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Child Domestic Labour in South East and East Asia: Emerging Good Practices to Combat It



International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

Child Domestic Labour in South-East and East Asia: Emerging Good Practices to Combat It

Ayaka Matsuno and Jonathan Blagbrough

2005 Bangkok, Thailand

ILO-SRO Bangkok

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**Child Domestic Labour in South-East and East Asia:
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Foreword

Some people argue that a child working in a household as a domestic worker has a much better life than those children who work in other labour situations, such as on the street selling flowers or begging. Some say that children working as domestic workers are at least fed and have a roof over their head, sheltered from suffering the outside elements. However, it is too simplistic to presume that child domestic workers are better off, as it is too difficult for us, outsiders, to truly know the actual situation in which they live and work. Behind the closed doors of each employer, children may be waiting for help without knowing how to reach out for it.

It is true that not every child domestic worker is exploited by his/her employer. Some employers take care of these child workers as if they were their own children, providing food, shelter and education. However, and unfortunately, available information confirms that exploitation occurs in many households more often than one might imagine. The problem is that a wall of privacy and secrecy prevents the flow of information to and from each household, and child domestic workers are isolated without any outside contact.

The ILO believes that these children deserve much more attention and care from all of us. Child domestic workers are often subject to verbal, physical, emotional and, in some cases, sexual abuse. The children's inferior status and negative treatment by employers inhibit the development of their self confidence. As well, their days are repetitive, monotonous and lack any opportunity for personal development. With having no, or limited, opportunity for education, child domestic workers stop dreaming about their future. These are clear violations of their human rights.

Because of these harsh realities, domestic labour remains one of the most common forms of child labour, particularly for girls. The ILO estimates that across the globe, more girls younger than 16 are employed in domestic labour than in any other form of work.

The ILO, through its special programme on the elimination of child labour (IPEC), has been addressing this issue based on two guiding instruments: the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No.138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182). Although children engaged in domestic labour are not explicitly mentioned in Convention No. 182, the extent and combination of certain conditions under which children work, such as being trafficked, bonded, and/or abused, can render child domestic labour as one of the worst forms of child labour. The ILO strategy to fight against child domestic labour focuses on total abolition of child domestic labour among children younger than the minimum legal working age and on eliminating exploitative and hazardous child domestic labour. To mobilize support for combating child domestic labour, the ILO intensified its efforts to raise awareness on the issue by making child domestic labour a special focus of the World Day Against Child Labour in June 2004.

This report explores the recent situation of child domestic labour and the actions that are being taken to combat it in the region. Recognizing the issue and the associated problems is the first step toward combating child domestic labour. We hope that this report serves as a resource for those who are concerned for child domestic workers and a catalyst for those who would like to take action to protect them. It is vital for children who work behind closed doors to receive priority attention now in order for them to enjoy decent work and a decent life in the future.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our partners for the hard work and progress made in combating child domestic labour. The ILO is committed to continue supporting it and to eliminate child labour all together. With our tripartite constituents (governments, employers' and workers' organizations), together with civil society groups and the children themselves, we believe that we can make this vital, necessary change.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Guy Thijs', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Guy Thijs
Director
ILO International Programme
on the Elimination of Child Labour

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Christine Evans-Klock', written in a cursive style.

Christine Evans-Klock
Director
ILO Subregional Office for East Asia

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Explanation of Terms Used in This Report¹

Child	A person younger than 18.
Domestic work	Tasks performed in a household by a person not related to the family; usually excludes domestic chores carried out by members of the family.
Child labour	Work undertaken by children younger than the legal minimum working ages. The law normally sets various minimum ages for different types of work (i.e. normal full-time work, light work and hazardous or potentially harmful work).
Child domestic labour (CDL)	Domestic work undertaken by children younger than the legal minimum working age as well as by children legally old enough (but still younger than 18) under slavery-like, hazardous or other exploitative conditions; a form of “child labour to be eliminated” as defined in international treaties.
Employer	The members of a household who engage the services of a child domestic worker.
Worst forms of child labour	<p>As defined in ILO Convention No. 182, Article 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and 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 performance;▪ The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;▪ Work which by its nature or because of the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of the child. (commonly referred to as “hazardous work”).
Light work ²	Work permitted by law for children of at least 12 or 13 years of age. The law may allow for specific activities that are not harmful to a child’s health and development and does not prejudice attendance at school and participation in vocational training nor “the capacity to benefit from the instruction received”. For statistical purposes, ILO defines light work as that which does not exceed 14 hours per week.

¹ Based on the publication *ILO: Helping hands or shackled lives*, *op.cit.*, p.VII, with modification by Ayaka Matsuno in consultation with Tim de Meyer, ILO International Labour Standards Specialist

² ILO-IPEC/SIMPOC: *Every child counts: New global estimates on child labour* (Geneva, 2002) p.26, with modification by Ayaka Matsuno in consultation with Tim de Meyer, ILO International Labour Standards Specialist

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADHOC	Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association
aimags	provinces in Mongolia
APPSI	Association of Indonesian Domestic Worker Suppliers
ASI	Anti-Slavery International
Batas Kasambahay	Magna Carta of Domestic Workers
BPMS	Board of Community and Social Empowerment (Indonesia)
CDL	child domestic labour
CWA	Child Workers in Asia
CDW	child domestic worker
DECS	Department of Education, Culture and Sports (Philippines)
DOLE	Department of Labour and Employment (Philippines)
DKJ	Jakarta's Art Council
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development (Philippines)
EGPs	emerging good practices
FCD	Foundation for Child's Development (Thailand)
FFTV-IKJ	<i>Fakultas Film Dan Televisi - Institute Kesenian Jakarta</i> , or Faculty of Film and Television - Jakarta Institute of Arts
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILO - SRO	ILO - Subregional Office
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
NFED	Non-Formal Education Department (Cambodia)
NFE	non-formal education
NGO	non-government organization
MA	minimum age
MSAVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
MDSALVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation (former MDSAVY)
MDSAVY	Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Veteran and Youth ` Rehabilitation (Phnom Penh)
MMT	Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration (Indonesia)
NCYD	National Council for Child and Youth Development (Thailand)
NPA-WFCL	National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour
OPERATA	<i>Organisasi Pekerja Rumah Tangga Anak</i> , or Organization of Child Domestic Workers supported by RGP (Indonesia)
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
Perda	Local Regulation (Indonesia)
Prakas	Ministerial Decree (Cambodia)
RGP	Rumpun Gema Perempuan, a national NGO in Indonesia
RRI	Radio Republic of Indonesia
RO	Radio Organization
SSS	Social Security System
SUMAPI	<i>Samahan at Ugnyan ng mga Manggagawang Pantahanan sa Pilipinas</i> , or Association and Linkage of Domestic Workers in the Philippines
TBP	time-bound programme
TCRAM	Technical Cooperation Resource Allocation Mechanism

TERAS	Organization of Child Domestic Workers supported by YKAI (Indonesia)
the Project	Preventing and Eliminating Exploitative Child Domestic Work Through Education and Training in South-East and East Asia
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNCRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UP CIDS PST	University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights Programme
VCAO	Vulnerable Children’s Assistance Organization (Cambodia)
Visayan Forum	Visayan Forum Foundation (Philippines)
WDACL	World Day Against Child Labour
YKAI	<i>Yayasan Kesejahteraan Anak Indonesia</i> , or Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation

Executive Summary

Child domestic workers perform chores in the households of people other than their immediate family and are extremely vulnerable to a range of exploitation, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Behind the closed doors of individual employers they are at their disposal, controlled by the “laws” set by the employers. No matter how unfair the laws are, they have to be obeyed. Because child domestic workers toil within the confines of a house, it is extremely difficult to know how they are treated or to reach them with help if they have any problem with the employers. Certainly not all child domestic workers suffer abuse, neglect or exploitation. And the work itself is not automatically considered dangerous or inhumane. However, because of their “invisible” nature, lack of negotiation power against employers and lack of awareness on their rights as children and as workers, they are at risk of considerable exploitation and abuse.

This report was prepared as part of the International Labour Organization’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour project “Preventing and Eliminating Exploitative Child Domestic Work through Education and Training in South-East and East Asia” (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Thailand, Philippines and Viet Nam). It presents a look into the “hidden” practice of child domestic labour in six countries in south-east and east Asia (data was not available in China and Lao PDR) to help cultivate a better understanding of the real situation of children working in households and to highlight emerging good practices to combat exploitative/abusive child domestic labour³.

Part I of the report provides an overview of child domestic labour in the region, based on existing publications and documentation. It includes deliberation over the definition of child domestic workers, a comparison of some key elements of child domestic labour among six countries, an analysis on child domestic labour from different angles and highlights recent ILO–IPEC and regional initiatives to combat child domestic labour.

Part II provides examples of emerging good practices to combat child domestic labour in Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Highlights of Part I

In this report, a [child domestic worker \(CDW\)](#) is defined as:

Any child younger than 18⁴ who performs domestic chores in the household of people other than her or his parents, regardless of the amount or kind of remuneration they receive.

To access the children who are typically kept “hidden” behind closed doors is extremely challenging and to obtain data and information about them is difficult. However, the information available indicates the magnitude of the problem of child domestic labour in the region and a variety of reports have been synthesized for this section.

This report includes an analysis of child domestic labour from different angles: education, culture/tradition, gender equality, Migration and trafficking, violence against children, minimum age for employment and the worst forms of child labour, as the following summarizes:

³ Child domestic labour is defined as domestic work undertaken by children younger than the legal minimum working age as well as by children legally old enough (but still younger than 18) under slavery-like, hazardous or other exploitative conditions; a form of “child labour to be eliminated” as defined in international treaties.

⁴ A child is defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as a person younger than 18.

