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Child labour and its connection with the exercise of the right to education in Mexico: State of affairs

Main conclusions and recommendations

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**“CHILD LABOUR AND ITS CONNECTION WITH THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT TO
EDUCATION IN MEXICO: STATE OF AFFAIRS”
MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Major Conclusions:

1. In Mexico, basic education (3 years of preschool, 6 years of primary education and 3 years of secondary education –in the theory for children aged 3 to 14 years) is compulsory. Labour law prohibits and punishes the employment of children under 14 years, and limits the hiring of children between 14 and 16 who have completed compulsory education to 6-hour shifts with permission from their parents or guardians. Some few exceptions in the law also provide for work restrictions for people up to 18 years of age.

2. Although national legislation provides for the prohibition of child labour to some extent, it is still insufficient to ensure the protection of children and adolescents against the exploitation child labour involves. The gaps are mainly related to the lack of harmonization of laws and international instruments ratified by Mexico. For example, a list of hazardous child labour is non-existent, which is contrary to the commitment undertaken when the ILO Convention 182 was ratified.

3. On the other hand, the country lacks a comprehensive policy of prevention and eradication of child labour at the federal or state levels. Only in the case of the state of Michoacán a broad policy framework called "State Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour" (PEETI) (Government of the State of Michoacán, 2007) was found, which, however, has not been executed to date.

4. As regards the legislative framework for education, there is no legislation to accompany the principle of interdependence of human rights (that is, the incidence of the right to education in the exercise of other rights, such as the right to be protected against CL exploitation).

5. Educational legislation establishes an equitable approach to providing quality and relevant education to indigenous and migrant populations. However, again it is important to consider that while it is true that the recognition of rights is fundamental to regulatory frameworks, enforcement of these rights cannot be equated with their objectification in the strictly legal sense.

6. According to the Module on Child Labour (MTI) of the 2009 National Survey of Employment and Occupation (INEGI, 2009) 3,014,800 children and adolescents between 5 and 17 years work in Mexico, which represents 10.7% of children of this age. Among children and adolescents who work, 1,195,744 do not attend school (39.7%). The rest of them, despite adverse conditions (e.g., long work hours and intense work pace) combine study with work. In fact, 961,257 work in excess of 35 hours a week. For its part, the 2009 National Farm Workers Survey (SEDESOL, 2009) estimates that 433,516 (59.2%) work as farm workers, among the 727,527 who are part of the underage agricultural worker population.

7. In urban areas, children work in many occupations, mainly in the informal sector of the economy: on the streets, markets, cemeteries, parking lots, in small family workshops, as domestic workers. There is little information on urban child labour, but in many cases children are involved in highly dangerous activities that should be considered as "worst forms of child labour" prohibited for any person under 18 years. It is exploitative work, which violates the right to education as it is incompatible with or hinders learning. These children have difficulty accessing and especially staying in school, because schools are not prepared to meet the needs of the child workers, and many end up excluding them through discrimination, abuse or multiple class fails.

8. Rural child labour occurs, in most cases, in household plots and / or caring for animals and in the children's own homes. This activity, in general, could be compatible with school when if conducted as training activity; however such work can become severe enough to cause dropping out of school and so dangerous that it should not be performed by any person under 18 years of age. Similarly, another portion of child labour in agriculture takes place in other people's farms, destined to meet demand for products for domestic consumption and export. Although in many cases, children are not hired openly, child labour is tolerated by those who involved in this type of farming.

9. The work of the child migrant farm workers should be categorized as hazardous child labour, and therefore, as one of the worst forms of child labour. Many occupations in agriculture include tasks or situations that are dangerous because they can cause physical harm, but also because they may cause less

visible emotional or psychological harm. What is more, some tasks that are safe for adults can be dangerous for children who are physically and emotionally more vulnerable. For example, in agriculture there are *risks of accidents* by falls, being struck by an object, or the risk of being pressed by an object or getting caught between objects, or the risk of being burned or cut; *biological hazards* related to dangerous animals or insects, poisonous or sharp plants, risk of exposure to bacteria, parasites or viruses; *chemical hazards* from exposure to gases, liquids or solid wastes, agricultural chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, insecticides), explosives or flammable materials; *ergonomic hazards* related to poor workplace design, or when an activity requires lifting, carrying or moving heavy loads, or repetitive and strenuous movements, or poor body position; *physical hazards* related to excess temperature, noise, vibration or radiation; *psychosocial hazards* related to stress, heavy or monotonous work, lack of supervision, insecurity, sexual harassment and abuse, and violence; and hazards associated with working conditions, such as long hours, night work or work in isolation.

