intervals. Or the child labour problem in a country may not be very acute, and be restricted to a few locations and sectors. In the latter instances, a judiciously selected smaller set of statistics and indicators could well satisfy the requirements for information on the incidence of child labour and for analyzing its consequences. A corollary to this is that large intervention programmes for areas and sectors where the child labour problem is severe need to be supported by a wide range of statistics and other information.
- 89.** At the minimum, the information collected should make possible an estimation of the total number of children by age and sex, the overall activity rate, the number of children engaged in each of the different forms of child labour, the hours of work, the proportion of children enrolled but not attending schooling, and the proportions attending schooling and working. Socioeconomic details on household characteristics (household size, number of family members, income, expenditure, some details on the work and education status of the head of household) should also be collected. In addition, for purposes of analysis, the data should if possible identify selected socioeconomic categories in the society, for instance by ethnicity, religion and rural/urban area or by administrative division.
- 90.** Perhaps the most important issue in a child labour survey is accurately determining the activity status of the target population in the group of children between the ages of 5 to 17 years, i.e. those who are economically active and who are not. Any omission and misclassification of the children being surveyed can have a major impact on the findings for the target population.
- 91.** A key initial step in policy oriented research or in the design of an action programme is to determine the extent and nature of the child labour problem and understand its causes and consequences. There are several reasons why such data is required. Statistics on the prevalence and nature of child labour are required for prioritization of interventions, target setting and, subsequently, impact evaluation. Besides the count of children in various sectors and forms of child labour, basic demographic data are also required for estimating or projecting population numbers needed so as to calculate proportions and percentages. Ideally, data should be available for estimating the level and trend of child labour, with an eye to their disaggregation by age, sex and geographical area. The analysis of such differentials is essential, inter alia, for formulating policy responses that are adequate and appropriate for each geographical area.

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**92.** The statistics and qualitative information on the nature of child labour that are required in order to develop a child labour profile in any given situation may be grouped into broad categories: (i) the child, (ii) the household to which the child belongs, (iii) the child's workplace conditions, (iv) the community infrastructure, and (v) contextual indicators and factors. Selected data requirements under each category are highlighted below.

*i) The child*

Characteristics (age, sex, mental and physical health, etc.)  
Basic learning competencies (literacy, numeric and life skills)  
Activities engaged in (economic and non-economic production, school, leisure)  
School attendance  
Attitude to work (is help accepted or are efforts to remove the child from WFCL resisted)

*ii) The household to which the child belongs*

Family characteristics (demographic composition)  
Socioeconomic status (income, expenditure, wealth, assets, land)  
Living conditions (housing, fuel used, availability of drinking water and toilet facilities)  
Parental perceptions (values and attitude towards education, goals for children, awareness of WFCL, attitude towards WFCL)

*iii) The child's workplace conditions*

Workplace characteristics (sector, size, child's status in employment, characteristics of work, hours of work, remuneration arrangements, technology used, recruitment procedures)  
Hazards faced by children (occupational accidents and diseases, ergonomic hazards, harmful substances and sources of exposure, exposure to physical agents and psychological hazards and abuse)  
Interaction with others at workplace  
Medical attention and recreation facilities

*iv) The community infrastructure*

Public utilities (wells, roads, community centres)  
Health and sanitation (primary health care facilities, family planning services, general health situation, availability of sufficient food and water)  
Attitudes (regarding schooling, gender, awareness of WFCL, attitude towards WFCL, degree of mobilization against WFCL, community participation on social issues)  
Schools (presence, distance, access, cost, schooling quality, monitoring)  
Local economy (income distribution, land ownership, capacity of local government, adult labour markets, types of industry, employment and technology, vocational training facilities).

*v) Contextual indicators and factors (external to the household)*

Political factors (participation, democracy, commitment to programmes, principles of good governance)  
Legal facilities (legal framework regarding crime, education and labour, enforcement capacity)  
Demographic characteristics (fertility rate, mortality rate, population growth rate, availability and use of contraceptive and attitude towards their use)  
Socioeconomic context (poverty, wealth, inequality)  
Economy (employment rates, industry, trade)  
Education (male/female literacy rates, total expenditure)

**93.** The objective of designating a good and efficient set of child labour statistics and information base is to develop indicators that are easy to calculate, understand and interpret, and which are (to the extent possible) comparable over time from one country or context to another. The ideal measures

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should both draw attention to the forms of child labour that are most hazardous to children and be gender sensitive<sup>21</sup>. In fact, to facilitate an informed analysis of the child labour situation, statistics on working children should be made available by sex, age groups, and urban/ rural residency status. For policy and programme intervention purposes, child labour data should be disaggregated to the lowest administrative unit, as possible.

94. There are several possible classifications into which child labour data may be compiled for supporting analysis and research, and much depends on the objectives and scope of the survey. A possible approach to compiling child labour statistics is presented below.

*Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics*

Name of place of origin (village, community, town)  
Size of household  
Head of household  
Siblings in the household  
Age, gender, education status of children  
Engagement of children under 18 years of age in economic production  
Contribution of children and youth to household income  
Land tenure (sharecroppers or owners) and work activity of head of household  
Migratory status of the household (place of origin, length of period living in the village, migratory patterns or practice)  
Ethnic and religious background (*optional*)  
Housing (structure and amenities)  
Economic and social status (including recent shocks faced by household)  
Annual/monthly family expenditure (or income) and sources  
Debt, if any, of household head

*Child labour and working children*

Distribution of working children by occupation and branch of economic activity, status in employment, method of payment  
Knowledge and attitudes regarding child labour, child work  
Awareness of the rights of child workers  
Awareness of child labour-related national laws and regulations  
Existence and mechanisms of enforcement within communities  
Type and location of work at home, farm, other places  
Hours worked per week  
Periods when work is performed  
Seasonality of work  
Reasons for child to be at work  
Conditions of work (type and frequency of payment, exposure to sun, chemicals, evidence of other hazards and dangerous conditions, etc.)  
Accidents, injuries or sickness incurred due to work-related activities (nature and extent of accident/injury/ill-health)  
Engagement in household chores (hours per week, main tasks)

*Occupational safety and health*

Illness, injuries by occupation, activity  
Knowledge and attitudes regarding safe work practices and procedures, by activity (tools and equipment use, pesticide exposure, sun exposure, heat stress, insect bites, etc.)

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<sup>21</sup> This means that the statistics should not inadvertently exclude activities carried out mainly by either boys or girls, so that the data analysis does not discriminate against one group or the other. An example of such inadvertent exclusion would be a survey composed of indicators that exclude non-economic activities, since studies have shown that girls engage in a disproportionate amount of non-economic activity, usually in the form of household chores.

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Young people's knowledge of what to do in the event of accidents and injuries and practical training in such eventualities

Knowledge and attitudes related to risk and risk management and prevention of accidents and injuries

Accidents or work-related health problems reported by others in the community

Other hazardous or dangerous work evident within the community where children are involved or at risk of involvement (mining, forestry, fishing, entertainment services, etc.)

Application practices involving chemicals (for example, pesticide) and involvement of children (proximity of housing and schools to treated work areas, potential for drift, posting, re-entry intervals, methods of application, handling of equipment, maintenance of equipment and protective gear, storage and disposal of pesticide containers, etc.)

#### *Local education resources and infrastructure*

Local school enrolment rate

Actual school attendance

Number of out-of-school youth

Grades completed by children, youth and adults

Proximity of schools (primary, junior secondary and senior secondary levels) in kilometres

Literacy rate of children and other family members

Attitudes toward education, formal school and teachers

Attitudes toward access and relevance of formal education

Attitudes toward, and access to, non-formal education programmes

Reasons children attend or do not attend school

School drop-out rate

School facilities, condition and needs

Quality of teaching methodology and curriculum used (formal or non-formal)

Pupil-teacher ratio

Interest in participating in non-formal literacy and life-skills education programme

95. The above list of indicators is somewhat exhaustive, and to obtain all of the data through a single survey may not be practicable. An illustrative list of child labour indicators, based on data that may be collected by applying the ILO/IPEC "model" questionnaire to a stand-alone national child labour survey, is provided in the Appendix to the draft resolution annexed to this report.

## **8.2 Classification of children by activity status**

96. *Working children/ employed children/ economically active children*: children who report their engagement in an economic production for at least one hour on any day during the reference week (or past seven days), or during a certain specified number of months during the reference year (or past 12 months). Such children do some work, in the reference period, for payment in cash or kind, or are in self-employment for profit or family gain in a business enterprise, a farm or a service undertaking. Fetching water, collection of firewood for their own homes and paid domestic work in other households are counted as economic production.
97. Two useful measures of the economically active child population are the *currently active children* measured in reference to a short reference period, and the *usually active children* measured in reference to a long reference period.
98. *Currently active children*: applies to the total of (a) children at work, that is, children who are engaged in economic production, paid or unpaid, during the specified short reference period for at least one hour, and (b) children who have a job but who are not at work (temporarily absent) during the reference period for various reasons, except unpaid workers in family business or farm.
99. *Usually active children*: applies to children who are working for a certain specified number of months during the long reference period.

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100. *Children in non-economic activities*: children who are engaged in unpaid domestic and personal services for consumption within the same household (also termed “household chores”). Non-economic activities (excluding studying) by children can be of several kinds, but a large proportion entail household chores that would include housekeeping activities (cleaning, decorating, preparing and serving meals), caring for children, sick or old people in their own home, and making minor repairs in their home.
  101. *Students*: children who are attending school, which may mean a registered and formal educational institution or a non-formal but regular arrangement for receiving education. Children not attending any form of schooling are *non-students*.
  102. *Children not economically active*: children who have not engaged in economic production in the last reference period, including children wanting work.
  103. *Children wanting work*: children who are currently not engaged in economic production but want to work.
  104. *Idle children*: children who do not go to school, are not economically active, and also do not perform any household chores.