Education: Both the education status and achievement level of child domestic workers are far from desirable. Though many children and possibly parents start off believing it is possible to combine the two, many surveyed young people report that it is difficult for them to keep up the household work and schooling. In urban Mongolia, for example, one third (34.4 per cent) of child domestic workers surveyed had dropped out of school. Out of children aged 7–15 who should receive compulsory education, according to Mongolian law, 25.3 per cent did not study. Many children also resort to domestic work because they are no longer in school. In Hanoi, a third of children surveyed had dropped out of school somewhere between grades 1 and 5 and were forced to find work.

Accessing lower secondary education is a challenge, especially for girls. While more Cambodian girl domestic workers than boy domestic workers have completed primary education (64 per cent compared with 47.7 per cent), more boys than girls have studied at secondary level (47.7 per cent compared with 26.7 per cent). That suggests a very difficult situation for girls to access higher education. Despite all the difficulties in continuing education, the willingness of surveyed child domestic workers to resume their formal education is high. Given the opportunity, some 72.1 per cent of them in the Indonesia study said they would like to resume their formal education.

Culture/tradition: Seeking work in a household is a practice that has long been culturally accepted as a coping mechanism for poor families in Asia. In many societies, placing children of poor families in the care of a wealthier relative is an established tradition and rarely, if ever, questioned.

Aside from the tradition, domestic work attracts parents, employers and children as an employment option. Parents prefer domestic service because they see it as a lighter and less arduous task than other employment options available for children in their community. Many employers see “taking in” a child to work in the home as an act of benevolence.⁵ It is considered as “doing a favour” for those coming from impoverished families. Many children are happy that they can contribute to their family’s household income, even as domestic workers in another house – if there are no better options. However, traditional acceptance does not justify the continuation of the practice if children’s rights are being violated.

Gender equality: In general, household-related tasks are considered “women’s work”. In many countries in this region that is the case and thus it is no surprise that children in domestic labour are predominantly girls. For example, 97.7 per cent of child domestic workers aged 12–17 years in Hanoi are girls. In Indonesia, 92.8 per cent are girls. This trend is reinforced by both parents’ expectations for girls and the realities of girls. Because it is traditionally believed that women do not have any other place but in their household, it remains more difficult for girls to be educated. Even if they want to find employment elsewhere, very few options are available to uneducated children, especially girls.

Once employed in households, the experiences of girls and boys differ. While girls tend to remain within the employers’ household, boys are given tasks outside, such as fetching water, shopping, washing cars, herding livestock, etc. The common problem of being isolated and/or confined that many child domestic workers endure is less experienced by boys. In addition, their future prospects are not the same. While boys tend to have more options other than domestic labour when they get older, girls tend to have little choice but to remain as domestic workers.

Migration and trafficking: Rapid urbanization and rise of the middle class in urban areas has affected the demand for domestic workers in general. The advancement of women in spheres other than their household has also created a need to have someone take up their domestic roles. Thus, domestic workers, both adults and children, are in high demand. Among migrant workers, many of them find employments in domestic work sector. In Thailand, for instance, domestic work sector is the second largest work sector for migrant workers after agriculture.

⁵ ILO: Helping hands or shackled lives? Understanding child domestic labour and responses to it (Geneva, 2004) p.30

Human traffickers often use household employment as an entry point. For children who have low educational attainment, especially girls, a housekeeping or nanny job is appealing. It does not require prior education or training, and it seems like a safe work. It is, however, not uncommon to hear that children recruited as child domestic workers actually end up in commercial sexual exploitation and/or very exploitative/abusive child domestic labour situations. This situation happens not only within a country context, but also in a context of cross-border migration.

Violence against children: A workplace where children are ruled absolutely by the law of the family and controlled by their employers is a potential den of violence. The most common forms of violence experienced by surveyed children are physical, verbal, emotional and sexual.

Physical violence against child domestic workers is probably the more recognized form of violence that children endure. This is due to the occasional media coverage of such cases. However, the lasting impact of verbal violence in the children's minds is overwhelming and should not be neglected. Each day of verbal violence places children under an emotional torture. The name-calling and treatment employers' and their family members resort to are intended to marginalize child domestic workers as an "inferior" group of human beings whose job it is to serve a "superior" group. This has significant impact on how they see themselves as human beings and contributes to their low self-esteem. In addition, child domestic workers, especially girls aged 15–18, often are expected to become sexual outlets for the men or boys of the household.

Minimum age for employment: Some people argue that what child domestic workers do is not actually "work" *per se*, but they are providing "helping hands" to their employers' households. Whether they should really be called "workers" is even debated, as is whether they (those above the minimum age for employment) deserve full rights as workers. It may at first seem only a terminology dispute, but there can be serious implications. Viet Nam's Labour Code and the National Plan of Action Against the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Indonesia use the term "helpers". The Labour Code in Viet Nam has specific provisions for the protection of persons employed to help in households. However, Indonesians use "helper" precisely because of the implications that it brings to the domestic work sector as a whole.

The worst forms of child labour: ILO Convention No. 182 addresses child domestic labour by providing some conditions under which children work that can render child domestic labour as one of the worst forms of child labour. These conditions too often include excessive working hours, no rest time or rest day, no or limited remuneration, exposure to safety and health hazards, abuse and exploitation, bonded labour and trafficking.

The impact of a poor working environment may manifest in a child's health condition, which is closely linked with emotional development. In Cambodia, 23 per cent of child domestic workers complained of exhaustion, 21.1 per cent complained of constant fear and 20.3 per cent suffered from insomnia. In Indonesia, 31.3 per cent of child domestic workers also stated that they could not sleep and had no appetite (28.9 per cent).

In sum, the report draws from a collection of documentation to grimly point out how child domestic workers run a high risk of experiencing human rights violations. Some work situations are similar to slavery, which calls for immediate attention and action.

Highlights of Part II

Part II of the report explores different experiences on action against child domestic labour in three countries, Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Each country has a different county context, thus different experiences with child domestic workers and different responses. Most of the documented practices and initiatives are still premature to be identified as "good" practices. Yet, as emerging good practices, they can inspire readers to learn from them and to take similar actions in their respective situation and/or country.

Each country section contains an overview of action within that country followed by the selected emerging good practices, as follows:

CAMBODIA

Child domestic labour in Cambodia has been a focus of ILO-IPEC programmatic concern since 2002. Entitled “Preventing and Eliminating Exploitative Child Domestic Work Through Education and Training in Cambodia”, the overarching project has worked with a variety of partners in key sending (Prey Veng province) and receiving (Phnom Penh) areas of the country. The ILO-IPEC project is the only integrated programme in Cambodia targeting child domestic workers. According to a survey by the National Institute of Statistics, an estimated 27,950 of child domestic workers were found in Phnom Penh in 2003.

The basic project framework entails two interconnected strategies: i) to create an enabling environment for sustainable actions on child domestic labour (such as research, policy change, social mobilization and legal reform); and ii) to assist child domestic workers, through direct interventions.

The section covers six emerging good practices (EGPs). The EGP, “Spinning a Protective Web for CDWs” highlights integrated mechanisms that the Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MDSAVY) has initiated for preventing and protecting children from domestic labour exploitation. The MDSAVY mobilized a variety of actors both from government institutions and civil society to link new and existing services for children in need of support. It is a great example of government and NGO collaboration and actions that can be sustainable. The MDSAVY has helped to build the capacity of key government and non-government partners (such as the police and other district officials), staff and a large number of other relevant parties by providing training and a forum to work together.

While MDSAVY’s efforts concern the municipality and district level in Phnom Penh, there has been a definite need to extend the network to the community levels. The EGP, “Community Care” documents the collaborative community-level efforts of the Provincial Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation in Prey Veng province, the Women Development Association (WDA) and the Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization (VCAO) to prevent child domestic labour. The EGP profiles their attempts to build the capacity of local communities and to mobilize them to protect children from the domestic labour situation.

Education, both formal and non-formal, plays an important role in preventing and rehabilitating children from any form of child labour. The Non-Formal Education Department (NFED) of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, VCAO and WDA are promoting education through different approaches. The EGPs, “Send Me to School and Help Me to Stay There!” and “Developing Skills for a Better Future” feature initiatives to promote education by enrolling and supporting children in the public education system (formal schools), providing non-formal education that follows a state-approved curriculum and providing vocational training for children who are older than the minimum working age.

The EGP, “Speaking Up for Child Domestic Workers” describes activities of the Children’s Committee (CC) and the WDA to support children’s actions to raise awareness on child domestic labour and to mobilize peer children in school settings.

Last, a trade union’s initiative to fight against child domestic labour is documented in the EGP, “Child Domestic Labour is a Trade Union Issue.” The Inter-Union Committee for Child Labour adopted a union-wide policy on child domestic labour in December 2005. As per its policy, no union member can employ a child domestic worker younger than 15. The policy also specifies the minimum wage for child domestic workers who are older than the minimum age at 60,000 *riels* (US\$15), excluding food, accommodation and other benefits such as education materials, clothes, bonus wages, etc.

INDONESIA

According to an ILO publication⁶ on child domestic labour in Indonesia, around 700,000 children younger than 18 work in households in the country. Their working situations are very serious, which calls for immediate attention and support from the society at large. Nearly 20 per cent of child domestic workers work longer than 15 hours a day, while 99 per cent of them do not have even one day of weekly rest. Of those surveyed, 30.7 per cent received 125,001–150,000 *rupiah* (US\$13–\$16) per month in salary while minimum wage for Jakarta is 819,100 rupiah (US\$82), and 92.8 per cent were girls.

To address the serious situation of child domestic workers in Indonesia, ILO–IPEC supported a project with a dual strategy: i) to focus on promoting change in the policy and creating an enabling environment through awareness raising, policy advocacy and direct support to policy development; and ii) direct intervention programmes to prevent children from domestic employment, to protect existing workers and to withdraw those younger than the minimum age. In this section, six emerging good practices are documented.

The EGP, “A Ray of Hope for Child Domestic Workers” features centre-based services for child domestic workers and continuing services for the children who were withdrawn from domestic labour by the Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (known as YKAI). A tracking exercise conducted by the NGO confirmed that the withdrawn children were still living in challenging situations. However, having a chance to go back to school has given them a ray of hope and YKAI is providing whatever support it can to help the children stay in school.