10. Moreover, these children cannot go to school because they work long hours and because the education system has yet to find a fully satisfactory answer to their condition as migrants who stay in any one place for only a short time. In their places of origin, schools will not accept them on their return if the school is already well under way. Programmes designed to serve them operate with too few resources and are not aimed at discouraging child labour but rather adapt their services to the uneven and temporary work conditions of these children. Have significant discontinuities. Specialized programmes manage to reach only between 10% and 20% of cases, depending on which institution provides the figures. Most school enrolment occurs in grades 1 and 2 (70%), which few children manage to pass. A significant percentage of working children not attending school consists of child farm workers.

11. Indigenous children are twice as likely to work than non-indigenous children. Indigenous children are also twice as likely not to attend school. They are represented across the entire spectrum of child labour in urban and rural areas. In all cases, their working conditions are inferior to those of non-indigenous children. Their engagement in child labour enjoys social tolerance ("society is accustomed"). At school, indigenous children also have special difficulties. Many schools in their hometowns are of very poor quality and linguistically and culturally irrelevant, so the chance these children drop out of school is higher. In urban and rural areas where there is demand for child labour, children that are able to attend school often meet Spanish language instruction that they do not understand and is culturally irrelevant, besides suffering very evident discrimination by teachers and classmates. They do not feel comfortable at school and eventually drop out.

12. Although a public policy against child labour in Mexico has not been developed and the programmes and actions addressing this problem do so in a disjointed manner, more often than not, unintentionally, these programmes and actions manage to have an impact on the phenomenon. An example of this is the Oportunidades programme, which without being explicit about this issue has reduced child labour by improving school attendance and retention of a large number of children. In urban areas, there are programmes with little impact operating with limited resources and limited coverage. It seems schools do not have programmes that have improved their ability to care properly for indigenous children and child workers.

13. With regard to child farm workers, the Farm Workers Care Programme (PAJA) (SEDESOL) serves various social needs, and the PRONIM and MEIPIM programmes focus on early childhood education, preschool and primary education. However, there are no programmes designed specifically for indigenous people, although the above-mentioned programmes address the needs of indigenous children to some extent, but without considering their linguistic or cultural peculiarities nor their special vulnerability to exploitative labour.

14. The programmes that serve working children are generally characterized as being very unstable, operating in a very uncoordinated manner, having very limited resources and - for the same reason - having very limited coverage to meet demand and show, therefore, very little progress towards the wider well being of working and preventing their lagging behind in school.

15. In Mexico, more than half of children live in multidimensional poverty conditions. This places them in a highly vulnerable position. It is widely recognized that poverty is one of the main determinants of child labour. However, it is recognized that other factors related to education and culture are also determinants.

16. In this sense, the findings of the Module on Child Labour of the ENOE Survey (INEGI, 2007) are revealing: When asked about the consequences of not working, 45.5% said they would have no consequences, 27.7% responded that this would have an impact on family income or that there would not be enough money for clothing, education and entertainment, while 12.7% said not working would deprive them from learning a trade and become responsible home providers.

17. Without doubt, an educational system that has no answers in terms of efficient coverage, relevance and permanence, contributes to the spread of child labour. On the other hand, a permissive social vision of child labour is prevalent. This view goes from an economic justification to a perception of work as positive to acquire life skills to a rationale that it is a valid strategy to keep children and adolescents away from crime.

