



12 JUNE 2011

World day against child labour



International
Labour
Office
Geneva

TRIPARTITE ACTION TO TACKLE HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR

Whilst the primary responsibility for tackling all forms of child labour rests with government, the issue of hazardous child labour is ideal for action by government, employers and workers. As mentioned above, ILO standards require the close involvement of employers and workers in determining what is to be regarded as hazardous work. The social partners can also assist government in ensuring that national occupational safety and health systems and programmes are in line with ILO standards. It is important to draw on the experience of the private sector and workers organisations in dealing with workplace safety issues.



THE WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

Civil society organisations play an important role in the worldwide movement against child labour. Many have acquired valuable experience of working to tackle hazardous child labour. This experience can help to inform and guide actions and future efforts.



JOIN US ON 12 JUNE 2011!

The World Day Against Child Labour promotes awareness and action to tackle child labour. Support for the World Day has been growing each year. In 2011 we look forward to a World Day that will be widely supported by governments, employers' and workers' organizations, UN agencies and all those concerned with tackling child labour.



WARNING!

Children in hazardous work

End child labour

We would like you and your organisation to be part of the 2011 World Day.
Join us and add your voice to the worldwide movement against child labour.
For more information contact ipcc@ilo.org or visit www.ilo.org/ipcc





WORLD DAY 2011

The ILO's most recent global estimate is that 115 million children are involved in hazardous work. This is work that by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm children's health, safety or morals. Children working in many different industries and occupations can be exposed to such risks and the problem is global, affecting industrialised as well as developing countries.

Hazardous work is among the worst forms of child labour which the international community has targeted for elimination by 2016. The need for urgent action in order to reach this target was both the theme of The Hague Global Child Labour Conference in 2010 which adopted a Roadmap for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, and has been endorsed in the ILO's Global Action Plan. Other worst forms of child labour specified in ILO standards are slavery or practices similar to slavery, child prostitution, and the use of children in illicit activities.

The 2011 World Day Against Child Labour will provide a global spotlight on hazardous child labour, and call for urgent action to tackle the problem. On this World Day we call for :

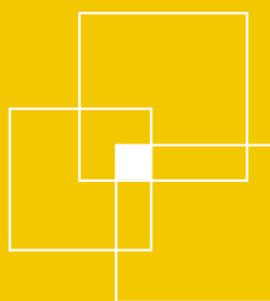
- New urgency in identifying and tackling hazardous child labour, as an important means to make progress on the global goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour;
- Recognising that hazardous work is part of the larger child labour problem, scaling up global, national and local level efforts against all forms of child labour through education, social protection and strategies to promote decent and productive work for youth and adults;
- Building strong tripartite action on the issue of the hazardous work of children, using international standards and the experience of employers' and workers' organizations in the area of safety and health.

WHAT WORK IS INVOLVED AND WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN ?

Certain industries or types of work carry particular risks, but any form of child labour can be or can become hazardous, depending on the working conditions. The more hazardous the work is the more extreme are the consequences. ILO Recommendation No. 190 gives guidance as to some of the factors to be considered in determining hazardous work. These include :

- Work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- Work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in 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;
- 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.

Based on such factors, the impact of work on children can range from a relatively minor injury to disability or even death. Furthermore, some of the physical or psychological problems that result from work are not obvious or do not show up for many years, such as in the cases of heavy metal poisoning or impaired intellectual or social development.



HOW IS HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR DETERMINED ?

The main international standards on child labour are ILO Convention No 138, concerning the minimum age, and ILO Convention No. 182, concerning the worst forms of child labour and their accompanying Recommendations Nos. 146 and 190, respectively. These important international standards provide that determination of which work is hazardous for children should be made locally. The standards require each Member State to identify and tackle hazardous child labour. They stipulate that it is up to the competent authorities, in consultation with workers' and employers' organizations, to determine what is hazardous in their national context. Many countries have now established lists of hazardous work for children, but many need to update their lists, and others have yet to establish lists. One aim of the World Day is to ensure that all countries have taken this step and thereby have a solid base on which to take action.

HOW CAN THE PROBLEM BEST BE TACKLED ?

The ILO's experience is that a combination of several types of action is most effective, such as :

- Improving the collection of data on children at work and occupational accidents and illnesses, including analysis of the sex and age of children involved;
- Awareness-raising, so that both adults and children recognise the dangers;
- Developing policies and up to date regulations to protect children;
- Promoting effective law enforcement through integrated labour inspection services working in concert with other actors; and
- Working with workers' representatives and employers' organizations to help ensure that work is safe for all.

Governments have a responsibility to ensure that children below the minimum age are in education, and that children of legal working age are working in safe conditions.

SCALING UP EFFORTS THROUGH INTEGRATED POLICIES

Hazardous child labour cannot be addressed in isolation. It is part of the global problem of child labour, which is closely linked to family poverty and working conditions. As such, measures to address the issue also need to be rooted in broader policy responses.

Education is the first priority : 67 million primary aged children of whom more than half are girls, and 71 million children of lower secondary school age, are not enrolled in school. Many others who are enrolled are not attending on a regular basis, often because of long working hours or because of the costs of schooling. Providing access to a free, compulsory and quality basic education for all children to the minimum age of employment is a key strategy in tackling all forms of child labour. Skills training opportunities and other measures to help those of legal working age to access decent and productive work are also very important.

Social protection strategies can provide support to poor families, and ensure assistance is provided when families face economic shocks, such as sudden unemployment, or other factors resulting in loss of family income. A social protection floor which ensures access to basic services such as education and health can be an important element of poverty eradication efforts.

Employment strategies which ensure that parents and youth of legal working age have the possibility of decent work is a key factor in tackling child labour. Active labour market programmes can help target adolescent workers in hazardous occupations to improve their working conditions or assist them in moving to decent jobs. Steps also need to be taken to improve national occupational safety and health systems and labour inspection services, ensuring outreach to rural areas and the informal economy, where the majority of child labour is found.