Another NGO, Rumpum Gema Perempuan (RGP), also has been providing direct support for child domestic workers through its centre. RGP emphasizes the inner strength of each domestic worker and has facilitated child domestic workers to unite in a solidarity organization called OPERATA. The EGP, “Standing Up for Our Rights” documents the creation of OPERATA and how RGP supports it.

The direct actions are complemented by other initiatives to promote change in policy and to create an enabling environment for the change. The local government of Karawang district devised its own regulation to protect children and women from trafficking. The EGP, “Stop Child Trafficking From Our Village!” highlights the local government’s strong will and proactive actions to address the serious social problem that the district faced. Currently, the draft local regulation is ready for public discussion before formal passage at the local parliament. To gain support, a community radio station was established in one child domestic worker-sending village, and it has been instrumental toward increasing awareness on child trafficking and child domestic labour among local people. The EGP, “Power to the Community” describes the experience and functions of that community radio station.

Because the impact of child domestic labour on a child’s development is not understood properly, intensive awareness-raising efforts have been made through different media. For instance, the Faculty of Films and Television of the Jakarta Institute of Arts (FFTV–IKJ) mobilized students to produce short films to raise awareness on child domestic labour. The EGP, “Mobilizing Young Creative Minds” features how this innovative approach of communication was used to reach the general public and thus potential or existing employers of child domestic workers.

The EGP, “Working with the Suppliers of Child Domestic Workers” spotlights the Association of Indonesian Domestic Worker Suppliers (APPSI) and another unique way to combat child domestic labour. Having a group of suppliers, the people who place domestic workers in jobs, on board in the movement to protect under-aged children from working is one of the stronger modes of prevention possible. Their story is a good example of working with social partners and addressing the issue from a different angle. Because of its unique role, APPSI’s action easily captures the attention of the public and policy makers and potentially will lead to a bigger impact on the overall child domestic labour situation.

⁶ ILO: *Bunga-bunga di Atas Padas: Fenomena Pekerja Rumah tangga Anak Di Indonesia (Flowers on the stony ground: The phenomenon of child domestic workers in Indonesia)* (Jakarta, 2004)

PHILIPPINES

Child domestic workers are one of the largest single categories of working children in the Philippines.

In 2001, the National Statistics Office surveyed children aged 5–17 years and reported that 120,000 were working away from home, employed in private households. The Visayan Forum Foundation, an NGO that has pioneered actions on child domestic labour in the Philippines for more than ten years, estimates that the actual figure of child domestic workers is likely to be at least 1 million.

Efforts to combat child domestic labour in the Philippines are highly developed and offer much to learn from. In particular, the Visayan Forum, with support from ILO and others), has become a catalyst for action at the national and local levels. The EGP, “Sowing the Seeds of Attitude Change” draws attention to Visayan Forum’s and its partners’ long journey to develop national legislation to protect domestic workers from exploitation and abuse and to improve their working conditions (the result that is being considered by the Senate and House of Representatives is the *Batas Kasambahay*, or the Magna Carta for Domestic Workers). In a recent advocacy development, Visayan Forum organized a National Domestic Workers Summit in September 2005 on the concept that “Domestic Work is Decent Work”. This brought together child and adult domestic workers with those working abroad to air their views and to work alongside government, worker’s and employers’ associations and advocates to develop a national agenda for domestic workers.

Support from national level legislators lends strength and a sense of urgency and importance to the anti-child domestic labour effort. Local government officials, including councillors, mayors and *barangay* (lowest-ranking) officials continue to be very involved as well; for example, in developing and implementing local ordinances to make child domestic workers more visible and enable them to access services. The EGP, “Making the Invisible Visible” showcases the experience of the Quezon City government in developing a local ordinance and implementing it.

Visayan Forum also inspired the birth of SUMAPI, a self-help group of domestic workers that has been a powerful actor in bringing domestic workers together. SUMAPI is now an 8,000-strong national movement of current and former domestic workers, the majority of whom are teenagers. In addition to mobilizing its members and supporters for advocacy purposes, SUMAPI now provides services to child domestic workers across the Philippines. The EGP, “Finding a Voice” provides detailed information of what SUMAPI is, how it operates and how it inspires others to work together.

The EGP, “Action Begins at Home”, provides a portrait of a trade union’s approach to combating child domestic labour. The Federation of Free Workers surveyed its members on the incidence of employment of child domestic workers in the National Capital Region (Metro Manila). The survey and ensuing workshops have helped sensitize union members to realize the magnitude of child domestic labour and brought the issue to their discussion table. Follow-ups for the survey are being discussed.

The final EGP underscores the importance Visayan Forum places on education in preventing child domestic labour and protecting children. Visayan Forum brings many different actors together to provide a variety of educational opportunities for child domestic workers and children at risk. The EGP, “Back to School” spotlights the NGO’s experience in achieving educational assistance and its emphasis on tailor-made services for each child as per his or her needs.

PART I

Overview of Child Domestic Labour in South-east and East Asia

Introduction:

What is wrong with having a child work as a domestic “helper”?

Throughout Asia, child domestic workers have been culturally accepted and commonly relied upon in households. A child’s engagement as a domestic worker in someone else’s house often is considered safe and nonstigmatizing, even a part of his/her development process and is not considered “labour”. Parents who send their children off as domestic workers may not be aware how abusive the working conditions can be. Comments made by both employers and members of the general public in countries such as Cambodia⁷ and Indonesia⁸ indicate that a large proportion of people do not regard the employment of children as domestic workers to be hazardous or exploitative. In many documented instances, the reality has proven very different from the perceived ideas.

The real-life situation of child domestic workers and the all-too-often suffering many endure have long been “hidden” from public scorn, mostly because it is an area excluded from labour laws and thus government inspection requirements due to it taking place in the private domain.

While the situation of a child working 12 or 16 hours in a factory or even in a sweat shop is increasingly deplored, little has been said about the child who cooks, cleans, washes clothes and baby sits with no rest for the same length of time. Somehow “housework” continues to be disregarded as work. And a “servant” mentality (in which a domestic worker is expected to serve all needs at all times) pervades, even if the word “servant” is no longer used.

What is wrong with having a child work as a domestic “helper”? Too many of them are in desperate need of help. Too often, children engaged in domestic work are caught in abusive, exploitative situations, which are detrimental to their development.

Because of their invisible nature, lack of negotiation skills and lack of awareness of their rights as children and as employees, child domestic workers are extremely vulnerable to a range of exploitation, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Certainly not all child domestic workers experience these risks; and the work itself is not necessarily dangerous and inhumane. But there are household *employers* who are dangerous or inhumane. Performing household chores for long hours without rest is a form of unacceptable labour; coupled with abuse, child domestic work quickly becomes one of the worst forms of child labour – which most countries in Asia have committed to eliminating.

⁷ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: Survey Report: *Child domestic worker survey*, Phnom Penh – 2003 (Phnom Penh, ILO-IPEC, March 2004)

⁸ Jonathan Blagbrough: *Child Domestic Work in Indonesia: A preliminary situation analysis* (London Anti-Slavery International, 1995) p.20



This Report

Purpose of This Report

In 2002 the International Labour Organization along with the Japanese and Korean governments organized a meeting on “Action to Combat Child Domestic Labour”.⁹ Participants in that meeting called on various actors such as governments, trade unions, organizations of employers and non-government and civil society organizations to take action against child domestic labour in the region. The ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO–IPEC) later published the background report for the meeting, entitled “An Overview of Child Domestic Workers in Asia”.

Since then, slow but steady progress has been made toward eliminating child domestic labour. Support and initiatives have come from different angles: knowledge building, advocacy, direct assistance for targeted children, education promotion, policy development, regional cooperation, etc. This report focuses on the initiatives and developments since 2002.

An ILO–IPEC regional project entitled “Preventing and Eliminating Exploitative Child Domestic Work Through Education and Training in South-East and East Asia”¹⁰ (hereafter referred to as the Project) has been supporting initiatives in eight countries in south-east and east Asia (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam). Comprehensive interventions are limited to Cambodia, Indonesia and Philippines.

This report was prepared as part of the Project activities to assess the situation of child domestic workers in the region and to bring to light emerging good practices (EGPs) toward combating exploitative/abusive child domestic labour.

Scope of the Analysis

The report is divided into two parts. Part I provides an overview of child domestic labour in the region. This includes a characterization of child domestic workers, a comparison of key elements of child domestic labour in the six countries (data was not available for China and Lao PDR), an analysis of it from different angles and brief overviews of recent ILO–IPEC and others’ initiatives to combat its worst forms.

Part II provides examples of emerging good practices to combat child domestic labour in Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. ILO–IPEC guidelines for good practices were used to identify them. One of the Project’s activities involves identifying emerging good practices and thus this report borrows from those findings, many of which are also supported by the Project. In addition, Child Workers in Asia (CWA),¹¹ which has a very active regional Task Force on Child Domestic Work¹², also helped identify emerging good practices, especially in the Philippines.

⁹ In Chiang Mai, Thailand, in October 2002

¹⁰ TCRAM CDW-RAS/04/60P/NET

¹¹ CWA is a regional network of non-government organizations that strives to improve the welfare of child workers in Asia.

¹² Child Workers in Asia and its task force use the term “child domestic work”, instead of “child domestic labour”. However, the thrust of their work and ILO–IPEC’s work to eliminate abusive and exploitative forms of child domestic labour are the same.

Most of the practices presented here are not mature enough to be considered as “good practices”. Thus, the term “emerging good practices” is used. “Emerging” means that the identified practices can provide useful insights and valuable direction for future action although they are still young interventions. The prospects for their future success as proven good practices are high. Their inclusion in this report is to inspire readers/practitioners to possibly replicate them or to take some type of action against the exploitation and abuse found in child domestic labour.