### **8.3 Classification of children in worst forms of child labour**

#### **8.3.1 Unconditional worst forms of child labour**

105. *Child trafficking*. Child trafficking is defined by the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, 2000, (Article 3 (c) and (d)) as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring and receipt of a boy or a girl [of less than 18 years of age] for the purpose of exploitation”. Article 3 also distinguishes child trafficking from trafficking in persons in general, which it describes as “the threat of use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation”; inasmuch as this text applies to adults, it does not constitute the necessary conditions for the identification of child trafficking. In other words, child trafficking does not necessarily entail illicit means, but it does imply the removal of children from a familiar environment (not necessarily the crossing of an international border) and that the consent of children recruited is irrelevant if there is abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, fraud or deception. It should be noted that in this context child trafficking is a process in which the trafficked child later becomes the victim to another form of child labour, usually one of the unconditional worst forms.
106. *Forced child labour*. Forced (compulsory) labour is defined by ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), in Article 2, para. 1, as “all work or service exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily”. Forced child labour can be distinguished from other forms of child labour by the presence of one or more of the following elements: (i) restriction of the freedom to move, (ii) a degree of control over the child going beyond the normal exertion of lawful authority, (iii) physical or mental violence, and (iv) absence of informed consent.
107. *Bonded child labour*. Bonded labour is a form of forced labour in which the element of coercion flows from a debt incurred by the worker. The Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, adopted in 1956, defines debt bondage as follows (Article 1(a)): “Debt bondage [is] the status or condition arising from the pledge by a debtor of his personal services or those of a person under his control as security for a debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied towards the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and

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defined.” Bonded child labour would thus refer to children’s underpaid or unpaid work for an employer for excessively long hours, ensuing from a debt contracted by their parents and constituting exploitative employment practices affecting the parents and involving children being pledged for credit.

- 108.** *Children in armed conflict/Child soldiers.* A child in armed conflict/child soldier is any person under 18 years of age who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers and those accompanying such groups, other than purely as family members.<sup>22</sup> Activities would include attending military training in the camps of rebel groups, food preparation and related activities for the benefit of the older members of the armed force where the child is a member, being a member of the foot patrol, sentry group, blocking force, armed escorts of older officials etc., or participating in the para-medical team, propaganda unit or urban hit squad of the armed group. It would also include the activities of children who are used as decoys, spies or couriers. While ILO Convention No. 182 refers only to forced recruitment, in practice it may be impossible to distinguish between *forced* and *voluntary* recruitment.
- 109.** *Commercial sexual exploitation of children.* This relates to the use, procurement or offering of a child for prostitution, production of pornography or pornographic performances. According to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography<sup>23</sup>, child prostitution means “the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any form of consideration”, whereas child pornography means “any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes”. It is entirely, or at least primarily, for financial or other economic reasons. The economic exchanges involved may be either monetary or non-monetary (that is, food, shelter, drugs) but in every case involve maximum benefits to the exploiter and an abrogation of the basic rights, dignity, autonomy, physical and mental well-being of the children involved. It is often characterized by violence against and coercion of the child, and is frequently linked to child trafficking and forced child labour where mostly girls are victims. It is usually, but not always, organized by an intermediary such as a parent, family member or procurer, and includes children in sexual relationships with adults in exchange for money and family support within the context of their home, on the street or in private business places.
- 110.** *Children in illicit activities.* When referring to children in illicit activities, Convention No. 182 focuses on children involved in the production and trafficking of drugs. The services rendered are for the benefit of a drug trader or exploiter engaged in the illegal drug business. This includes a child carrying out tasks for his/her parents in the illegal drug business and who might not receive any compensation or income for his/her work.

### **8.3.2 Potential worst forms of child labour**

- 111.** *Street children.* Children working on the streets may be classified into two groups. The first group of children work on the streets during the day, sometimes during the evening and night, but finally go home to stay with their family. The second group of children are working and living in the streets (in front of shops, markets and other such open spaces). They are independent and have left their homes or their families have disintegrated. They are children of the streets. These children may be involved in such activities as selling napkins, light food and drink items like chewing gum and water, newspapers/ magazines, flowers, and other small items appropriate to the season. Some

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<sup>22</sup> The definition is based on the *Cape Town Principles*, adopted at the Symposium on the Prevention of Recruitment of Children into the Armed Forces and Demobilization and Social Reintegration of Child Soldiers in Africa, Cape Town, 30 April 1997. <http://www.pitt.edu/~ginie/mounzer/conventions.html#CapetownPrinciples>

<sup>23</sup> Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 May 2000; entered into force on 18 January 2002. <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/dopchild.htm>

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may be engaged in car washing, shoe shining, street cleaning, garbage collection, and playing, singing or performing for profit. Street children who are independent are vulnerable to being involved in drug abuse, street gangs, violence, stealing and prostitution.

- 112.** *Child domestic workers.* These are children who carry out (legally) permissible domestic work in a third party's household with remuneration in cash or in kind. Domestic work undertaken by children under the legal minimum working age, as well as by children above the legal minimum age but under slavery-like, hazardous or other exploitative conditions is distinguished as *child domestic labour (slated for abolition)*.
- 113.** *Child rag-pickers/Child scavengers.* This group includes working children collecting rags or recyclable materials that can be sold for money. Rag picking entails the sorting, collecting and selling of various waste materials that can be found at dumpsites, riverbanks, street corners or in residential areas, consisting primarily of plastics, bottles, cardboard, tin, aluminium, iron, brass and copper.
- 114.** *Child porters.* Child porters refer to two categories of children: (i) those carrying loads over long distances and journeys requiring more than one day, and (ii) those working short distances in such areas as markets, business centres, and bus and truck parks. In both cases, the children receive a payment that is usually in cash. Excluded from the definition are children who carry loads for their own families without any remuneration.
- 115.** *Child beggars.* Begging by children may be considered as child labour, depending upon the circumstances. When a child is begging of its own free will it should not be considered as child labour, as begging *per se* is not a production activity, and money received from begging is not "income" but a "transfer" under SNA Rev. 1993. However, where the child is forced to beg (either by parents whatsoever be the compulsion, or by an adult after being trafficked, or by the institution where the child studies or resides, in return for upkeep and under the menace of penalty) it would be considered child labour and classified as *forced child labour*. It would also amount to child labour should the child be employed by an adult for a wage to beg and/or collect donations.

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## 9. CHILD LABOUR DATA COLLECTION

### 9.1 Methodologies for child labour data collection<sup>24</sup>

- 116.** ILO/IPEC's SIMPOC programme has devoted considerable time and resources to develop and improve, through a constant process of research and field implementation (largely in collaboration with national statistical offices), methodologies for child labour data collection through various types of surveys. Two important features regarding child labour data collection should be noted at the outset. First, the experience of ILO/IPEC has revealed the household-based national child labour survey as the most favoured child labour data collection methodology by the national statistical offices, as it is capable of providing a comprehensive range of child labour indicators. While most countries that have had a national child labour survey have implemented it as a stand-alone survey, some countries have preferred to anchor it as a module and extension of their labour force surveys. Second, while a reliable estimate of "working children" (including those in hazardous work) for a country may be generated through the household-based national child labour survey, its full "child labour" population *per se* is more difficult to accurately compile since methodologies for robust estimates of children in the unconditional worst forms of child labour are not currently available.
- 117.** Obtaining comprehensive child labour data may involve combining two or more data collection approaches in a complementary way, depending on the purpose for which the information is required: household-based surveys, baseline surveys<sup>25</sup>, establishment surveys, rapid assessment studies<sup>26</sup>, street children surveys, school surveys, and community level inquiries. The survey methodologies are not mutually exclusive, and can be quantitative, qualitative or a combination of both. The choice of which method(s) to apply depends on the objectives and purpose of the survey, the type of child labour to be investigated, the level of accuracy and reporting detail required, and the available budget. It is also useful to take into consideration the kind of information to be gathered (quantitative data for estimating the prevalence of child labour, or qualitative information to understand the nature, causes and consequences of a specific worst form of child labour). In fact, essential to statistical planning is the choice of an appropriate combination of data collection instruments to meet both the measurement objectives and the data needs of a given situation.
- 118.** Given the nature of child labour, qualitative methods remain an important investigation approach. They enable information gathering on the working and living circumstances of children by means of discussions and interviews in a quick and simplified way within clearly defined geographical areas such as small communities, towns, villages or urban areas. Qualitative methods use semi-structured questionnaires or none at all, in-depth interviews and conversations, careful and attentive observation, and background information derived from a variety of sources such as survey findings, reports, case studies, key informants or knowledgeable persons. Their scope is therefore limited to the area(s) where the survey has been conducted and its output is primarily descriptive. Although qualitative methods may provide some numerical data, these cannot be extrapolated to larger populations.

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<sup>24</sup> For a comprehensive presentation of the various child labour data collection methods listed in this subsection, please see ILO/IPEC, *Child Labour Statistics: Manual on methodologies for data collection through surveys*, Geneva, March 2004 (ISBN 92-2-116167-6). The publication is also available on the ILO/IPEC website <http://www.ilo.org/ipeinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=141>

<sup>25</sup> Some researchers prefer to use the term "baseline study" rather than "baseline survey". However, both imply the same data collection procedures and the terms are used interchangeably.

<sup>26</sup> Again, some researchers prefer to use the term "rapid assessment procedures" rather than "rapid assessment studies". However, both imply the same data collection and analysis methods.