18. Paradoxically, this vision naturalizes a condition that does not promote the social and educational inclusion of children in poverty, and thus undoubtedly contributes to perpetuating the vicious cycle of poverty and child labour.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Mexico must prioritize the fight against child labour from the perspectives of prevention and eradication following minimum international standards signed and ratified. The following are some of the main recommendations resulting from the study:

In relation to public policy

2. As a country, there must be an urgent conviction that the best investment is that which is placed in the population, especially in children and adolescents. Hence, the causes of child labour must be analyzed in the different dimensions presented here, and public policies should be designed that would ensure – through cross-sectoral programs and at the three levels of government and with the participation of other key stakeholders– the effective abolition of child and adolescent labour and raise progressively the minimum age for admission to work or employment so as to promote the fullest physical and mental development of children.

3. These programs should establish short-, medium- and long-term actions which, in a comprehensive manner and encouraging synergies, will combat its root causes and not only its effects.

4. In this manner, preventing and eradicating child labour should help generate regional economic, social, health and education development projects, with surveillance of the implementation of labour legislation and other issues which, when simultaneously executed, are indispensable to sustain public agenda on the matter.

5. It is necessary to generate comprehensive responses to address this problem while recognizing that when the universalization, quality and relevance of education are promoted, eradicating child labour becomes a more feasible task.

6. As regards the challenges that remain concerning the education of indigenous children and adolescents that would contribute to combat economic exploitation and child labour, it is particularly necessary to strengthen the effective participation and advocacy in decision-making on education policies aimed at indigenous communities.

7. These policies should integrate the cosmo-knowledge of indigenous peoples into the educational curriculum of the rest of the population to promote multiculturalism, guarantee permanent infrastructure and staffing, ensure the linkage between school and other government programs (birth registration, health, nutrition, etc.), and exchange successful experiences in indigenous education.

In relation to the generation of knowledge

8. It is particularly necessary to contribute to the prevention and eradication of child labour in the educational field. This means that the education sector should have a clear idea of the characteristics of different populations of children who work and the causes that push children to miss or drop out of school

because of work. Programmes must be adequately resourced with appropriately trained staff to operate, ensure their continuity, and have clear mechanisms for assessment and accountability.

9. In the last two decades, the generation of quantitative data on child labour in Mexico has improved despite significant gaps in information regarding the link between the exercise of the right to education and child labour.

10. The following other information gaps can be mentioned: the relationship between dropout rates and child labour; children's educational status and the school dynamics of urban working children; issues such as absenteeism and dropping out and child labour; the characterization of school environments and cultures that increase the risk of child labour; the systematization of best practices that have an impact on comprehensive school strategies for the eradication of child labour (e.g. Proniño and others to be identified); information on working schoolchildren; the impact of grade repetition in child labour; representations of principals, teachers, parents and students on child labour; child labour and educational paths; the characterization of education in the hometowns of migrant children and its link to child labour.

In relation to law adaptation and enforcement

11. Mexico has ratified international conventions on minimum age: ILO Convention 58 of ILO concerning the minimum age for admission to employment at sea and ILO Convention 90 concerning night work in industry. Yet, the urgent ratification of ILO Convention 138, the general instrument on the matter which supersedes other instruments applicable to limited economic sectors, is pending and necessary for achieving the total abolition of child labour. In addition to providing for the minimum age for employment, this Convention links the issue of work with compulsory education, and also establishes the link between adolescent work and education. Its ratification must be analyzed in light of the ongoing process to define upper secondary education as compulsory (up to age 17) within the next 10 years.

12. In Mexico, Section III of Article 123 of the Constitution prohibits the employment of children under 14 years. However, although the regulatory age for secondary school is 12 to 14 years, only six out of ten adolescents enrolled in the third year of secondary school (9th grade) were 14 years old; the rest will complete their secondary education at age 15 (INEE, 2007). Keeping the minimum age for employment in 14 years opens the door to the possibility of children working who have not completed their compulsory education cycle, and discourages them from continuing their studies at the upper secondary level.

13. Besides the need to adapt and harmonize labour laws on child and adolescent protection, it is also advisable to review in depth the legal framework governing education and adapt it as necessary for recognition of child labor as a necessary focus of attention.