What are good practices?

A good practice is defined as anything that works in some way in combating child labour, whether fully or in part, and that may have implications for practice at any level elsewhere.

The criteria for determining what makes a practice “good” include:

- Innovative or creative
- Effectiveness/impact
- Replicability
- Sustainability
- Relevance
- Responsive and ethical
- Efficiency and implementation

Source: ILO–IPEC *guidelines on good practices: Identification, review, structuring, dissemination and application*

Sources of Information

This report is based on the available literature (including recent ILO–IPEC-supported baseline surveys), inputs for good practices from partner organizations and field missions to Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. In particular, the Cambodia project partners contributed greatly by preparing draft documentations of good practices after attending an ILO–IPEC training on documenting good practices and lessons learned (April 2005).

The bulk of Part I presents various statistics and information about the child domestic labour situation in each country. The data and information derives from the following research:

List of research on child domestic labour used for data presented in this report

Country	Title	Author/Researchers	Year
Cambodia	<i>Child Domestic Worker Survey: Phnom Penh, 2003</i>	National Institute of Statistics in collaboration with ILO-IPEC	2004
China	NA	NA	NA
Indonesia	<i>Baseline Survey on Child Domestic Workers in the Municipalities of East Jakarta and Bekasi</i>	University of Indonesia/ ILO-IPEC	2003
Lao PDR	Baseline survey on Child Domestic Labour, ongoing	National University of Lao PDR in collaboration with ILO-IPEC	Not yet published
Mongolia ¹³	<i>Baseline Survey on Child Domestic Workers in Mongolia</i>	Population Teaching and Research Centre in collaboration with ILO-IPEC	2005
*Philippines	<i>Programmatic Listing and Databasing of Child Domestic Labourers for the Philippines Time-Bound Programme on the Worst Forms of Child Labour</i>	Visayan Forum Foundation	Not yet published
*Thailand	<i>Child Domestic Workers: A Rapid Assessment – Thailand</i>	Nawarat Phlanoi ILO-IPEC	2002
*Viet Nam – Hanoi	<i>Children in Domestic Service in Hanoi</i>	National University of Hanoi and Save the Children Sweden	2000
* Viet Nam – HCMC	<i>Survey Report: Child Domestic Workers in Ho Chi Minh City</i>	HCMC Economic Research Institute (ERI) and Quality of Life Promotion Centre (LIFE) in collaboration with ILO-IPEC	Not yet published

Note

An * in front of each country indicates that the research is qualitative in nature, such as a rapid assessment. The samples for those studies were purposefully selected and do not represent the total population of child domestic workers in the surveyed areas. Of course it is not possible to compare the data from that type of research with data from the research done with a random sampling method, such as a baseline survey. However, they are presented together here for two reasons: i) there was no alternative source of information available and ii) they can still present indicative sketches.

¹³ In the case of Mongolia, the data provided includes children who herd livestock for someone other than their parents. This is due to the special country context of Mongolia where, in rural areas, children are employed often to herd the livestock (which essentially belongs to the agricultural sector) of another household and doing domestic chores is often a part of the overall tasks. However, the issue on whether child herders are to be considered as domestic workers has yet to be agreed upon.

Limitations

Because this report was written as part of the Project activities, most of the emerging good practices are from its experiences. Generally, there are limited numbers of people working on the issue of child domestic labour in the region. However, some good practices may have been overlooked due to the limited timeframe for this report.

To identify the emerging good practices, the authors used ILO-IPEC guidelines on good practices and discussed their selection with partners. However, it was the authors' judgement that made the final decision on what to document and how the emerging good practices would be introduced. Thus, some subjective views may have slipped into the report.

The Project has contributed significantly to the knowledge base on child domestic labour in the region by supporting three baseline surveys in Mongolia, Viet Nam and Lao PDR.¹⁴ But information regarding it remains limited and sometimes unreliable. Some information presented here was extracted from rapid assessment¹⁵ surveys, where the sample population is small and purposefully selected. In these cases, the survey findings do not represent the entire target population. Ideally, information from rapid assessments should not be presented together with the information from baseline surveys but has been done so here because alternative information was not available.

¹⁴ As of January 2006, the research in Lao PDR had not been finalized.

¹⁵ Rapid assessment (RA) methodology is a new qualitative approach that UNICEF and the ILO-IPEC statistical department developed for gathering in-depth information on the less visible forms of child labour that are not easily captured from a survey of a large population, such as national child labour surveys. Unlike a national survey, RA studies use a small sample group with a restricted scope. As a consequence, the results cannot be generalized to represent an overall population. The process is intended to take a short period of time for the benefits of an urgent intervention.



Who Are Child Domestic Workers?

Generally, a child domestic worker is anyone younger than 18¹⁶ who does domestic chores in the household of people other than his or her parents, regardless of the amount or kind of remuneration they receive. Whether the child is regarded as a domestic worker when employed in the home of relatives is still being debated. Also, in some countries children perform certain activities that are considered domestic work in that country but elsewhere are regarded as work or labour, such as herding in Mongolia. The distinction makes a difference in terms of approaches in dealing with the issue. Thus, who is regarded as a domestic worker varies from country to country and reflects the way a household operates, the way a child's role is considered and the way paid and unpaid work are defined.

The general definition of a child domestic worker covers five key elements: 1) sex, 2) age, 3) task, 4) relationship with the "employers" and 5) remuneration. They provide an easy way to discuss the issues related to child domestic workers, though as indicators they may vary country to country.

1) Sex

Child domestic workers are predominantly girls. However, available information shows that surprisingly large numbers of boys also engage in domestic work in this region. The existence of boy domestic workers depends on the country context and gender-assigned tasks and roles. This issue is further discussed in the section on Gender Equality.

2) Age

The majority of child domestic workers in this region are aged 15–17. However, significant numbers of them are younger than the legal minimum age for employment. In this illegally working age group, the number of children aged 12–14 exceeds children in other age groups. There are many reports of children much younger: in Davao, Philippines, 1,053 children identified as domestic workers included two 6-year-olds. The following story tells the sad plight of a 4-year-old girl domestic worker in Cambodia.

Significant numbers of child domestic workers who started at a tender age have limited educational attainment as well as capacity development for their future lives.

¹⁶ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as anyone younger than 18.

Sopheap's story

She does not remember her mother's name or her father's. She does not remember where she used to live or with whom. She is only 4 years old. But Sopheap* remembers her terrible experience as a domestic worker.

Sopheap is an orphan who had been in the care of an unknown female beggar on the streets of Phnom Penh since she was about 2 years old. When she was 3 years old, she was sold to a woman for 10,000 *riels* (US\$2.50). The 30-year old woman who bought her took her home and told Sopheap that now she was her "adopted" child and she would take care of Sopheap.

But it was Sopheap who ended up caregiving. She had to wash dishes and clothes for the family of five, go on errands, grocery shop and take care of the 3-month-old baby. Often her female employer verbally berated her and pulled/shaved her hair, whipped, beat, kicked and pushed her around. The numerous scars and unhealed wounds on her tiny body silently scream of the abuse she endured.

The worst came in late August of 2005, a year after she started to live in the family. That day Sopheap had diarrhoea so bad that she soiled her skirt. The accident upset her employer, who in a rage grabbed a metal fire nipper and burned the girl's genitals.

Sopheap screamed in such pain that it rattled a nearby neighbour. "I often heard the lady punishing the girl, but this time it was so loud and so serious that I could not ignore it," recalls the neighbour who reported the case to the *Sangkat* (commune) authority for help. The Sangkat authority immediately reported the abuse to a district network to protect child domestic workers and the municipal agency for social affairs, as well as the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC), which works in the area. ADHOC responded to the case and rescued Sopheap from the house. The district network and commune authority together took custody of her. Immediately, she was sent to a hospital for treatment.

"I don't want to go back to that home," says Sopheap, with a frightened face and a trembling voice.

She now lives in a temporary shelter run by the Cambodia Women's Crisis Centre. Three days after ADHOC filed charges against the female employer, she was subpoenaed by a Phnom Penh court for "clarification" and sent to prison until an investigation of the case is completed. Eventually Sopheap will be sent to an orphanage run by the Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Veteran and Youth Rehabilitation.

Story contributed by Un Vuthy, National Project Coordinator, ILO- IPEC Cambodia
**Not her real name*

3) Tasks

Child domestic workers are expected to carry out domestic chores, such as washing dishes, cooking, cleaning, looking after the young and old and other activities according to their employers' orders. The "other activities" usually include only those performed within the household or the surrounding property and does not include commercial activities. Depending on which country and the employers' lifestyle, the other activities vary significantly.

In Lao PDR, for instance, many households have commercial activities within the house. In general, only household chores are considered the tasks of child domestic workers. But in the case of Lao PDR, children working in households often help the employers' business in addition to the regular tasks. Thus, some advocates suggest that these workers be "grouped" with other domestic workers when planning programming. Indeed both are child domestic workers, but the extra burden actually changes the environment and life experience for those working in a family's business as well. They at least have a chance to interact with outsiders, to get out of the house possibly, to be seen and thus have a chance for outsiders to reach them more easily. This is a different experience from the common problems that child domestic workers who are confined to a house and lack access to

outsiders. Many are not seen and may never be reached by outsiders hoping to help them. Thus, a distinction should be drawn between these two types of child domestic workers for programming purposes so that different approaches to target them will be considered.

A similar situation is found in Thailand. The slightly different situation in Mongolia illustrates another debate over “grouping”: Child domestic workers in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, carry water and chop/carry firewood in addition to the typical chores. More pointedly, herding and taking care of livestock are included in the tasks of child domestic workers in rural Mongolia. This includes looking after horses, cleaning livestock stalls, preparing dairy products, slaughtering animals, etc. However, as previously acknowledged (footnote 13), there is debate on whether these children should be considered domestic workers or farm workers.