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119. Quantitative approaches, on the other hand, allow the application of known statistical methods for making reliable estimates about a larger population (at the national, regional or sectoral level). Such estimates are critical for informed policy making to combat child labour. Therefore, to fill in a significant lacuna in child labour statistics, a major ongoing research initiative of ILO/IPEC is to develop robust quantitative methodologies for making national-level estimates of children in the unconditional worst forms of child labour.
120. Another important factor in the context of child labour is that, due to gaps in the availability of desired data, statistics from one source may be sometimes used to supplement information from another source. However, statistics derived from one source can be usefully linked or compared with those derived from another source only if proper care is taken to match concepts, definitions, classifications and reference periods, wherever possible.
121. Brief details on the different possible child labour data collection methodologies are given below. For each survey method, complete details of the field application procedures together with sample questionnaires are provided in the ILO/IPEC manual on child labour statistics.<sup>27</sup>

### 9.1.1 Household-based survey

122. With the exceptions of a few special child labour categories (such as children who live on the street, or those engaged in “hidden” forms of child labour), household surveys based on probability sampling provide an efficient approach for estimating the prevalence of particular forms of child labour. The household-based *national child labour survey* (NCLS) also makes it possible to ask a large number of questions related to child labour conditions, and the experience of ILO/IPEC has revealed that, in collaboration with the national statistical office, the results can be obtained quite efficiently. In addition, the household is often the most appropriate unit for identifying children and their families, measuring their socioeconomic and demographic characteristics and housing conditions, and obtaining information on the circumstances that force them to work and, for many in household-based economic activities, on their conditions of work.
123. The respondents in the stand-alone household-based survey are the most knowledgeable adult household member (who may be the head of household) and the children of the household between 5 and 17 years of age. The survey questionnaire<sup>28</sup> is usually divided into three parts:
- (a) The first part is addressed to the most knowledgeable adult household member (or head of household) on the composition of the household; demographic characteristics of each household member; educational attainment, and current and usual economic activity details of each household members aged 5 years and above; household chores carried out by children aged 5-17 years; and perception of parents about the working children (including reason for letting them work).
  - (b) The second part is also addressed to the most knowledgeable adult household member (or head of household) on the socioeconomic characteristics of the household.
  - (c) The third part is addressed to each of the children between 5 and 17 years old who normally reside in the same household, about their education, current economic activities (including wanting to work), and conditions of work (especially health and safety issues), and household chores performed.

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<sup>27</sup> ILO/IPEC, *Child Labour Statistics: Manual on methodologies for data collection through surveys*, op.cit. <http://www.ilo.org/ipeinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=141>

<sup>28</sup> Appendix III and Appendix IV of the ILO/IPEC *Child Labour Statistics: Manual on methodologies for data collection through surveys*, op. cit., contain “model” questions for a household-based national child labour survey that should be asked of the household head and of the children. The recently updated and refined version of the ILO/IPEC “model” questionnaires for stand-alone national child labour surveys (Parts I, II and III) is available on the web-site <http://www.ilo.org/pec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/Model%20questionnaires/lang--en/index.htm>

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124. The “model” questionnaire for the household-based national child labour survey is thus designed to obtain comprehensive data on the magnitude and character of child labour and reasons for it. It attempts to collect statistics on working conditions, industrial activity, occupation, employment status, and the effects of work on the health, education situation, and possibilities of normal development of the working child. The questionnaire seeks information also on the demographic aspects and socioeconomic details of the household, the work-related characteristics of the children, the factors that lead children to work, and perceptions of the parents or guardians vis-à-vis children's work and schooling.
125. Keeping in view that countries may find it expensive to implement the comprehensive stand-alone national child labour survey, ILO/IPEC has also developed a “model” questionnaire of essential questions on child labour for household-based surveys, which has 10-15 additional questions in relation to the usual labour force survey queries. The questionnaire is intended to facilitate the collection of a minimal set of child labour statistics through a child labour module appended to a household-based survey, preferably the labour force survey. The major areas of enquiry are the composition and demographic characteristics of the entire household; for each household member five years old or older, details of their educational situation and current economic activity; and, for children aged 5 to 17 years, details on their household chores. While the module may be implemented with any household-based survey, the advantages of the labour force survey are that similar concepts are applied, and that several of the questions in the list of essential questions are already included in the main survey. In this setting, it is often an easier and more cost-effective option to set the lower age limit of the labour force survey at five years, and to modify the main questionnaire as required to include as many of the questions as is possible from within the set of essential questions on child labour.<sup>29</sup>

### 9.1.2 *Baseline survey/study*

126. The baseline survey is a method that is mainly applied at the beginning of (or prior to) an intervention, to collect information on child labour characteristics or identify the target beneficiaries of the intervention. Baseline surveys may involve one or more of the methods described above, that is, a combination of sample survey (quantitative estimation, where a sampling frame may be developed) and qualitative (participatory) research techniques (especially, key informants interviews and focus group discussions). A baseline survey could even be a simple rapid assessment, or a probability-based survey that may generate a technically robust estimate. ILO/IPEC's SIMPOC programme has acquired considerable experience in the use of baseline surveys/studies for identifying target populations and their characteristics and for analysing the determinants and consequences of child labour in specific socioeconomic sectors. For programme intervention purposes, they have been used to obtain insightful data on initial (baseline) conditions for use at each stage of the programme cycle (design, implementation, monitoring and impact assessment). Findings from baseline surveys facilitate the establishment of targets in that incremental changes can be measured by means of follow-up studies, as well as the development of child labour monitoring systems.

### 9.1.3 *Establishment survey*

127. Establishment survey questionnaires, administered at the workplace (which may be a factory on an industrial site or even a home-based production unit), seek to obtain information on the particulars of the production unit and the characteristics of its workforce, with a special focus on child workers under 18 years of age. Items of information sought include children's wages, hours of

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<sup>29</sup> The “model” questionnaire reflecting *essential questions on child labour* for household-based surveys is available on the ILO/ IPEC website <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/Model%20questionnaires/lang--en/index.htm>. This questionnaire may also be applied as a stand-alone child labour survey but will produce a smaller set of child labour statistics (in relation to the more comprehensive 3-part national child labour survey questionnaire).

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work, other working conditions and benefits, and injuries and illnesses at work, both separately and compared with those of adult workers. Information is also sought on the perception of employers vis-à-vis the advantages and drawbacks of using child workers, the reasons for using such labour, and the methods of recruitment.

- 128.** The establishments to be targeted for the survey are selected from available directories or lists, including those of producers' associations and cooperatives, or from lists drawn up during a community-level inquiry and/or a household-based national child labour survey. Alternatively, lists can be based on local inquiries in the area to be investigated, comprising discussions with key informants such as representatives of trade unions, local government offices and agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), community organizations, community leaders, religious groups and charitable associations.

#### **9.1.4 Rapid assessment methodology**

- 129.** The rapid assessment methodology on child labour aims to assist countries in obtaining information on the more "hidden" or "invisible" forms of child labour and on child workers in the most dangerous types of activities or occupations.<sup>30</sup> It uses a participatory approach of discussions and interviews that is ideal for obtaining detailed knowledge of the working and living conditions of children who are involved in activities or occupations otherwise difficult to identify and characterize. A rapid assessment may use a structured or merely semi-structured questionnaire to collect information from the working children and their parents (and, where relevant and possible, from the employers). It is supplemented with careful and attentive observation and background information derived from a variety of sources, such as findings from prior surveys and reports, case studies, interviews of key informants, locality leaders or knowledgeable persons, and focus group discussions.
- 130.** Rapid assessments are primarily intended to provide information relatively quickly and inexpensively for use in, for example, awareness creation and project formulation. Its output is mainly qualitative and descriptive and is usually limited to a small geographical area; it is generally not a useful tool if the aim is to measure the prevalence of child labour. Nevertheless, like any kind of data collection endeavour, the value of the results depends on the quality and appropriateness of the study design. For example, the usefulness of qualitative information from a rapid assessment study can be enhanced by complementing it with a sample survey or a complete census of households in the selected areas.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, the applicability of rapid assessments is more relevant to research institutes and organizations, and for supplementing the survey findings by national statistical offices.

#### **9.1.5 Street children inquiry**

- 131.** The street children survey targets two main categories of children: (a) those that live and work on the street and by definition do not have any other place of residence, and (b) those that work on the streets but normally reside with their parents/ guardians in a household. The two categories require different data collection techniques. Those who stay with their parents or guardians in a household are usually captured through a normal household-based survey. It is a much harder task to conduct an inquiry into children who live and work on the streets with no fixed place of residence, since household-based samples exclude homeless persons. Most of these children are continuously on the move from one place to another during the daytime, and sleep outside buildings during the

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<sup>30</sup> It is a commonly applied qualitative technique for child labour data collection and ILO/UNICEF's *Manual on child labour rapid assessment methodology* (Geneva, December 2005) provides full implementation details. It is available at the ILO/IPEC website <http://www.ilo.org/ipceinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=1819>

<sup>31</sup> See Annex 1 of Y. Ofosu: *Building the knowledge base for the development of time-bound programmes* (Geneva, ILO, 2003) for an example from Nepal.

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night. The survey method relies on interviewing purposively selected children and, where relevant and possible, their employers and clients. This purposive and convenience approach is applied both in selecting the areas to be covered and in carrying out interviews of children about their working conditions and of informal sector operators about the children working for them.

### **9.1.6 School-based survey**

- 132.** School surveys concern children identified as working by household surveys. The main purpose of school-based surveys is to determine the impact on school attendance and school performance of work by children attending school. The survey also tries to assess the children's attitude to studying. The survey also covers non-working children (as a control group), preferably from the school where the working children are studying. Interviews are conducted with the child, teachers and school management, and parents and guardians of children. In addition, the school survey attempts to assess some of the school-related factors influencing a child's work, such as the quality of the school. Overall, it is a special type of rapid assessment.