In relation to free education and combating indirect education costs

14. According to the National Income and Expenditure Survey (ENIGH, 2008), the national average monthly expenditure per pupil in public elementary schools is \$ 272 pesos a month. The percentage of income that poorest (decile I) families allocate to education is 3.4%, which doubles in the next highest income decile, and reaches 12% in decile V. Additionally, this same source tells us that the poorest families allocate 30% of education spending to unexpected events (festivals and other school necessities), while for most this proportion is only 10%. This proportion is 21% for rural areas and 15% for urban areas. It is evident that the poorest families help solve the budgetary shortfalls of schools. This certainly has an effect on the retention of children in school and constitutes a high risk of early school leaving and child labor.

15. Recognition of this situation results in two recommendations. The first is to establish actions to reduce household spending on public education - school costs should be satisfactorily covered by the government, and households should disburse a minimum. The second is to strengthen the system of scholarships or additional financial support (conditioned and unconditioned) for poor households that impacts both on tangible expenditure and on opportunity costs.

In relation to Quality of Education

16. The school day in Mexico is one of the shortest in the world, allocating only four hours and a half per working day in primary school. Extending school-day hours has impacts on educational quality and achievement and also responds to the demand for school care of a growing urban population and to changing patterns of family life, especially since the incorporation of women into the labour market. To this one must add the impact on discouraging child labour. The Full Time School Program that the Ministry of Education (SEP) currently operates nationally, and the Extended School-Day Program that the Administration of Educational Services runs in Federal District schools should be strengthened. The former already reported a positive impact in agricultural fields. Therefore, it is highly recommended to continue to set up an educational system that will increase and consolidate its coverage. Schemes such as Extended School-Day and the Always Open School Programme constitute important priority measures to be extended to areas and regions where child labour is concentrated.

17. All schools in the country should work with an intercultural approach. This is true of indigenous schools, but it is also true of general primary schools, all types of preschools and secondary schools, and schools operating in migrant farm camps. The intercultural approach means that teachers are trained to take pedagogical advantage of cultural diversity, to instill respect for the "different other" to encourage children from various backgrounds to enrich each other when they are together and, when not, to be aware of diversity and learn to respect and appreciate it. The intercultural approach assumes that teachers are concerned that ALL students learn, and therefore are concerned about providing learning experiences for children to develop basic and higher thinking and living skills. The intercultural approach is consistent with the principles of inclusive education based on recognizing the particularities of each child, including children who work or who are at high risk of working, in order to serve them accordingly.

18. Schools in indigenous areas should endeavour to provide culturally and linguistically relevant education, inculcating the knowledge of the indigenous culture and the pride of belonging to it, and be especially warm, welcoming and safe for children to want to stay in them.

19. Initial and continuous teacher training programs would do well to emphasize awareness of child labour issue and its diversity, give teachers the tools to care for children who are working and studying or at high risk of leaving school for work, and promote coordination with other institutions also responsible for addressing the problem of child labour.

20. Children who have worked know many things. In general they excel at math. Those who have migrated are people of broad horizons, having coexisted with diverse people and seen many different contexts. These are strengths that should be harnessed to develop what in these children is still perceived as weaknesses in their learning.

21. It is desirable that a degree in intercultural and bilingual primary education exist in at least one teachers' college in each state, at least in the 24 states harboring aboriginal indigenous populations. A similar degree should also exist for preschool education. Teachers' colleges should offer a major in language and culture. In states where there are poles of attraction and expulsion of migrants, a degree in elementary education specializing in care for migrant children should also be offered.

22. The school supervisory boards, and also the school principals, should be an integral part of a concerted effort to prevent, reduce and combat child labour. It is highly desirable that they know the phenomenon and its causes and that they act cautiously in their approach to combat it and that they denounce the illegal recruitment of children whenever possible. They must be prepared on the basis of specifically designed institutional strategies to support teachers to work and achieve learning outcomes with children at high risk of leaving school for work or to reintegrate those children who should not be working for being under the minimum age for admission to employment or because they are involved in a dangerous or worst form of child labor.