4) Relationship with employers

From the ILO’s perspective, “labour” is defined by an employer–employee relationship, though this relationship does not always include monetary remuneration. Thus children who do domestic chores within their own household are not considered domestic workers, nor is it child domestic labour when their environment is abusive, although, they are abused children. Child domestic labour is only discussed within the context of the households of a third party where a worker and an employer can be clearly defined.

However, many children in this region work in the households of relatives, including grandparents or very distant relations. They may not have any privileges that children of extended families might have. Then there are many working for “relatives” who have no blood relation. Depending on the situation, these relatives could be considered as either extended family or as employers. It is difficult to determine if they claim to be kindred to the child worker.

In the Philippines, the term “employers” is defined as any parent, legal guardian or producer acting as employer who hires or engages the services of any child older than 15.¹⁷ This definition allows for parents to be treated as an employer who must abide by the minimum set of conditions prescribed by law.¹⁸ The data generated by ILO–IPEC-supported surveys generally cover extended family members as employers, though they are analysed separately from “non-relative employers”.

¹⁷ Child Labour Act, the Philippines

¹⁸ Amparita St. Maria: op.cit.

Table 1: Child domestic workers' relationships to "employers", by country

Country	Employers		Relatives		Grandparents/ siblings	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cambodia – Phnom Penh	5%	33%	73.6%	57%	21.4%	10%
Indonesia	90.4%		9.6%		-	
Mongolia – Ulaanbaatar	28.9%		18.9%		52.2%	
Mongolia – rural	28.1%		41.9%		30%	
*Philippines	NA		NA		NA	
*Thailand – Bangkok	84.6%	94.4%	15.4%	5.6%	-	-
*Viet Nam – Hanoi	50.6%		27.7%		21.7%	
Viet Nam – Ho Chi Minh City	NA		NA		NA	

Source: List of research on child domestic labour on page 5

5) Remuneration

Many parents who send their children out as live-in domestic workers for other families often do so not to *increase* the total household income but to *decrease* their total household expenditures.

In the case of child domestic labour, children's remuneration may be provided as either cash or an in-kind form. But not earning an income in cash or being paid a very limited amount of money may disguise the fact that child domestic workers are indeed workers and also explain the use of the term "helper". It is very dangerous to allow the use of this term. Not being paid in cash or receiving a nominal salary is no reflection of the amount of work involved. On the contrary, studies confirm that typically child domestic workers labour under strenuous conditions, which deserve a more appropriate amount of remuneration and recognition. Often these are cases of the worst forms of child labour and the children need to be rescued or prevented from experiencing them.

Many relatives and non-relatives who call themselves a relative (such as uncle or aunty) take in young domestic workers as "benefactors" who offer protection or a better way of life. Even though they may not allow or do not help the children to attend school and even treat them differently than their own children, they consider themselves as doing something good or decent. Thus they see the situation as mutually beneficial and do not feel compelled to provide any remuneration.



Magnitude of Child Domestic Labour

It is extremely difficult to survey child domestic workers due to their “hidden” nature, the wall of privacy in accessing each individual house and because of the lack of recognition of domestic work as a form of child labour. However, the ILO estimates that across the globe, more girls younger than 16 are in domestic service than in any other category of child labour.¹⁹

Available statistics indicate that there are alarming numbers of child domestic workers in the region who may be experiencing violations of their rights, including the right to education:

- In the capital of [Cambodia](#), an estimated 27,950 domestic workers are aged 7–17. This means one in every ten children in Phnom Penh is a child domestic worker. Of them, 41.4 per cent are boys and 58.6 per cent are girls.²⁰
- In [Indonesia](#), an estimated 688,132 domestic workers are younger than 18. This represents 26.5 per cent of the total 2.6 million domestic workers nationwide.²¹
- In [Mongolia](#), 6,148 children have been recorded as an employed child domestic worker in six central districts of Ulaanbaatar city; 30,427 are employed as herding livestock and doing domestic chores for families other than their own in the rural *aimags*.²²
- In [Thailand](#), there are some 233,211 domestic workers; 85 per cent of them are female, and 4.6 per cent (10,728) are 17 years old or younger.²³
- In [the Philippines](#), the National Statistics Office reported that in its 2001 Survey on Children 5–17 years old, some 230,000 children worked in private households. The same survey counted 120,000 children living away from home and employed in private households. However, the Visayan Forum Foundation has put the estimate much higher, at 1 million child domestic workers in the country.²⁴
- In [Viet Nam](#), one in every 100 households in Hanoi employs a child younger than 16 for domestic tasks.²⁵
- In [Ho Chi Minh City](#), a total of 2,160 children aged 10–17 are estimated to be employed in domestic labour; of them, 10.5 per cent (227 children) are younger than 15.²⁶

¹⁹ ILO: *Helping hands or shackled lives?* op.cit., p. 14

²⁰ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

²¹ University of Indonesia: Baseline survey on child domestic workers in the municipalities of East Jakarta and Bekasi (Jakarta, ILO-IPEC, 2003)

²² Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: *Baseline survey on child domestic workers in Mongolia* (Ulaanbaatar, ILO-IPEC, 2005)

²³ National Statistical Office Thailand, 2002

²⁴ Visayan Forum Foundation: *Reaching out beyond closed doors: a primer on child domestic labour in the Philippines* (Manila, 2004) p. 16

²⁵ ILO: *Helping hands or shackled lives?* op.cit., p. 15

²⁶ Institute for Economic Research Ho Chi Minh City and LIFE: *Child domestic workers in Ho Chi Minh City* (Ho Chi Minh City, ILO-IPEC, to be published in 2006)



Child Domestic Labour From Different Angles

This section covers child domestic labour from different angles, each with a view on the lives and working conditions of child domestic workers. Each angle offers a different light on the phenomenon of child domestic workers: education, culture/tradition, gender equality, violence against children, migration and trafficking, minimum age for employment and the worst forms of child labour.

CDL and Education

An adequate and appropriate education is globally recognized as a prerequisite to earning a livelihood, breaking out of the poverty cycle and building a more secure future.²⁷ ILO-IPEC has made education the centre of its strategy to combat child labour. Indeed, history has shown how instrumental education has been to the abolition of child labour, establishing a skilled workforce and promoting development based on principles of social justice.²⁸

Both the education status and achievement levels are far from desirable among known child domestic workers. Although many countries provide free compulsory education, it does not mean that education is totally free. Associated fees for schooling, such as costs for uniforms, text books, transportation and sometimes teachers' own insurances, are a huge burden for people who are poor. Many children have looked for work or were forced to drop out from school due to economic reasons, including the cost of schooling.

➤ Education status

Domestic labour, among other types of child labour, raises certain expectations among working children and parents: They think that they can combine work and school. Indeed, the majority of child domestic workers in the research consulted for this report originally sought employment in domestic labour expecting that they could continue their study as well.

In Mongolia, 50 per cent of the surveyed boy domestic workers migrated from rural areas to the capital city to study and 25 per cent of them migrated to live with relatives. They did not necessarily expect that they would do domestic work. Among the girls who migrated, there was not much expectation to study from the beginning (9.1 per cent of girl domestic workers originally migrated to study); rather, a large portion left home to find domestic work (36.3 per cent). Some 34 per cent of child domestic workers do not study at school any longer; among those aged 15–17, 59 per cent no longer study at school or participate in some informal training programme.²⁹

The situation in Cambodia parallels Mongolia. Some 66 per cent of the surveyed Cambodian boy domestic workers migrated to Phnom Penh with the hope of better education, compared to 16 per cent of girls. At the time of the survey, 40 per cent of the child domestic workers surveyed were no longer in school. In addition, there is a huge discrepancy between boys and girls: Almost 68 per cent of boy domestic workers still attended school, whereas only 46 per cent of the girls did so.³⁰

²⁷ ILO: *Helping hands or shackled lives?* op.cit., p49

²⁸ ILO-IPEC: *Combating Child Labour... through Education*, leaflet (Geneva, 2003)

²⁹ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

³⁰ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

An alarming situation was found in Indonesia where 89 per cent of child domestic workers were out of school.³¹

A survey on immigrants conducted from 1994 to 1996 by the Ho Chi Minh City Economic Institute found that only one third of the child domestic workers aged 13–19 were in school, while 61 per cent worked exclusively for a living.

Viet Nam

Thuy's story

Thuy* will be 18 soon. She has not had much of a childhood. As long as she can remember, she has worked, either helping her domestic worker mother or doing chores for the employers' small restaurant. Though she will be an "adult" with her next birthday, her exceptional skinniness makes her appear more as a young teenager who has not yet had a chance to develop. She had no choice in becoming a domestic worker and now has little choice or chance in finding a better opportunity. She never attended school and is illiterate.

Her mother worked in the house of a family in Ho Chi Minh City. When Thuy was 9, she started working in the family's small restaurant. When she turned 13, she took over her mother's role and took care of the house. Now four years later, she continues to do what she did then: laundry, house cleaning, shopping and carrying water from the house to the restaurant, which is far away.

When Thuy took over, her mother moved into a shanty leaning against the employer's restaurant so she could work there full time. Thuy's younger brother also works in the restaurant for the same employer. Because they are given shelter and two meals a day, they are not paid regularly for their work. Occasionally, Thuy receives a little pocket money of 5,000–10,000 *dong* (US\$0.3–\$0.6).

Some neighbours say that the mother and children are often beaten and yelled at by the employer. Thuy does not disparage her employer because her and her family's survival depend on the employer's whim. Without an education and without other opportunities, Thuy most likely will remain in poverty and in servitude for the rest of her life, like her mother.

*Story contributed by Nguyen Thi Mai Oanh, National Programme Manager,
ILO-IPECHanoi*

**Not her real name*

Cost is certainly a determining factor for not sending children to school. However, it is not the only reason. Their heavy workloads and a lack of compatibility between the school schedule and their daily schedule also prevent child domestic workers from going to school. Transportation costs also can be significant. Employers who consider themselves as "benefactors" because they are "extended family members", conveniently forget about children's right to education and the "benefactor's" responsibility to send children at the compulsory education age to school.