### **9.1.7 Community-level inquiry**

- 133.** Community-level inquiries are usually undertaken to collect information from elected or appointed leaders, administrators and other community leaders regarding major locality particulars, in order to obtain a cultural, demographic and socioeconomic profile of the community (for example, schooling, educational institutions, medical facilities and sanitation, public utilities, sources of vulnerability, safety nets, community profile, and community livelihood strategies). Community-level inquiries may well be an independent investigation to collect data on a particular child labour situation. However, the inquiries are often also an integral part of the methodology of rapid assessments and baseline surveys to obtain supplementary information on the circumstances in which the working children live and engage in their daily activities.

### **9.1.8 Methodology for estimating unconditional worst forms of child labour**

- 134.** Children in the unconditional worst forms of child labour are to be included in the group comprising child labour (as distinct from working children), but it is not possible to make reliable measurements based on existing statistical methods. Part of the problem is that such groups of child labourers are mostly hidden from public view, and very often are engaged in illicit activities. More important, there is no known frame for applying a sampling procedure, and it is often very hard (if not impossible) to interview the child, either because the guardian or employer does not permit it or because the child refuses for fear of reprisals by the guardian or employer after the interview. ILO/IPEC is engaged in developing methodologies for national-level estimates of children in some of the unconditional worst forms of child labour, and currently a few pilot surveys (in collaboration with national statistical offices) to test the practical feasibility and efficacy of potential estimation methods are being carried out. The methodologies are sector specific, as the workplace conditions and child labour characteristics vary among the unconditional worst forms of child labour.

## **9.2 Analysis of existing data sources**

- 135.** Data collection is always an expensive proposal, but nonetheless some countries may wish to have a minimal set of child labour statistics at periodic intervals. Again, since child labour concerns a relatively small population and national statistical offices have competing demands for producing a wide range of statistics, some countries may not have the financial and personnel resources to accord priority within their work programme to a dedicated child labour survey, or even to a child labour module attached to a larger survey. In such circumstances, a limited range of periodic child labour data may be generated for the country by the analysis of data contained in its existing censuses and surveys. In these cases, for improved child labour data in the longer-term, the national statistical offices concerned may find it useful to develop suitable methods of collecting a

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limited set of desirable child labour statistics by means of minor modifications to the data collection vehicles used for its regular surveys.

- 136.** Supplementary data sources in the country can also be explored in order to assess the gravity of the child labour situation (for example, education statistics of school enrolment or attendance, given that for a child work and schooling might have competing claims on his or her time.) Administrative records can also be a useful source. However, most data from supplementary sources have to be applied with caution, as these usually provide only a partial perspective of the situation. Furthermore, the efficient combination of the data from different sources can be difficult because of differences in the survey reference period, the definitions applied, the respondents or the objectives and scope of the enquiry.

### **9.2.1 Household-based national sample surveys**

- 137.** Many countries collect socioeconomic and demographic data on a periodic basis through household-based sample surveys. These include, for example, labour force surveys, living standards measurement surveys, household budget and expenditure surveys, and demographic and health surveys. Such surveys may not have specific data on child labour, or for the full range of child-age groups, but nonetheless they can contain useful information for analyzing the child labour problem. For example, a labour force survey may provide statistics on working children in the upper age groups. Moreover, there may sometimes be scope for adding a child labour module to a household-based survey, and this could yield some essential child labour statistics at a relatively reduced cost.

### **9.2.2 Data from national population censuses**

- 138.** Most countries conduct national population censuses on a periodic basis (every five or ten years). Although few national censuses provide data on the incidence of child labour, census results relating to aspects such as schooling or economic activity can make a useful contribution to an analysis of child labour. The inclusion of a few questions (often already in the list of items on which census data is collected) on economic activity, occupation, status in employment and school attendance status should suffice, and census authorities may be more easily persuaded to collect this data for the full labour force rather than for children alone. An alternative data collection approach sometimes employed during a census is to apply a module relating to a specific subject to only a part of the total population. The main advantage of including child labour questions through a census in this manner, if feasible, is that it facilitates the calculation of child labour prevalence for small geographical areas.

### **9.2.3 Secondary sources**

- 139.** Secondary data sources on child labour for a country may be obtained from a wide range of institutions. They might, for example, be extracted from the data contained in surveys and research carried out by international development organizations such as UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, or from reports submitted to expert meetings and roundtable discussions involving the government, social partners, research institutions, universities and civil society.<sup>32</sup> The Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) supported by the World Bank, and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) of UNICEF are examples of country surveys that contain statistics on various attributes of children, which could be of relevance to the child labour issue. Other data sources include annual school reports filed with ministries of education, school surveys, school

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<sup>32</sup> This might include data collected for various international development reports (e.g. the World Bank's *World Development Indicators*, the UNDP's *Human Development Report*, UNICEF's *State of the World's Children*) and for the follow-up to international conferences, such as the periodic assessments of UNESCO's International Consultative Forum on Education for All.

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inspection reports, and statistical reports by national statistical offices. However, the statistical information from such sources has to be reviewed with reference to the respective settings, definitions and background.

#### **9.2.4 Education statistics**

140. School attendance (or enrolment) rates in the education statistics of a country reflect to some extent the engagement of children in what ideally should be their main activity. Although some children who attend school also engage in economic activities, and absence from school does not necessarily imply that the child is working, data on school non-attendance (or, non-enrolment, if statistics on attendance are insufficiently developed) may, in the absence of a proper data collection system on child labour, be used as a proxy indicator for child labour. The link of the school non-attendance rates by school level (primary, middle, secondary, etc.) to the children's age groups should correspond to the official ages of schooling set for each school level.

#### **9.2.5 Administrative records on violations of child labour legislation**

141. Paragraph 5 (3) of ILO Recommendation No. 190 stipulates that relevant data concerning violations of national provisions for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date. In this regard, administrative records – on cases concerning violations of child labour legislation brought to court and before other authorities and leading to convictions, on the criminal prosecution of child traffickers and those engaged in the commercial sexual exploitation of children and on child rights abuse leading to revelation of forced or bonded child labour - are useful sources of information that should be compiled to supplement national child labour statistics. Labour inspection reports might also provide useful supplementary information, to the extent that they draw attention to underage workers and hazardous working conditions.

### **9.3 Complementarity of survey methods**

142. Collecting comprehensive data on child labour is an exceedingly challenging task, and no single survey methodology may fit the data needs adequately. A fundamental reason is that working children are found in a vast array of situations, and no common technique can be devised to fit all possible circumstances in which the child worker may exist. Furthermore, for policy analysis and targeted project intervention, information is needed from a variety of potential respondents who may influence the life and development path of the child, namely, the child him/herself, the parent or guardian, the employer, the school teacher, the community leader, the child's peers and siblings. Accordingly, circumstances in the home, school, workplace and community to which the child belongs all have a bearing on child labour outcomes and characteristics. To collect all the relevant data in a single survey or occasion, and from all parties that may have a bearing on child labour, cannot always be possible.
143. Child labour data collection is complicated by the fact that, in addition to child labour being a multi-dimensional problem, in the most severe cases involving for instance, unconditional worst forms of child labour it is very difficult (if not impossible) to make contact with the child and collect the necessary information. Also, as activities under for the unconditional worst forms of child labour are usually hidden from public view, a sampling frame for survey purposes does not exist, nor can it be readily prepared without prior information. In such cases, the methodologies employed to compile useful child labour data tend to be the rapid assessment or baseline survey, depending on the situation. The latter methods, however, generate only sector- and area-specific data that are mainly qualitative and are not valid beyond the sector and area investigated.
144. For national-level estimates of child labour, working children and their characteristics, the usual statistical enquiry vehicle is a large-scale household-based child labour survey, and a significant amount of child labour data and related information can be estimated through such a survey for

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regional and even smaller geographical areas. However, children who are working but do not stay in households are beyond the scope of household-based child labour surveys, and to investigate them an establishment-based survey is more appropriate. Child workers without a household to live in, and who may even be living on the streets or in dire situations, are among the most vulnerable to forms of child labour, and a street children survey is required to collect information on this category.

- 145.** The above situations refer to the supply side of child labour. To obtain information on the demand side employers have to be interviewed, and for this purpose an establishment-based or workplace survey is needed. Again, since children attend school, then in order to get statistics on how a child's work may impact on school attendance and school performance, and on attitudes to schooling (which is what children should be engaged in instead of work), a school-based survey is required. All this goes to confirm that, while there is merit in every form of child labour survey, any single survey, however designed, can at best provide only a partial picture of the actual situation. For more comprehensive data, different methodologies generally have to be combined.