23. Along these same lines, it is particularly important and relevant to undertake actions to prevent child labor within the classrooms themselves, both with children –at risk of working or not– and their parents and the school community at large. Delving deeper in the myths and realities surrounding child labour and its causes and consequences may contribute decisively to sensitising the younger generations against child labor and thereby reduce social tolerance of this phenomenon. In this sense, it is important to make use, where possible, of existing tools for these purposes, such as ILO's SCREAM methodology, which has been incorporated into the educational programmes of other countries in the region.

24. The presence of the INEA and other technical training programs should be strengthened to cater to older adolescents who are falling behind in school and prefer to continue to explore alternatives designed especially for them rather than to attend school with younger children. The 10-14 modality may be relevant to them, and so may be the model of Education for Life and Work (MEVyT), which should be accessible to all youths and adults. The same is true of the Occupational Training Institutes (ICATs).

25. In urban areas, it should be avoided at all costs that the 9-14 project become a space to segregate indigenous children, as indeed has happened. In any case, in urban areas and for children who are behind academically, a version of the Intelligent Classrooms should be implemented, grouping students together in same-age groups whenever possible –in physical education classes, in art education classes, during recess, on field trips– and ultimately mainstreaming them into regular groups.

26. It is advisable to maintain the Oportunidades scholarship programme. However, this must be done in conjunction with actions geared at improving the schools themselves in terms of resources, training of teachers to address diversity (including working children) and ensure a relevant and meaningful education.

27. Mexico must also work for the school to become a welcoming, friendly and secure environment where children may feel comfortable and want to be at. This entails strengthening the supervisory boards to support school principals and teachers everyday in order to fulfill the unmet demand and avoid early school leaving to the extent possible. Schools should also review their class fail policy so that it will not become a cause of dropping out of school.

28. Opportunities should allow the population to receive scholarships to attend school even in communities with no health clinic. The poorest communities where no health care services are available are precisely the ones most in need of the Oportunidades scholarships.

29. This program should also make necessary modifications in order to serve the children of migrant farm workers who travel with their parents so they may continue attending school without losing financial support when arriving in communities considered "poles of attraction."

30. Oportunidades also should recognize in its rules of operation that the costs of opportunity for attending school are different for rural, urban and commercial farming areas; therefore, scholarship amounts should be adjusted accordingly.

31. It is required that the migrant child population be served by the regular education system; to this end, it is necessary to make modifications to the budget allocation formula of the Fund for Promoting Basic Education (FAEB) as regards the Federal Contribution Fund (known as "Ramo 33"). The Fiscal Coordination Act states that funds received by the states through this fund shall be used exclusively to "finance the attributions set out in Articles 13 and 16 of the General Education Act (LGE)", i.e. initial basic education, including indigenous education, special and normal education for teachers' training. However, under the current distribution formula, historical allocations to each state have the greatest weight when deciding on the total amount to be transferred. Therefore, FAEB is distributed among the states in an inertial fashion. It is necessary that 100% of the demand for educational services be included in the distribution, including migrant education. Otherwise, the states will continue to argue that the resources for catering to this population are in their home states.

32. On the farm worker camps, children must attend regular schools in the communities in which they live. This entails establishing systems of school transportation from the camps to the schools and explore and review the funding systems on the basis of public-private co-responsibility schemes. It also implies, of course, working hand in hand with teachers to address the enormous diversity of cultures, languages, ages and the times of arrival and departure that accompany this population. It also implies for teachers to be trained to regulate the coexistence of regular students and migrants, for which an inclusive and intercultural approach is certainly helpful. PRONIM teachers and CONAFE instructors could serve as monitors of regular teachers in these schools. The experience of Sinaloa with the Intelligent Classrooms is interesting because they operate precisely in regular schools. It should be ensured that children are integrated into the regular activities of other children as soon as possible so they may join classes as appropriate to their age.

33. Where the only option in the short term is for children to attend school in camps, it is recommended that PRONIM and CONAFE divide the work among themselves, so the former should tend to pre-school children and latter cater to primary school students, thereby leveraging their advantages and strengths.