Even if they are able to go to school, long hours of work and less sleep interfere with scholastic performance; child domestic workers often are tardy, absent or unable to complete their school assignments.³² Continuing their education as a child domestic worker becomes a challenge.

³¹ University of Indonesia: op.cit.

³² Human Rights Watch: Always on call: Abuse and exploitation of child domestic workers in Indonesia, Vol. 17 (New York, June 2005) p. 46

Table 2: Education status of child domestic workers, by country

Country	Never attended school		Currently enrolled		Out of school	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cambodia	1.3%	7%	67.7%	46.6%	31%	46.4%
Indonesia	2.4%		8.4%		89.2%	
Mongolia – Ulaanbaatar	Informal training 5.9%	7.7%	58.8%	59%	35.3%	33.3%
Mongolia – rural	Informal training 1.7%	1%	37.4%	54.2%	60.9%	44.8%
*Philippines	NA		34.7%		52%	
*Thailand	NA		NA		NA	
*Viet Nam – Hanoi	NA		NA		NA	
Viet Nam – Ho Chi Minh City	5%		11%		84%	

Source: List of research on child domestic labour on page 5

➤ Education Level

While many countries have a nine-year compulsory education system, child domestic labour poses a serious concern for the Education for All (EFA) initiatives in general and for secondary education goals in particular. Table 3 shows the impact of child domestic labour on lower secondary education, especially for girls.

In Indonesia, the majority (67.5 per cent) of child domestic workers had completed their primary education. However, far fewer were studying, or had studied, in higher levels; only 21.7% had completed junior high school, and some 89.2 per cent were no longer in school.³³

In Hanoi, a third of them had to face the complicated world of employment, having dropped out of school somewhere between grades 1 and 5.³⁴ In urban Mongolia, one third (34.4 per cent) of child domestic workers have dropped out of school. Out of children aged 7–15 who should receive compulsory education according to Mongolian Law, 25.3 per cent do not study at school. In rural Mongolia, more than half of child domestic workers surveyed did not study at school and one in every four children aged 12 and older cannot read or write.³⁵

While more Cambodian girl domestic workers than boy domestic workers have completed primary education (64 per cent compared with 47.7 per cent), more boys than girls have studied at secondary level (47.7 per cent compared with 26.7 per cent).³⁶ That suggests a very difficult situation for girls to access higher education.

The fact that most child domestic workers are girls indicates that they are additionally vulnerable to gender discrimination in relation to education. Often, when faced with limited resources and many financial demands, parents in Asia prioritize their sons' education, while daughters are expected to forego schooling to contribute to the household economy, either by working at home or taking employment outside, including domestic work. Learning household chores is considered by many parents to be a good preparation for their daughters' future roles as mothers and wives. Therefore, prevailing attitudes and perceptions relating to child domestic labour are a direct threat to promoting basic education for all. As child domestic workers are predominantly girls, promoting education

³³ University of Indonesia: op.cit.

³⁴ Nguyen Thi Van Anh & Le Khanh: *Children in domestic service in Hanoi* (Hanoi, Save the Children, Sweden (National Political Publishing House, 2000)

³⁵ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

³⁶ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

among child domestic workers would increase educational opportunities for a large number of girls and would contribute to narrowing gender disparities in education.

Table 3: Education level of child domestic workers, by country

Country	No grade completed		Completed primary education		Completed lower secondary education		Completed secondary education	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cambodia	1.3%	7.5%	51%	64.4%			47.7%	26.7%
Indonesia	10.8%		67.5%		21.7%		-	
Mongolia – Ulaanbaatar	NA							
Mongolia – rural	NA							
*Thailand	NA							
*Philippines	0.2%		15%		1 st yr 25.8%	2 nd yr 26.6%	3 rd yr 25.2%	4 th yr 4.5%
*Viet Nam – Hanoi	NA		33.2%		65.6%		1.2%	
Viet Nam – HCMC	23.1%	9.2%	30.8%	48.3%	46.2%	36.8%	0%	5.7%

Source: List of research on child domestic labour on page 5

Note

Cambodia:	Compulsory education – 9 years		
	Primary education	grades 1–6	starting at 7 years
Indonesia:	Secondary education	grades 7–12	children aged 13–18
	Compulsory education – 9 years		
Mongolia:	Primary education	grades 1–6	starting at 7 years
	Lower secondary education	grades 7–9	children aged 13–15
Philippines:	Compulsory education – 8 years		
	Primary education	4 years	
Thailand:	Secondary education	4 years	
	Upper secondary education	2 years	
Viet Nam:	Compulsory education – 9 years		
	Primary education	grades 1–6	
Thailand:	(Elementary education)		
	Secondary education	grades 1–4	
Viet Nam:	(high school)		
	Tertiary education (college)	grades 1–4	
Thailand:	Compulsory education – 9 years		
	Primary education	grades 1–6	starting at 7 years
Viet Nam:	(Elementary education)		
	Junior secondary education	grades 7–9	children aged 13–15
Viet Nam:	Compulsory education – 9 years		
	Primary education	grades 1–5	children aged 6–10
Viet Nam:	Lower secondary education	grades 6–9	children aged 11–14
	Secondary education	grades 10–12	children aged 15–17

➤ Interest in education

In general, the willingness of child domestic workers to resume their formal education is high. This is largely because they were forced to stop studying due to their family economic situation and not due to poor academic achievement or lack of interest. Most child domestic workers in a survey in Thailand (60.7 per cent of 115 respondents) reported that their academic achievement was fair, and 24.3 per cent said they did well in school before they became household employees.³⁷

In the Philippines, many children enter domestic labour hoping for an opportunity to pursue higher education. However, a majority of them (52 per cent) have stopped studying.³⁸ Interestingly, many save their earnings with the prospect of going back to school in the near future.³⁹ Some 72 per cent of the child domestic workers polled in an Indonesian study said they would like to resume their formal education if they had the opportunity.⁴⁰ In Hanoi, 61.7 per cent of child domestic workers aged 12–18 also said they would like to go to school again.⁴¹ Around 54 per cent of Cambodian child domestic workers responded that they would go back home and study if a scholarship was granted.⁴² In urban Mongolia, 86.7 per cent of surveyed child domestic workers selected “To study at school” as their preferred choice for their future.⁴³

Some advocates argue that child domestic workers can be good students compared to children in other forms of child labour, such as street children. Because their mobility is limited and they have a few distractions being confined in a household, when given some time to study they actually do well. This is an opportunity point, and promoting basic Education for All initiatives should specifically address child domestic workers.

➤ How to make education relevant for CDWs

Considering that the dominant age group of child domestic workers is 15–17, education means not only promoting basic education but also non-formal education as well as pre-vocational training and vocational/skills training. Sometimes, and for different reasons, children in domestic labour do not wish to go back to school. Some have lower educational attainment for their age so they are reluctant to go back with younger peers. Some are pressured to generate income for their families and they prefer to opt for vocational training, which can lead them to different employment opportunities in the future and/or to start income-generating activities. However, in Thailand, access to non-formal education, including skills development training, is not possible unless a child completes his/her compulsory education, as required by the education legislation. This is a serious obstacle when pursuing alternative ways to develop the capacity and skills of some children, such as domestic workers, who may not be able to complete compulsory education.

The Project has put educational components at the centre of its strategy and provides different types of educational opportunities for child domestic workers. Previous educational attainment, age, capacity, willingness to study and availability for classes determine the type of educational opportunity someone can take.

³⁷ Nawarat Phlainoi: *Thailand child domestic workers: A rapid assessment* (Geneva, ILO-IPEC, April 2002)

³⁸ Visayan Forum Foundation: *Programmatic listing and databasing of child domestic labourers for the Philippines time-bound programme on the worst forms of child labour* (Manila, ILO-IPEC, unpublished)
This figure excludes Davao data.

³⁹ *The phenomenon of child domestic work in Asia*, p. 12

⁴⁰ University of Indonesia: op.cit.

⁴¹ Nguyen Thi Van Anh & Le Khanh: op.cit.

⁴² National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

⁴³ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

How to make educational initiatives effective to prevent child domestic labour and/or rehabilitate former child domestic workers:

- Provide basic education in both formal and non-formal settings;
- Provide vocational and skills training to increase the level of employability of children who are older than the minimum age for admission to employment;
- Revise policies and legislation to address gaps and flaws in the education system to include working children and to prevent child labour;
- Make schooling relevant and physically, socially and economically accessible to children (paying particular attention to girls' needs and aspirations).

➤ Initiatives to make education relevant for CDWs

The Project supports the Education for All initiatives, particularly in Indonesia and Cambodia. The Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI) is working with the Ministry of National Education to prepare a teacher's guide for non-formal education. This guide is designed to help teachers encourage child domestic workers to stay in school or resume their education. Because the number of child domestic workers is significant, reaching this target group will help Indonesia reach the Education for All goals.⁴⁴

In Cambodia, the Non-Formal Education Department (NFED) of the Ministry of Education is preparing two modules of an NFE curriculum for grades 5 and 6. Child domestic workers are one of the target groups. In preparation, the NFED conducted a needs assessment among child domestic workers in Phnom Penh and Prey Veng province. Similar to the Indonesian situation, the Government of Cambodia sees child domestic workers as a priority target for non-formal education with a view to achieving the Education for All goals and the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals.

CDL and Culture/Tradition

Seeking work in a household is a practice that has long been culturally accepted as a coping mechanism for poor families in Asia. Often, children are expected to contribute to the household income in one way or the other. In many societies, placing children of poor families in the care of a wealthier relative is an established tradition that is rarely, if ever, questioned. In Indonesia, the Javanese recognize a so-called *ngenger* tradition – a term used for taking a child to his/her relatives or extended family living in a bigger city or taking a child to an unrelated family but who is committed to helping the child. In the older *ngenger* tradition, children took on domestic work in return for the opportunity to continue studying and having all living expenses covered. In modern times, however, there is less taking care of the children, including less attention to schooling, and the benefits seem more one-sided, favouring the employing family.