#### **9.4 Data collection strategy**

- 146.** In assessing the child labour situation, data on child workers at the national level and by geographical subdivisions are always useful. If the subdivisions are based on administrative criteria, it is useful also from the standpoint of programme interventions. Even where action plans are expected to have a strong regional focus, it should be useful to obtain figures on the overall size of the child labour problem at the national level. National data are needed for a variety of uses, including advocacy and awareness raising, resource mobilization, overall programme design, target setting, monitoring and evaluation. Some such data could be obtained from national population censuses, especially if they included questions on economic activity, ideally for the population aged five years and above. If population and labour force data are not current, it may be possible to make projections based on additional socio-demographic data and assumptions.
- 147.** Where recent census data are not available and projections cannot be envisaged, it may be necessary to consider the organization of a stand-alone household-based national child labour survey. In some countries, child activities (or child labour) modules have been attached to national labour force surveys. The difference between these alternative formats of a national child labour survey (that is, a stand-alone type and the modular form) is that the stand-alone version will attempt to provide more information on child labour conditions and attributes than the modular format, but the former obviously demands more resources in terms of money and personnel. If household-based surveys are scheduled and the results can be released in time for the development of planned intervention programmes, the possibility of attaching a child labour module ought to be explored.<sup>33</sup> A similar approach may be adopted for censuses, where the possibility of attaching a short module or limited child labour-related questions could be envisaged for a sample of the population.
- 148.** Should it be the case that neither the census nor the survey data collection can be detailed enough to allow for an estimation of the numbers and percentages of child workers by various categories (industrial sector where they work, and their occupations), and if resource availability does not permit the conduct of a fresh national survey, then alternatives have to be sought. One solution may be for a limited survey to concentrate on the sectors and areas or localities where the prospective programme is to be implemented and, to the extent possible, on nearby areas as well. This could be in the form of a rapid assessment or a baseline survey, depending on the prior information available on the form of child labour in the sector or area to be investigated, on the

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<sup>33</sup> Besides the relevant national statistical office, contacts should also be made with the concerned donor agencies. For demographic and health surveys, USAID is often a major donor, along with UNFPA. The World Bank, UNICEF and UNDP also fund major household-based surveys to which child labour modules could be annexed.

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specific data needs and on the available time and budget. In fact, a rapid assessment is more realistic and feasible when other survey circumstances are limited. In particular, for obtaining qualitative information on perceptions and non-quantifiable factors having a bearing on sustaining children in work in targeted sectors or areas, especially in the worst forms of child labour, rapid assessment techniques are best suited for investigation purposes. In fact, street children surveys and school-based surveys are often special forms of rapid assessments, as the selection criteria of observation units (streets or schools) is in the nature of a judicious decision.

## 9.5 Issues in implementing child labour surveys

149. *Choice of survey type.* What survey methodology may be applied depends on the child labour data requirements and on the underlying purpose of the statistical exercise. Wherever possible, providing that a sampling frame can be developed at low cost and reasonably quickly, a survey method that is capable of generating probabilistic estimates should be preferred. This is because the findings of a survey with a purposive selection of respondents is strictly applicable only to those respondents, and even their extrapolation to the geographical area and child labour sector to which the survey relates requires considerable caution. Should the available financial resources be limited, a smaller sample of respondents selected on the basis of a standard randomized sampling design should take precedence. However, for investigating specific forms of child labour for which a sampling frame is not readily available, such as children in unconditional worst forms of child labour, rapid assessments are currently the only option: in such circumstances, for useful results, the child labour form should be very specific, as should the geographical area to be covered.
150. *Collection and presentation of child labour data.* A working child or a child who is engaged in economic production is not necessarily a child labourer. Nevertheless, it is useful to utilize the concept of a working child as a point of departure for measuring the prevalence of child labour in large national child labour surveys, since the child labour population cannot be larger than that of working children. In fact, the child labour population is generally a small proportion of working children, and in national child labour surveys it is usual to present most of the tabulations as pertaining to working children only. This is because the data on distribution by age group, sex, residence status, industry of activity and occupation are sought by users and policy makers, and the experience of ILO/IPEC has shown that the results are statistically significant only for the larger population of working children. For child labour as such, only summary tables with distribution by age group, sex and (occasionally) major geographical region may have reliable statistics.
151. *Questionnaire design to capture “work”.* Very often, even identifying the economically active children is problematic, because most children work in their own household or on the family farm, and even those working outside the household in most cases work together with their parents or other family members. Only a relatively small proportion of children are employed directly by an employer. The way the questions are posed, and the language of the query, should take these facts into consideration, especially if the operation is intended to identify accurately whether or not the child is engaged in economic production, marketed or non-marketed. Capturing unpaid work is important because many children, even among those working outside the household, do not receive wages. The possibility of different categories of children’s engagement in work highlights the importance of ensuring that respondents understand the term “work” without any ambiguity. The treatment of non-market economic production also needs great care. In addition, the notion of what does and what does not constitute work varies within different cultures and between households, but the survey should be based on SNA Rev. 1993 and its concepts have to be followed.
152. *Occupation and industry classifications.* National classifications generally apply to adult work, and the identification of the type of economic production tasks children actually undertake can occasionally be no more than approximate. The questions used to collect these data have to be suitable worded, so that references to existing standards are possible when compiling the data

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- 153. *Education and health.*** Given that child labour is defined in large part by the effect of work activities on a child's educational opportunities and health, sufficient information needs to be collected in these two areas. In addition to the standard questions, information could be obtained about potential conflicts between school and work. For instance, information may be collected on whether a child had to drop out of school in the reference period owing to the time devoted to economic production (for example, in the harvest season) or to household chores.
- 154. *Socioeconomic indicators.*** Poverty is regarded as one of the most important determinants of child labour. A child labour survey should therefore include questions designed to collect data that can be used to analyze the relationship between poverty and child labour. General household surveys cover many of the relevant household characteristics, such as household monthly income (or expenditure), parent's work and educational status and household composition by number, age, gender, etc. The collection of such data on both adult and child household members also needs to be covered by child labour surveys.
- 155. *Analysing the data.*** Given a comprehensive data set, the challenge in analyzing child labour is combining the necessary indicators, such as economic production details (industry and occupation, market and non-market), weekly hours of work, school attendance status, age, and known health risks due to work, in order to identify the group of children within the definition of child labour. While all surveys may not map both the "current" and the "usual" status activities of children, mapping the "usual" status activities is particularly important as this approach takes into account seasonal variations, which is characteristic of a considerable proportion of children's economic production activities.
- 156. *Ethical considerations.*** Maintaining a code of ethics during the data collection process is essential. This applies, in particular, to those child labour surveys in which children are respondents.<sup>34</sup> It should be noted that Paragraph 6 of ILO Recommendation No. 190 specifies that "the compilation and processing of the information and data referred to ... should be carried out with due regard for the right to privacy." Thus, a set of ethical guidelines for child labour data collection may be established by those national statistical offices that wish to measure child labour, keeping also in view Article 2, paragraph 2, and Article 13, paragraph 1, of UNCRC. At a minimum it should be ensured that the working children, especially those who are respondents, are not harmed as a consequence of the survey. As in all statistical surveys, the respondent should be assured that confidentiality of the information provided shall be respected, as well as the respondent's anonymity. It should be ensured that survey participation by child respondents is voluntary, and that enumerators do not face any risks during data collection. The field enumerators, in turn, should respect cultural traditions, knowledge and customs of respondents. In addition, when interviewing children, enumerators should be sensitive to children's ways of behaving and thinking and avoid raising unrealistic expectations in the child workers. Wherever feasible, child labour data collection should be undertaken by persons specially trained in the type of survey being conducted.
- 157. *Periodicity of data collection.*** Child labour data collection in sufficient detail at regular periods (determined by the national statistical offices in the light of national data needs and resource availability) helps in assessing child labour trends and should also facilitate an impact assessment of policy and programmes implemented to combat child labour. Sustainability of child labour data collection may be attained by identifying a few key child labour variables on which data are collected with assured regularity and by their inclusion in a module annexed to an appropriate national household-based survey, preferably a labour force survey.

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<sup>34</sup> Edmonds, Casper N., *Ethical considerations when conducting research on children in the worst forms of child labour in Nepal* (Geneva, ILO/IPEC, 2003).

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<http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=1819>

<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/Model%20questionnaires/lang--en/index.htm>

<http://www.pitt.edu/~ginie/mounzer/conventions.html#CapetownPrinciples>

<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/dopchild.htm>

<http://www.unicef.org/sowc08/docs/sowc08.pdf>

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## **ANNEX**

### **DRAFT RESOLUTION CONCERNING STATISTICS OF CHILD LABOUR**

The Eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and having met from 24 November to 5 December 2008,

Taking note of the discussions at the Sixteenth and Seventeenth International Conferences of Labour Statisticians regarding child labour statistics,

Recalling the provisions of the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) as well as their respective supplementing Recommendations (Nos. 146 and 190), which should be the basis for any effort to gather child labour statistics and would by no means be affected by the present resolution,

Keeping in view the relevance of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the definition of child and child rights,

Considering that child labour statistics are especially needed in order to plan, carry out and evaluate action to effectively combat child labour where children are working in contravention of agreed international labour standards and national legislation safeguarding the interests and welfare of children,

Recognizing the need to establish technical guidelines to countries for the statistical measurement of children's work activities,

Acknowledging the usefulness of establishing such statistical measurement standards for the identification and classification of children at work, and for facilitating the comparability of child labour data over time as well as across countries and regions,

Having reviewed the relevant texts of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, particularly concepts of being "economically active" and being "at work",

Appreciating that not all children who are working may be deemed to be child labourers in the sense of ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182,

Adopts this .... day of December 2008 the following resolution:

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## Objectives and Scope of National Child Labour Statistics

1. The principal objective of child labour statistics is to provide reliable, comprehensive and timely data on working children. Children are engaged in various types of work, but not all of it should be deemed as child labour slated for abolition. This resolution aims to set out standards of good practice for the collection, compilation and analysis of child labour statistics as guidance for countries to update their existing statistical system in this field, or to establish a new one.

2. Countries, particularly where children may be observed to be at work, should develop an adequate system of child labour statistics. Due account should be taken of specific national needs and circumstances, especially the existing legislation, if any, on the minimum age to work. The system should contribute to the improvement of economic and social statistics in the country, increase public awareness of the situation of working children, and provide a suitable statistical base for various data users, including policy makers. Statistical information on child labour, and more widely on all working children, would also be useful for developing an appropriate regulatory framework for the protection of the rights and welfare of children by determining the causes and consequences of child labour.