34. In the communities of origin, regular schools (indigenous or ordinary) should remain open all year with a teacher specially trained in the intercultural approach to care for returning migrants. Such teacher should be a regular teacher.

35. In both places of origin and destination, it is advisable to promote the ludic approach to learning, especially in early childhood care. The work done by PRONJAG in the design of recreational activities for children from 0 to 5 in its child development centers can serve as an example of the type of activities referred to.

36. The models of care for children of migrant farm workers operated by PRONIM and CONAFE must be revised in depth. Care should be taken in designing models that allow children to progress in school without having any interruptions in their learning process when changing schools or locales. In addition, curricula should be meaningful for children and their condition, and ensure the acquisition of knowledge and skills and desirable values for all children at all educational levels. This entails a flexible, modular curriculum and teachers who facilitate skills-based development rather than merely transmitting knowledge, and a school system that enables children to advance more expeditiously through their schooling cycle.

37. It is essential that teachers who cater to child migrant farm workers have a permanent post and enjoy a decent remuneration for their work. These teachers face much more difficult conditions than their counterparts in regular schools; therefore, their ability to function in such contexts must be adequately recognized and rewarded.

38. It is urgent to create a single ticket system (“boleto única”) for education coursed under any modality anywhere in the country, so that the progress of a child in a subsystem may be accepted by any other subsystem. Progress has been made in establishing a single ticket for school modalities catering to migrant children. But now this system must be extend to all modalities of primary education. While the effort to build the National System for Educational Monitoring of Migrant Populations (SINACEM) is acknowledged, difficulties in operating the single ticket have not yet been overcome, not even for the migrant child population. Therefore, it is recommended that the creation of the National Education Information System and the creation of a National Register of students, institutions and schools be followed up on, as formulated in the amendments to the General Law of Education published in the Official Gazette of the Federation on January 28, 2011. This would result in making the single ticket a reality for all children and adolescents.

39. In a progressive manner but in the short term, the above should be adapted to secondary education (including investment in infrastructure) which is also part of the compulsory basic education programme and should be available equally to all children and adolescents, migrant, indigenous or otherwise.

In relation to linkages with other sectors

40. It is necessary to re-address the issue of institutional linkages with federal state institutions in order to create a comprehensive care scheme. Mexico have the experience of the project for Promoting and Improving Intercultural Education for Migrants that sought to link all the institutions engaged in educational work with migrant agricultural day labourers, a project operated between 2003 and 2006 at the federal level and was maintained by some states even with the change of administration. This experience can be revisited and enriched with linkages with federal state institutions at intersectoral level.

41. Much more work needs to be done with the local authorities at poles of attraction and expulsion of migrants; it is also necessary to encourage participation of producers in projects underway at the migrants’ home communities, establishing strategic alliances with academic, private and social institutions. It is also necessary to develop a working plan that allows interaction between federal state institutions to address this sector.

42. It is necessary for the Secretariat of Public Education to consider child labour as a problem that directly affects the right to education of many children and adolescents, and for that reason the Secretariat should focus its contribution towards the prevention and eradication of this scourge.

43. Besides the central role of the public sector in relation to preventing and eliminating child labour and the creation and implementation of education policies, it is important to note that, in order to address this link, it is also necessary to count on the participation of other key stakeholders. Clear roles, responsibilities and actions should be established in connection with education workers' organizations, employers' organizations, the private sector, NGOs, academic institutions and international cooperation agencies.

44. Workers' organizations should incorporate the issue in their analysis, internal training processes and their communication strategies, so that they can make proposals and take action to prevent and eliminate child labour as part of their mandate and in connection to the right to education of children and adolescents. The National Union of Education Workers included a commitment to "seal" the National Education System with the aim, among others, that children do not have to "work from an early age" among the proposals "for a Mexico for the XXI Century", resulting from the Fourth National Congress on Education and the Second National Meeting of Parents and Teachers (2007). They also formulated the mainstreaming of social policies to halt the proliferation of disconnected and disjointed programmes. It would be desirable to see more actions aiming at this purpose. Progress is possible, for example, towards creating an institutional scaffolding to allow states and municipalities to take over administrative responsibility of schools to make them flexible, attractive and inclusive. It is also possible to engage them in setting in motion territorial interventions and intersectoral policies that would result in supporting policies against external factors, so that education may achieve its mission of correcting inequities in a structural manner.