Aside from the tradition, domestic work attracts parents, employers and children as an employment option. Parents prefer domestic service because they see it as a lighter and less arduous task than other employment options available for children in their community, such as farming or peddling. In addition, the chance to work in the city is perceived as a step or a movement up the social ladder. Domestic service is seen not as stop-gap employment but as a “stepping stone” or “preparation” to more and better options in the

⁴⁴ This initiative is not included in Part II.

city.⁴⁵ Parents genuinely believe that within the limited options for their children, domestic work is a better opportunity.

Many employers see “taking in” a child to work in the home as an act of benevolence.⁴⁶ It is considered as “doing a favour” for those coming from impoverished families. As one of the reasons why they hire children as domestic workers, household employers in Ho Chi Minh City said that in doing so they are recognized as good people who are willing to help disadvantaged children.⁴⁷ In these cases, some employers may see the situation as one of mutual help and thus not feel compelled to pay any remuneration apart from giving them shelter and feeding them whatever they have.

Children typically do not think highly of domestic work though they are willing to take it if there are no better options. According to some employers in Hanoi, children’s preference for working for private business is not because it is a favourable job but because they like to be called “a sales assistant” rather than “a house worker”.⁴⁸ They most likely would choose better alternative employment opportunities over domestic work. With no better option, they are happy to have a domestic job so that they can contribute to the household income. In the Philippines, commonly cited reasons among child domestic workers for taking their job include poverty and the concomitant reasons of wanting to help their parents and siblings, or one day going to school.⁴⁹

CDL and Gender Equality

In general, household-related tasks are considered as “female work”. This is certainly the case in many countries in this region where child domestic workers are predominantly girls. For example, 98 per cent of child domestic workers aged 12–17 in Hanoi are girls.⁵⁰ Some 93 per cent of child domestic workers in Indonesia are girls.⁵¹ In the Philippines, at least 90 per cent of them are girls.⁵² This trend is reinforced by both parents’ expectations for girls and the realities of girls.

Girls are expected to help their mothers in household chores. Helping mothers gives them “on the job training” that they can easily apply to other households. It is acceptable for parents to send their daughters as a domestic worker because they think the opportunity is good for them as preparation for marriage. And they genuinely believe that the environment as well as the tasks will not be so different from that in their houses. In many cultures, it is expected of the female folk to serve others and to be submissive to the superior men. Thus, domestic work is considered a low-status job to be performed by women and girls.

The realities of girls limit their options in life. Because it is traditionally believed in many areas that women do not have any other place but in their household, it remains more difficult for girls to be educated. In Cambodia, 7 per cent of the girl domestic workers have never been to school, compared to 1.3 per cent of the boys.⁵³

Even if they want to find employment, very few options are available to those who do not have much education. Among the possibilities, domestic work probably seems to be one of

⁴⁵ Ma. Cecilia Flores-Oebanda: *The phenomenon of child domestic work in Asia: Issues and responses* (Manila, Visayan Forum Foundation, Inc., April 2003) p.13

⁴⁶ ILO: *Helping hands or shackled lives?* op.cit.

⁴⁷ Institute for Economic Research Ho Chi Minh City and LIFE: op.cit.

⁴⁸ Nguyen Thi Van Anh & Le Khanh: op.cit. p. 7

⁴⁹ Ma. Cecilia Flores-Oebanda: op.cit. p. 10

⁵⁰ Nguyen Thi Van Anh & Le Khanh: op.cit.

⁵¹ University of Indonesia: op.cit.

⁵² Roland Romeo R. Pacis, Visayan Forum Foundation, Inc.: *An In-depth study for a time-bound program targeting child domestic workers in the Philippines* (Manila, ILO-IPEC, December 2002)

⁵³ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

the better choices. At least they know what to do, have been “trained” at home and no educational requirement is needed. However, the information that girls will receive about employment opportunities most likely is limited. It will be probably come from their parents, neighbours and friends who have limited awareness. Thus, domestic work becomes a promising job opportunity for girls with limited education, limited capacity and limited information.

As Table 4 shows, there is a significant number of boy domestic workers. This typically depends on the tasks included in the domestic work role in each country. Some household tasks require physical strength and naturally more boys take it on. In Mongolia, the number of boy domestic workers exceeds girl domestic workers (56.7 per cent and 43.3 per cent, respectively, in Ulaanbaatar; 64.4 per cent and 35.6 per cent, respectively, in rural areas).⁵⁴ The tasks of boy domestic workers tend to be performed outside of the house, such as collecting firewood, chopping it, taking care of livestock, etc., even though it is considered household work.

Mongolia

Manal's story

Manal,* a 15-year old boy, works in a non-family household to herd animals in Khovd province. He no longer attends school. In the winter time, he gets up around 6 or 7 in the morning to take the animals to pasture. His responsibility is to keep a close eye on their well-being while they rest. Around 5 p.m. he takes the herd back home and makes them drink water. In the evening, he collects the animal dung for heating his employer's house and for cooking purposes. He can go to bed around 8–9 p.m. In the summer, his work begins 5 a.m. and doesn't end until 10–11 p.m. He says his main difficulty is the risk of frostbite in the winter. He dreams of being a good herder.

*Story contributed by Norjinkham Mongolmaa, National Programme Manager,
ILO-IPEC Mongolia*

**Not his real name*

In the case of Cambodia, boys outnumber girls in the 10–14 age group; but in other age groups (7–9 and 15–17), girls are predominant. This may suggest that boys go to school early and then drop out around age 10, taking on a domestic job but then leaving it when they reach the legal working age. It may also indicate that girls are more likely to be sent into domestic work, or stay in it, as a long-term option.⁵⁵

Table 4: Sex of child domestic workers, by country

Country	Boys	Girls	Total
Cambodia – Phnom Penh	41.4%	58.6%	100%
Indonesia	7.2%	92.8%	100%
Mongolia – Ulaanbaatar	56.7%	43.3%	100%
Mongolia – rural	64.4%	35.6%	100%
*Philippines ⁵⁶	17.8%	82.2%	100%
*Thailand – Bangkok	22.6%	77.4%	100%
*Viet Nam – Hanoi	2.3%	97.7%	100%
Viet Nam – Ho Chi Minh City	13%	87%	100%

Source: List of research on child domestic labour on page 5

⁵⁴ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

⁵⁵ ILO-IPEC: Child domestic labour in Cambodia: Why it has to stop and how we can stop it, booklet (Phnom Penh, 2004) p5

⁵⁶ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

Once engaged in domestic work, the life experience of girls and boys differs. While girls tend to remain in an employer's house and work within the household, the task of boys covers work outside of the house, such as fetching water, shopping, washing cars, herding livestock, etc. Thus, the typical problem of being isolated and/or confined that many child domestic workers endure is less experienced by boys. Among children herding livestock as child domestic workers for other families in rural Mongolia, boys know more about other children in the same job compared to girls.⁵⁷ This suggests a wider exposure to outsiders. The same research also reveals that the duration of a girl's workday is longer than that of a boy's by one hour and the frequency of meals eaten by girl domestic workers per day is lower than that of boys.

In Cambodia, 85 per cent of boy domestic workers work for one to four hours daily, compared to 47 per cent of girls. This data is supported by the data on child domestic workers' participation in school: While 67.7 per cent of boy domestic workers were still attending school, only 46.6 per cent of the girl domestic workers attended school. Many in Cambodia work relatively shorter hours a day compared to child domestic workers in other countries. Still, some 15 per cent of the Cambodian girls work 9–13 hours a day.⁵⁸

In Bangkok, 69.8 per cent of boy domestic workers work less than 12 hours a day, while 73 per cent of girl domestic workers work more than 12 hours a day.⁵⁹ But it seems that boys experience more punishment than girls: One in four boy domestic workers reported occasionally being punished while one in six experienced it among girl domestic workers.⁶⁰ Similar to Mongolia, Thai boy domestic workers seem to have more freedom compared to girls: While almost 70 per cent of boy domestic workers in Bangkok stated that they knew places and were able to travel there by themselves, only 46.1 per cent of girl domestic workers said the same.⁶¹

Their future prospects are not the same either. While boys tend to have more options other than domestic labour when they get older, girls tend to remain as domestic workers. In urban Mongolia, more girls (5.1 per cent) than boys (2 per cent) said that they would continue working as a domestic worker.⁶² In Hanoi, many of the surveyed child domestic workers planned to stop working once they had earned enough to make a significant difference in their family's situation and to build up some savings for themselves. For girls, there is a clear deadline to return home from where they work in domestic service. Because there is a strong belief in rural areas that girls should marry before they turn 24, girl domestic workers want to go home when they are about 18 to prepare for marriage.⁶³

CDL, Migration and Trafficking

Child domestic labour is not a new practice in Asia. And while the tasks may not have changed over decades, the surrounding environment in which children find jobs as child domestic workers has drastically changed. The migration flow (both internal and across borders) that has intensified over the years has influenced the market for child domestic workers. One in five child domestic workers in Ulaanbaatar migrated to the city in the past five years.⁶⁴

With the rapid urbanization and rise of the middle class in urban areas, demand for domestic workers has increased in general. Advancement of women in a sphere other than their household also has created a need to have someone to take up their role in doing

⁵⁷ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

⁵⁸ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

⁵⁹ Nawarat Phlainoi: op.cit.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ *ibid.*

⁶² Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

⁶³ Nguyen Thi Van Anh & Le Khanh: op.cit.

⁶⁴ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

household work. In Ho Chi Minh City, most employers usually recruit child domestic workers to take care of their babies as there are no public or semi-public nursery/kindergartens that accept admission of babies younger than 18 months.⁶⁵ Child minding used to be one of the main duties of mothers but has been handed over to domestic workers. Thus, domestic workers, both adults and children, are in high demand.