3. An adequate national system of child labour statistics should supply quantitative information on the number of working children in the country, their geographical distribution, age and sex, working conditions and other relevant variables. Statistics on various socioeconomic characteristics, such as, education status, level and achievements, the time allocation to various non-school activities, the income or expenditure level of the child's household, and the impact of children's economic activities on their health, well-being and morals, should also be generated to facilitate a situation analysis of particular groups of working children. The system may, moreover, make available essential data for the design of intervention policies and programmes against child labour, and for measuring, monitoring and evaluating progress of these. The collected data should therefore assist in establishing the prevalence of child labour, as also the identification and prioritization of the specific forms of child labour and geographical locations that targeted interventions should address.

4. In order to fulfil the above objectives, the national programme of child labour data collection should, in principle, cover all productive activities that children engage in, and measure these in terms of the time spent in each.. The programme should be developed to the fullest extent possible in harmony with other national economic and social statistics.

5. Overall, the essential and desirable properties of a statistical measurement standard on child labour are therefore that it should: (i) be based on international and national concepts of child labour as work that children must not engage in; (ii) allow for data collection operations for facilitating quantification and characterization of child labour; and (iii) facilitate the comparison of the collected data over time and across countries.

6. The role of statistics is to measure and reflect economic and social reality as closely as is possible. Therefore, for each country, definitions as contained in national legislation where they are available, and in their absence, guidelines provided by international labour standards and/or other international instruments, should be taken as the starting point in the search for statistical definitions. This approach would make statistical definitions as close as possible to, and as coherent as possible with, national legislation and international standards.

7. A national system of child labour statistics should bear in mind the framework of the existing international standards set by the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182) and their respective

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Recommendations (Nos. 146 and 190) that provide the essential legal basis for national and international action on child labour.

8. A national system of child labour statistics should keep in view that the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190), Paragraph 5, has specified, among others, that:

(1) “detailed information and statistical data on the nature and extent of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date as to serve as a basis for determining priorities for national action for the abolition of child labour, in particular for the prohibition and elimination of its worst forms as a matter of urgency”, and

(2) “as far as possible, such information and statistical data should include data disaggregated by sex, age group, occupation, branch of economic activity, status in employment, school attendance and geographical location. ...”

9. International labour standards on child labour, especially on minimum age to work, provide guidance to national legislation and allow for flexibility and exceptions to general prohibitions of child labour. As such, there can be no uniform definition of child labour for universal application across countries. Therefore, while national statistical offices are required to mould the criteria for data collection on child labour and working children as closely as possible to the prevailing national laws and regulations, it should be useful if such data may allow further compilation and are sufficiently disaggregated to also facilitate international comparability.

## **Definitions and Measurement Approaches**

### *Child*

10. A child is defined as an individual under the age of 18 years, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 1) and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) (Article 2). Age of a person should be measured in number of complete years at last birthday. For the purpose of defining and identifying “working children” and “child labour” the age group 5 to 17 years is usually taken into consideration. National statistical offices may, however, in consultation with the responsible government offices for education and for child welfare, set the lower age threshold of 5 years as a function of their respective country situations, with the caveat that it may not be higher than the official age for entry to compulsory schooling.

### *Child labour measurement framework*

11. The framework for child labour measurement (defined in paragraph 28) consists of the totality of “working children” (defined in paragraph 12) which may be estimated through known survey techniques, and that part of the “worst forms of child labour” (defined in paragraph 15) which cannot be measured presently by available statistical data collection methods.

### *Working children*

12. The term “working children” refers to “economically active children”, drawing on the Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1982). “Economically active children” comprises all children of either sex who are engaged in the production of economic goods and services as defined by the United Nations 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA Rev. 1993) during a specified time reference period. It is a broad concept that encompasses production activities undertaken by children, whether for the market or not, paid or unpaid, for a few hours or full time, on a casual or regular basis, in the organized or unorganized (formal or informal) sector, and whether the activities are legal or illegal.

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Work in family enterprises and in household-based production activities is included. Excluded, however, are activities that are part of schooling; begging and stealing (unless the acquired goods are resold.); and household chores, which are unpaid domestic and personal services produced by a child for members of the same household. The concepts of “currently active population” and “usually active population” also apply to working children.

13. The term “economically active population” is applied to denote the total of “employed” and “unemployed” persons in the context of the adult work force, and an unemployed person is defined as one who is not employed but is actively seeking work and is available for work. However, the concept of an “unemployed child” is difficult to conceptualize, since persons below the minimum age of work cannot be legally employed, or be considered to be available for employment. At the same time it is true that some children, who are currently not working, may want to work if offered. Such children may be termed as “children wanting work” or “children at risk of becoming child labourers”. National statistical offices are encouraged to collect also this information to guide policy makers in assessing the potential child labour population.

#### *Minimum age for work*

14. Most countries specify a minimum age for work through national legislation. In the absence of a nationally applicable minimum age the cut-off may be set according to ILO Minimum Age Convention No. 138 which stipulates in terms of its Article 2 that it should not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less 15 years. However, it allows countries whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed, after consultation with the organizations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, to initially specify a minimum age of 14 years. Child labour statistics should cover those economically active children below the minimum age for work. Children in the age group 15 (or the national minimum age for work, if different) to 17 years are, in principle, allowed to work, unless they are in “any type of work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardize the health, safety, or morals of young persons” as per Article 3 of Convention No. 138, or are engaged in one of the activities prohibited for children in line with the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182.

#### *Worst forms of child labour*

15. Efforts should be made to collect data about children’s involvement in the types of work or activities addressed by the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182. The instrument makes no distinction between developed and developing countries and applies to all girls and boys under the age of 18 years. Its Article 3 defines the “worst forms of child labour” as:

- a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, as well as forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- c) the use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties; and
- d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Although not specifically mentioned, child beggars would fall into one of the above categories, depending upon the circumstances.

16. Activities covered by clause (d) of Article 3 of Convention No. 182 are often referred to as “hazardous work”, and those under clauses (a) to (c) as “unconditional worst forms of child labour”.

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In principle, statistics on hazardous work may be collected through surveys according to the national parameters of hazardous work (as detailed in paragraphs 17 to 24 below). However, it is unlikely that statistics on economic activities by children would capture all of the unconditional worst forms of child labour. Therefore, data collection on some of these forms may require different approaches, keeping in mind that reliable data on activities that are illegal and take place in locations concealed from public view are difficult to obtain.

#### *Hazardous work*

17. In accordance with ILO Conventions Nos. 138 (Article 3) and 182 (Article 2), work which is likely to harm the health, safety or moral of young persons below 18 years should be prohibited. Therefore, with regard to statistics of children in hazardous work, the cut-off age should be set at 18 years.

18. ILO Conventions Nos. 138 (Article 3) and 182 (Article 3(d) and 4) stipulate that hazardous work shall be determined by national laws or regulations set by the competent national authority, after consultation with the organizations of employers and workers concerned, taking into consideration the relevant international standards. Legal prohibitions of, and consequently, measurement standards for hazardous work by children may therefore differ among countries.

19. For countries where the list of hazardous work by children is officially specified by legislation or administrative notification, or by a recognized group of experts assigned to the task of protecting the interests of children, national statistical offices may need to apply and adopt such lists for identification of hazardous work of children and for developing the measurement standards. Where there is no enforceable legislative text yet, drafts or recommendations from consultative bodies might be used as guidance. Thereafter, designated hazardous industries and occupations shall have to be defined precisely in statistical terms by relating them to the relevant specific industry and occupation codes of the corresponding national/international classification systems.

20. In the absence of national legislation on hazardous work to be prohibited for children, national statistical systems should take account of the contents of the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190), Paragraph 3, which calls for particular consideration to be given to:

- work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- work underground, under water, at dangerous heights and confined spaces;
- work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
- work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health; and
- work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

21. One element for the identification of hazardous work by Recommendation R190 that lends itself to objective measurement is work for long hours. National legislation concerning labour often includes provisions setting an upper time threshold for work by children under a certain age. In excess of such a threshold, even otherwise permissible work in non-hazardous industries and occupations by children who are above the minimum working age would be categorized as hazardous. The national statistical offices should include such a “long hours of work” threshold for the statistical identification of “hazardous work” and also as a component of the worst forms of child labour.

22. Concerning the circumstances or conditions in which or under which work is carried out in a particular setting and its bearing on the health and safety of working children as laid out in Recommendation 190, the issue is more complex. This is the greatest challenge to the objective

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measurement of hazardous work, as fixed objective standards to measure the hazardous nature of working conditions do not exist, and perceptions among country authorities are likely to vary.

23. Therefore, for national statistical systems that do not have such supporting national legislation or documentation, while one approach to the identification of hazardous work for children is to be guided by the classification of hazardous occupations and processes for the ILO global estimates, an alternative guideline is provided below.

24. Based on the guidelines provided by ILO Recommendation R190, the statistics on children in hazardous work might be compiled by applying multiple layers of filters to the total of economically active children in the given age group:

- i) First, all economically active children within designated hazardous industries with reference to ISIC (for instance, mining or construction) are counted as children in hazardous work.
- ii) Second, among the economically active children in non-hazardous industries, those who are in designated hazardous occupations with reference to ISCO are also counted as children in hazardous work.
- iii) Third, among the economically active children in non-hazardous occupations in non-hazardous industries, those who work “long working hours” above a specified threshold of maximum weekly working hours (for instance, 43 hours per week, or as set by national legislation or other official communication) are further added to the number of children in hazardous work.
- iv) Additional filters may be added, such as:
  - a) the number of children in hazardous work could also include the economically active children working less than the threshold hours in non-hazardous occupations in non-hazardous industries, where their work comprises night work (which needs to be defined by national legislation),
  - b) where it is possible to classify working conditions of children as hazardous (for instance, extremely hot, very noisy, unhealthy, and so on) from answers to the questionnaires used, or
  - c) children working under conditions that are likely to have an adverse impact upon their morals.