45. We are clear about the impact of child labour on productivity and competitiveness and hence on the real possibilities of development and economic growth that can affect the entire population. Therefore, employers' organizations, and notably the Business Council and COPARMEX, besides the respective chambers, have a responsibility to voice the opinions of the business sector regarding education and establish a dialogue with education authorities and organizations on the causes and consequences of child labour and how to develop actions to address them.

46. Particularly, employers' organizations should be concerned that members of their associations should hire or allow children to work in their companies, in violation of the law and trampling on fundamental rights. Their role in training its members in order to build a vision of an equitable and educated Mexico and, therefore, a more productive and competitive Mexico, and in clearly defining what behaviors are unacceptable within the guild, seems undeniable.

47. They can also develop concrete actions to reduce vulnerability to child labour through corporate social responsibility mechanisms aimed at strengthening the state's educational services, or through promoting options for decent employment for adult members of the household so that children will not to partake in the household's survival strategies.

48. Both employers' and workers' organizations should take shared responsibility of this social problem and, together, position it as an important issue on their agendas. Some recommendations would be aimed at integrating the topic in social dialogue forums that are unique to these organizations and have the potential to impact on reducing vulnerability to child labour. They can also influence the government to achieve legislative reforms, the ratification of international conventions or give impetus to programmes designed to address the problem.

49. It is also necessary to involve the private sector through its foundations, particularly those that have programmes linked to addressing the issue of child labour. Partnerships should be formalized so that efforts to raise awareness of the issue may have a greater impact, as part of the co-responsibility of all social stakeholders. It is important to promote creative public-private partnership processes where both parties provide best practices to develop successful social collaboration experiences, while preserving the areas of competence of the state and public policy.

50. The civil society organizations dedicated to education should include more clearly among their goals the prevention and eradication of child labour in the different fields in which it occurs. There are few

NGOs that have this as one of their goals. There is an absence of civil society organizations working among migrant farm workers. This is one of the reasons given by the second-tier private foundations for not funding projects with this population, in the absence of mediators to submit proposals and manage donations. It is desirable to bring up the issue of child labour in the various networks of civil society organizations (e.g., Civil Advocacy in Education, Citizen Coalition for Education, Independent Citizens' Council for the Right to Education, Adult Education Center for Latin America, etc.) so that knowledge and visibility of the issue will lead to new approaches.

51. Universities and academic institutions also have a role to play. Their main functions include teaching and training of new professionals in education. Awareness about the issue of child labour and its relationship with the right to education since the start of the teaching training process is very important to generate more rapid progress in building a more democratic and more unified society.

52. Universities should promote awareness of this issue as part of their plans of study by engaging students and teachers in field work, social action and community outreach, or by offering programmes on specific issues related to education and child labour.

53. Another key task of universities is knowledge generation and taking the initiative to develop research with a rights-based approach to assist in better understanding the problem of child labour and its various and complex facets, causes and consequences in society, with a focus on proposing and / or strengthening public policy.

54. Investigation may also be conducted in the field of social auditing through the analysis, monitoring and evaluation of the performance various agencies and programmes in the field of education, with the purpose to identify institutional barriers and propose new solutions.

55. International cooperation, in turn, should strengthen its contributions in terms of information, technical assistance and capacity through synergistic actions to enhance the efforts of the state and the country as a whole on this issue, and facilitate the sharing of knowledge on best practices or other tools and mechanisms developed in other countries.

56. Awareness by government and society of the issue of child labour, its causes and consequences, its dimensions and scope becomes indispensable. Information and awareness raising campaigns, along with training for public officials, can help visualize the phenomenon and put it in the right perspective as one of the great scourges of modern society. Education has an important role to play.