### *Measuring “light work”*

25. ILO Convention No. 138 Article 7 allows an option that national laws or regulations may permit the work of persons 13 to 15 years of age (the age range may be 12 to 14 years in countries with less developed economies and education systems) in light work which is: (a) not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and (b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority, or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received. Defining and identifying “light work” is therefore necessary in order to measure child labour for this age group more precisely.

26. ILO Convention No. 138 also requires a restriction on weekly hours of work for this age group, but leaves the determination of the exact maximum hours to the national authorities. National statistical offices, in determining the threshold for light work should draw on stipulations set forth in national legislations, and in their absence, use the cut off point of 14 hours per week supported in terms of ILO Convention No. 33 Article 3 (1) (c) which sets 2 hours per day, either schooldays or holidays, as the maximum for light work from 12 years of age.

27. Other criteria, in addition to the hour threshold, should also be used to define light work according to the conditions for light work under the national laws or regulations, for instance,

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limiting the industries or occupations in which light work is permitted. It should be noted that hazardous work may not be considered as light work.

### *Child labour*

28. The term “child labour” reflects the engagement of children in prohibited work and can be categorized as follows:

- a) Work that is performed by a child who is under the minimum age specified for that kind of work (as defined by national legislation in accordance with accepted international standards), and that is thus likely to impede the child’s education and full development.
- b) Work that is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of a child, either because of its nature or because of the conditions in which it is carried out, known as hazardous work.
- c) The unconditional worst forms of child labour which correspond to those internationally defined in terms of ILO Convention No. 182 Article 3 (a) to (c) as:
  - all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, as well as forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
  - the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; and
  - the use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties

*The worst forms of child labour* comprise hazardous work and unconditional worst forms of child labour (that is, both b) and c) above).

29. Child labour is the total of (i) a subset of economic activities performed by children (that may be measured through surveys conducted with known statistical measurement techniques) and (ii) those worst forms of child labour that cannot be measured with existing methods (principally, the unconditional forms of child labour). The approach in countries that have collected child labour statistics has been to explain the data limitations, and compile child labour statistics as a subset of children’s economic activities. It has the advantage that the statistical standards for the measurement and classification of economic activities are well established, and considerable uniformity prevails across countries in regard to the concepts and definitions of the data targeted for collection. One major exception is that country practices diverge on the treatment of time spent by a child in fetching water and collecting firewood for estimating his/ her hours of economic activity. Notwithstanding these differences, countries are encouraged to collect statistics on the time spent by children in fetching water and collecting firewood in order to analyze their impact, if any, on children’s schooling.

30. Where children are permitted to engage in “light work” under the national legislation in accordance with ILO Convention No. 138 Article 7, working children in this age group and in the types of permitted work should be excluded from the estimate of child labour.

### *Unpaid domestic and personal services for consumption within the same household (household chores)*

31. There is some concern that non-economic activities, principally household chores, which are currently excluded from most statistical measures of child labour – might in certain cases involve safety and health hazards, or hinder schooling in a similar way to economic activity. Hence, the question arises as to whether non-economic activity should be considered in child labour measurement and, if so, under what conditions or beyond what time threshold.

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32. Non-economic activities (excluding studying) by children can be several, but a large proportion is contributed by domestic or personal services that are unpaid and provided by household members for consumption within the same household, such as, housekeeping activities (cleaning, decorating, preparing and serving meals), caring for children, sick or old people in the own home, and making minor repairs in one's own house.

33. Child activity surveys have shown that household chores absorb considerable time of children. National statistical systems are therefore encouraged to gather data on the household chores by children, in terms of the time spent in such activities and the major tasks performed. The gender and age distribution of children engaged in household chores could reveal interesting social values and generate important information for policy and programme formulation.

## **Data Collection Methods and Programmes**

### *Data collection methods*

34. Child labour data collection methods can be quantitative, qualitative or a combination of both. The choice of which method(s) to apply depends on the objectives and purpose of the enquiry, type of child labour to be investigated, levels of accuracy and reporting details required, and the availability of time, technical and financial resources. It is also useful to take into consideration the kind of information to be gathered (quantitative data for estimating the prevalence of child labour and its distribution by desired criteria, or qualitative information for understanding the nature, causes and consequences of child labour). The principal methods of child labour inquiry for quantitative data are household-based surveys and establishment based surveys, while rapid assessment studies are conducted where qualitative information may suffice or where randomized sample surveys are not possible.

35. With the exception of special categories of child labour (such as, children who live on the street, or those in the unconditional worst forms of child labour), household-based surveys provide an effective tool for collecting a wide range of statistics on child labour, and estimating its prevalence. The household-based national survey may be applied by countries to either in a stand-alone way or as a module attached to another household-based survey. In regard to the latter, a labour force survey should be preferred since similar concepts are applied. The advantage of a household-based child labour survey is that the household is the most appropriate unit for identifying children and their families, measuring their socioeconomic and demographic characteristics and housing conditions, obtaining information on the child's educational and work status including engagement in hazardous work, and the determinants and consequences of children's work activities.

36. Establishment surveys administered at the child's workplace (which includes home-based production units that engage hired workers) seek to obtain data on the particulars of the production unit and the characteristics of its workforce, with a special focus on child workers. Information is sought on children's wages, hours of work, working conditions and employment benefits, and injuries and illnesses at work, as compared with those of adult workers. The perceptions of the employer regarding motives of hiring child workers, and the methods of recruitment, may also be explored.

37. Rapid assessment studies are a useful tool to collect information on children in hidden forms of child labour. Their output is mainly qualitative and descriptive and usually limited to a small geographical area, and hence, the method is generally not applicable if the aim is to estimate the number of child workers. Nonetheless, it can provide the relevant data on the causes, consequences and characteristics of the child labour form being investigated relatively quickly and inexpensively for many uses, for example, awareness creation and project formulation. Its participatory approach of discussions and interviews with a variety of key respondents is ideally suited for obtaining detailed knowledge of the working and living conditions of children who are

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involved in activities or occupations otherwise difficult to identify and characterize. Therefore, the applicability of rapid assessments is more relevant to research institutes and organizations, and for supplementing surveys carried out by national statistical offices.

38. A special form of rapid assessment relevant to child labour data gathering is the street children survey that targets two main categories of children, namely: (a) those who live and work on the street and by definition do not have any other place of residence; and (b) those who work on the streets but normally reside with their parents/ guardians. The two categories require different data collection techniques, and the approach relies on interviewing purposively selected children and, if possible, their employers and/or clients.

39. Another important data collection vehicle for child labour statistics is the baseline survey/study that is aimed at the identification, of population attributes and the consequences of child labour in specific sectors and/or areas at different points of time. It is usually closely linked to action programmes and assists in the identification of project beneficiaries and monitoring their withdrawal from work over time. The baseline survey/study generates both quantitative and qualitative data, applying a mix of sample survey and participatory approaches. If a suitable sample frame can be developed, the findings may be extrapolated to the industry and/or area surveyed.

#### *Further research on measurement of specific worst forms of child labour*

40. As regards the worst forms of child labour, only statistics on child labour in hazardous work may be collected through household-based and establishment based surveys. Concerning the unconditional worst forms of child labour and special groups such as child workers living independently or on streets, for which a sampling frame does not exist or cannot be easily prepared, reliable methodologies for deriving accurate estimates of their numbers for a particular form and in a specified geographical area do not currently exist. The ILO and its partners are engaged in research towards developing appropriate methodologies.

#### *Ethical considerations*

41. Maintaining a code of ethics during data collection process is essential. This applies in particular issues to child labour surveys. The Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation No. 190 specifies in its Paragraph 6 that: "The compilation and processing of the information and data referred to in Paragraph 5 above should be carried out with due regard for the right to privacy." Each national statistical authority, which wishes to measure child labour, should establish a set of ethical guidelines for child labour data collection keeping in view Article 2, paragraph 2 and Article 13 paragraph 1 of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. At a minimum it should be ensured that the working children, especially those who are respondents, are not harmed as a consequence of the survey. Also, as for all statistical surveys, the respondent should be assured that confidentiality of the information provided shall be respected, as also his/her anonymity.

42. It should also be ensured that survey participation by child respondents is voluntary and that enumerators do not face any risks during data collection. The field enumerators, in turn, should respect cultural traditions, knowledge and customs of respondents. In addition, when interviewing children, enumerators should be sensitive to children's ways of behaving and thinking, and avoid raising unrealistic expectations of the child workers. Child labour data collection should be undertaken by persons specially trained to the type of survey being conducted.

### **Global Estimation Processes**

43. Progressive abolition of child labour has become a major concern of the international community, and the achievement towards that goal needs to be measured internationally as well as nationally. The procedure for identification of child labour for the purpose of ILO global estimates (in the paragraph below) provides a practical guide, and may be suitably adapted (especially

concerning the minimum age of work and hazardous work that is prohibited for children), and with regard to the time thresholds for classification of light work and hazardous work. The estimate of children in the unconditional worst forms of child labour can be only approximate as robust methodologies in this regard await development.

44.	I.	Children in unconditional worst forms of child labour (Approximate estimate)	----	<b>U</b>
	II.	The total of economically active children excluding children seeking work 5 to 17 years, also termed as “working children” (denote as “EAC”), obtained from household-based surveys, should be classified by layers as below:		
		- EAC in designated hazardous industries	----	<b>A</b>
		- EAC in non-designated industries:		
		- in designated hazardous occupations	----	<b>B</b>
		- in non-designated occupations :		
		- ≥ 43 hours per week	----	<b>C</b>
		- < 43 hours per week:		
		- EAC 5 to 11 years	----	<b>D</b>
		- EAC 12 to 14 years:		
		- ≥ 14 hours/week	----	<b>E</b>
		- < 14 hours/week	----	<b>F</b>
		- EAC 15 to 17 years	----	<b>G</b>

Children in hazardous work = **[A + B + C]**  
 Children in non-hazardous work, but in work not permitted to them = **[D + E]**  
 Child labour = **[U + A + B + C + D + E]**  
 EAC in work permitted to them = **[F + G]**  
 = EAC not classified as child labour

45. Since national lists of designated hazardous industries and occupations differ, the indicator to be used to arrive at global estimates of children in hazardous work should be the overlap among the lists provided in the national legislations, that would constitute a “core” or “minimal” list of hazardous work prohibited for children.

46. The basis on which light work in non-designated industries or occupations is determined for the purpose of the global estimates is the cut off point of 14 hours per week supported in terms of ILO Convention No. 33 Article 3 (1) (c) as referred to in paragraph 26.

47. Due account should be taken of Paragraph 7 of Recommendation No. 190, which stipulates that collected data should be communicated to the International Labour Office on a regular basis. National statistical authorities should collaborate with the efforts for global estimation of the situation on child labour in the world, and by its major regions. While national statistical systems may be expected to produce and disseminate child labour statistics in accordance with the national legislation and safeguards for the well-being of children in the country, the collection of national data sufficiently disaggregated in order to allow compilation of statistics for the purposes of global reporting is also important.

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## Supplementary Sources of Child Labor Data

### *Review of available data on working children*

48. A low cost approach to child labour data collection is the review of child labour-relevant data contained in existing censuses and socioeconomic surveys. Since child labourers are a relatively scarce population, data analysis based on these surveys constitutes an option for countries to compile basic data on working children at periodic intervals in situations where personnel and financial resources do not permit to conduct specific or modular child labour surveys.

### *Education statistics*

49. School attendance (or enrolment) rates in the education statistics of a country reflect to some extent the engagement of children in what ideally should be their main activity. Although some children who attend school also engage in economic activities, and absence from school does not necessarily imply that the child is working, in the absence of a proper data collection system on child labour, data on school non-attendance (or, non-enrolment, if statistics on attendance are insufficiently developed) may be used as a proxy indicator for child labour. The link of the school non-attendance rates by school levels (primary, middle, secondary, etc.) to the relevant child age groups should correspond to the official ages of schooling set for particular school levels.

### *Administrative records on violations of child labour legislation*

50. In accordance with ILO Recommendation No. 190, Paragraph 5 (3) relevant data concerning violations of national provisions for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date. In this regard, administrative records on violations of child labour legislation in the form of cases brought to courts and other relevant official authorities, and convictions thereof; on criminal prosecution of child traffickers and those engaged in the commercial sexual exploitation of children; and on child rights abuse leading to revelation of forced or bonded child labour are useful sources of information that should be compiled to supplement national child labour statistics. Labour inspection reports might also provide useful supplementary information, to the extent that they inform on underage workers and hazardous working conditions.

## Items of Data Collection

51. The most important items of data collection for purposes of an informed statistics based analysis of child labour and working children will include: (i) age and sex of the child, (ii) school attendance status, (iii) engagement in household chores, (iv) time spent in economic activity, (v) place of work, (vi) kind of production activity, (vii) occupation of the working children, and (viii) working conditions of children including impact on their health and education.

52. For a comprehensive analysis of the national child labour situation, statistics on children's activity should be collected so as to enable classification of children by (a) school going, and (b) non-school going groups. Each group may be further subdivided by weekly hours engaged in (i) only economic activities, (ii) only household chores, (iii) both economic activities and household chores, and (iv) neither economic activities nor household chores. Depending on the national circumstances and regulations, this will facilitate determination of what should statistically be considered as "child labour".

53. It would be useful to national policy makers and other users to have the necessary child labour statistics in sufficient detail so that data can be classified by urban/rural residency and, if possible, by the lower level administrative units of the country at which policy and programme interventions can be effective.

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54. Important child labour statistics and indicators that should be collected and covered in a survey on children's activities are listed in the Appendix to this resolution.

55. Child labour data collection in sufficient detail at regular periodicity (as determined by the national statistical offices in the light of national data needs and resource availabilities) helps in assessing child labour trends, and should also facilitate impact assessment of policy and programmes implemented to combat child labour. Sustainability of child labour data collection may be attained by identifying a few key child labour variables on which data are collected with assured regularity by including a module in an appropriate national household-based survey, preferably a labour force survey.

### **Further Action**

#### *ILO manuals and questionnaires*

56. To assist the national statistical systems in the task of collecting and analysing statistics on the various aspects of working children and child labour, the ILO should update its manuals and model questionnaires on child labour statistics when necessary and possible. Instructions for adopting the provisions of this resolution must be clearly laid out.

#### *ILO technical assistance*

57. The ILO should continue with and expand its technical assistance programme on child labour statistics to support implementation of this resolution by member countries. Such technical assistance should include provision for technical advice and training targeted to enhance national capacities where required, and financial support to countries for the conduct of child labour data collection and analysis, to the extent possible.

## Appendix: Guidelines for child labour indicators to be used by national statistical offices

Category	Indicators	Suggested statistics
<i>1. Indicator set: Prevalence and characteristics of working children</i>		
<b>Number and prevalence: Working children (economically active children) and Child labour</b>	Working children/ child labourers by activity and characteristics [by: age group, sex, school attendance status, region and urban/ rural residency]	<b>Working children:</b> Number and percent of children who reported working for pay or profit (in cash or in kind, part-time or full-time), or working for a family enterprise (paid or unpaid), or as a domestic worker outside their household for an employer (with or without pay) during the reference period. <b>Child labourers:</b> Child workers in one of following conditions: (i) child is below the minimum age established in the legislation for the industry or type of work performed; (ii) child works excessive hours or more than the maximum established in the legislation for the age, industry or type of work; and (iii) work is one of the worst forms of child labour.
<b>Child categories by activities</b>	Grouping of children by activities engaged in [by: sex and broad age groups]	(i) only study (ii) study + economic activities (iii) study + economic activities+ household chores (iv) study + household chores (v) only economic activities (vi) only household chores (vii) economic activities + household chores
<b>Duration of work</b>	Number of hours worked [by: age group/ sex]	Number of hours worked per week
<b>Distribution by industry</b>	Working children by industry [by: age group/ sex]	Number and percent of working children by industry
<b>Distribution by occupation</b>	Working children by occupation [by: age group/ sex]	Number and percent of working children by occupation
<b>Location of workplace</b>	Working children by location of workplace [by: age group, sex, and urban/ rural residency]	Number and percent of working children who work at home versus away from home; also, distribution by major work locations
<b>Status in employment and earnings</b>	Working children by status in employment, and earnings with frequency of payment [by: age group, sex and urban/ rural residency]	Number and percent of working children who work as paid employee (in cash or in kind), domestic worker for an employer (paid or unpaid), contributing family worker, or are own-account workers, or other. Earnings of working children with type and frequency of payment, whether paid to child worker or another person, and use of the earnings.
<b>Workplace conditions</b>	Working children by workplace conditions.	Adverse conditions at work place, due to industry or due to occupation of working child. (Number and percent of working children that report working with dust, fumes, gas, in a noisy

	[by: age group, sex and types of adverse work conditions]	environment, with extreme temperatures or humidity, with dangerous tools, underground, at a height, with insufficient lighting, with chemicals, or carry heavy loads, etc.)
<b>II. Indicator set: Correlates and possible causes and consequences</b>		
<b>School attendance</b>	School attendance status and education level of all children [by: age group, sex, activity status and urban/ rural residency]	Number and percentage of all children attending school, and their breakdown by those who are working children, those who do not work, and those doing household chores only, as well as those combining one or more activities. Education level of all children (attending /not attending school). Working children who are school dropouts and working children who have never attended school (along with main reasons for dropout/ not attending school).
<b>Injuries/ illnesses sustained at work</b>	Injuries/ illnesses among working children [by: age group, sex, occupation and recovery time]	Number and percent of working children injured at work among all who have ever worked, type of injuries and sickness due to work, whether or not medical treatment required, who paid for treatment, absenteeism, if any.
<b>Abuse at work place</b>	Abuse at work place to working children [by: age group, sex, occupation and type of abuse]	Number and percent of working children abused at work place, by type of abuse.
<b>Socioeconomic characteristics of household</b>	Working children [by: various household characteristics]	Number of household members by age/ sex/ education status/ economic activity status/ relationship to household head (for each)/ whether or not child living with both natural parents and, if not, why. Household monthly income/expenditure, Household movable and immovable assets, etc.
<b>III. Indicator set: Other useful statistics</b>		
<b>Household chores</b>	Children engaged in unpaid domestic and personal services for consumption within the same household [by: age group, sex, hours of engagement, and urban/ rural residency]	Number and percent of children who reported performing household chores, number of hours engaged per week, and classified by major domestic tasks. The data should be compiled separately for school going and for non-school going children.
<b>Children at risk of becoming child labourers</b>	Children wanting work [by: age group, sex]	Number of children who are not working but wanting work
<b>Idle children</b>	Idle children [by: age group, sex]	Number of children who are (i) not studying, (ii) not engaged in economic activities, (iii) not doing household chores, and (iv) not wanting work.