Some employers particularly prefer children to adult domestic workers because they think that they are easier to manage, less demanding and thus they can pay them less. Employers in Hanoi reported they preferred hiring children instead of adults because they can be easily trained or moulded, they can easily be sent on small errands, they are less likely to fall sick than adults, etc.⁶⁶ Less sickness lets employers feel less anxious about there being important medical expenses to cover. Employers in Ho Chi Minh City said they specifically preferred children aged 11–15 because they are suitable for looking after their babies.⁶⁷ The Association for Indonesian Domestic Worker Suppliers in Jakarta, Indonesia, estimated that about 30–40 per cent of the total domestic workers provided through placement services are younger than 15. This accelerates recruitment of children as domestic workers.

The recent phenomenon of international migration puts pressure on the child domestic worker market, especially in the Philippines and Indonesia. Domestic workers in both countries constitute an important workforce. A large number of adult domestic workers are drained from their own countries for overseas employment. Anecdotal information supports that the popular practice of women going abroad to become domestic workers in the Middle East, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan in the past decade has significantly impacted the demand for child domestic workers by increasing the bargaining position of the adult domestic workers who prefer to stay at home. Those people who remain to become domestic workers in their own countries prefer not to work with employers who potentially require a lot from them, such as those who have small children and/or who cannot provide electronic equipment to make their work lighter. Therefore, children are sought after to fill the demand–supply gap in the adult domestic workers market.

The supply side of the story has seen new developments. Rural poverty and the lack of appropriate employment opportunities in rural areas remain overruling factors that generate rural–urban migration. In the case of child domestic workers, low educational attainment, especially among girls, pushes children to seek employment as domestic workers because it does not require specific prior education or training.

Children's aspiration to see big cities and the flowery images of lives there also contribute to the rural–urban migration. Children from north-eastern Thailand have a positive image of Bangkok as a beautiful and civilized place. This notion of Bangkok was formed from stories told by returning migrants who visit their hometown during important festivals such as New Year and *Song Kran* (Thai New Year).⁶⁸ In addition, the development of telecommunication and transportation systems between rural and urban cities also has facilitated the migration process.

The emergence of different players in the migration process has eased the movement from rural to urban and even from one country to another. Relatives, neighbours, friends, other domestic workers from a similar area and even village chiefs have been playing a role of recruiter. Nearly 48 per cent of child domestic workers in Bangkok, for instance, were taken to their first job by a relative and 17 per cent by friends.⁶⁹ In Indonesia, families of around 47 per cent of child domestic workers surveyed took the initiative to send their daughter/son to a domestic service job.⁷⁰

Agents with recruitment agencies (formal and informal) now play a role also, though so far they seem limited in number. These agents see opportunities to make money from the

⁶⁵ Institute for Economic Research Ho Chi Minh City and LIFE: op.cit.

⁶⁶ Nguyen Thi Van Anh & Le Khanh: op.cit.

⁶⁷ Institute for Economic Research Ho Chi Minh City and LIFE: op.cit.

⁶⁸ Nawarat Phlainoi: op.cit.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰ University of Indonesia: op.cit.

intensified migration demand and abundant untouched human supply in rural areas. In-depth interviews with child domestic workers and their parents in Ho Chi Minh City reveal that children from central or northern Viet Nam are typically brought to the city by an acquaintance (such as relatives, friends) or non-acquaintance who acts as a guide. Most of the guides are women. In each trip, the guide recruits eight to ten children and manages the travelling and placement process. Employers hire the children through the guide and give her some money for transportation costs and commission for her work. Children from the Mekong River Delta region are usually taken to Ho Chi Minh City individually or in small groups of two to three children.⁷¹

There are two different types of agents: one to recruit children for the internal market and the other for the international market. They have different procedures and channels to send potential child domestic workers to the destinations. The increase in the market for domestic workers, both adult and children, has encouraged the market of agents. As many people see a chance to make money, they find ways to either enter the stream or to create the channels in which the flow of workers moves. Most are likely to be concerned with their own profiteering and pay little heed to laws or rights of under-aged workers, if they are even aware of them.

Increasingly, it seems that the channels for cross-border migration have become diversified and complicated. In particular, the Philippines, Indonesia, Lao PDR and Thailand have been experiencing intensified cross-border migration for domestic labour. In Indonesia, government records indicate that from 1999 to June 2001, 968,260 officially registered Indonesia workers were placed abroad, the majority as domestic workers. More than 70 per cent of them were women.⁷² In Thailand, 1,284,920 people from Myanmar, Lao PDR and Cambodia were registered as migrant workers in 2004. Among them, 126,310 people were registered as domestic workers. This makes the domestic sector the second largest work sector for migrant workers after agriculture.⁷³ These numbers give an indication of the magnitude of the domestic sector in Thailand and thus the demand for workers. If the demand is high, it is natural for children (youth) to try to get into the picture even by faking their identity cards. Child domestic workers are not allowed to register but the ILO studies used for this report provide evidence that under-aged children are employed in households. As well, child domestic workers from the neighbouring countries are replacing Thai children due to their availability, cheaper wages, willingness to work longer hours and more patience.⁷⁴

In the Philippines, a noticeable trend of “step migration” has been recorded among the child domestic workers identified in rural areas such as Davao and Bacolod. They are considerably younger (younger than 15) than child domestic workers identified in Metro Manila who range in age from 15 to 17. The younger domestic workers reported that their main motivation for seeking household employment was “to gain more experience in work (74 per cent). This suggests their intention was to start young and gain experience so they could later be “recruited” to work in Manila and eventually to go overseas as domestic workers.⁷⁵

In most countries, children younger than 18 are not permitted to seek employment abroad. However, it is not uncommon for many under-aged persons to obtain falsified travel documents with an appropriate age. Children who go abroad for employment without proper documents or protection tend to be easy prey to exploitative/abusive situations at the destinations, if not during the migration process as well. Whether the child is voluntarily recruited as a foreign migrant or not, falsifying his/her age to cross a border renders the voluntary movement as a part of the trafficking process.

⁷¹ Institute for Economic Research Ho Chi Minh City and LIFE: op.cit.

⁷² ICMC & Solidarity Center: *Trafficking of women and children in Indonesia* (Jakarta, 2003) p. 57

⁷³ Bureau of Irregular Migrant Workers Administration, Ministry of Labour/Department of Employment: Migrant Registration 2004 (Thailand)

⁷⁴ Foundation for Child Development: *Child domestic workers in Thailand* (Bangkok, 2000) p. 2

⁷⁵ Visayan Forum Foundation: *Programmatic listing and databasing of child domestic labourers...*, op.cit.

Domestic work is often used as an entry point for traffickers. It easily appeals to children who know the usual tasks and to parents who consider it as safe work. It is not uncommon to hear that children recruited as child domestic workers actually end up in commercial sexual exploitation and/or very exploitative/abusive child domestic labour.

In the Karawang district of Indonesia, the local government is taking child trafficking for child domestic labour very seriously and has drafted an act called a *Perda* (a local regulation). The situation of child trafficking in Karawang district is acute. In the village of Panyingkiran, for instance, officials recorded 400 cases of child trafficking in 2004. Of this number, 340 cases involved taking children to the Middle East, mostly Saudi Arabia to become domestic workers.

Indonesia

Watik's story

Watik,* a 15-year-old Indonesian girl says she does "nothing" at the moment. She is waiting for another chance to go to Saudi Arabia as a domestic worker. "I want to be successful," she says, which means, she explains, to be rich enough to build a house for her family. "I need to be successful," she repeats. To achieve this, she wants to return to Saudi Arabia even though her previous experience there was unpleasant.

Watik had gone to Medina, Saudi Arabia, a year earlier – the first job she ever had. She did not know anything about the job other than she would make money. "I was not afraid. I was only excited to go there," she remembers. After she finished elementary school, Watik was not interested in studying and wanted to work. She used a fake identity card to get employment abroad through a local labour supplier.

She was sent as a domestic worker for a family of three children, aged 3 to 8 years. She worked from 6 a.m. to 3 a.m. the following day, every day for ten months. She was prohibited from making contact with anyone, not even to write a letter to her family. Her Arab language skill was too poor to communicate with her employer and her family properly, so there were constant miscommunications and scolding. She did not know anyone outside of her employer's house whom she could talk to. She remembers many nights crying from loneliness.

Her female employer was relatively nice in that she never abused Watik physically. However, the husband did not hold back and attempted to take sexual advantage of Watik frequently. Once he exposed himself to her in the kitchen, wanting her to "service" him. Scared and feeling threatened, Watik pleaded with her female employer for help. But the woman took the pleading as a joke. Feeling hopeless, Watik started to carry a knife to protect herself from the husband. Finally in frustration, he dismissed her claiming she was of "no use".

But Watik came back with her ten months' salary of 12 million Indonesian *rupiahs* (approx. US\$1,200), enough to buoy her interest in returning. "I want to be successful. That is why I still want to go back to Saudi Arabia," says Watik, but adding, "I will not recommend anyone in my village to go there as a domestic worker."

Story from an interview with Ayaka Matsuno in June 2005

**Not her real name*

Watik's story is not uncommon. Many children like her, with low education and living in rural areas where there are few economic alternatives available, migrate to a bigger city or foreign country as a domestic worker. It is an accepted practice and even regarded as a positive one for both the girl and her family because it is not a degrading experience as some other alternatives.

CDL and Violence Against Children⁷⁶

Each domestic employer has his/her own rules and “laws” for the household. Children working as domestic workers often are taken into a family with the expectation of becoming part of the “family” and obeying the laws of the family. In reality, the child worker needs to obey the laws not because he/she is part of the family but because he/she is the “property” of the family.

The work and life of child domestic workers are inseparable and their employers have complete control over them in how they work as well as how they live. Households are protected with individual rights to privacy and thus evade any scrutiny by outsiders. This creates a protective environment for the family but leaves domestic workers, particularly young ones, without much protection as the “laws” for the household, no matter how unfair they may be, are what they must obey. In this region to date, no authority can assess a child’s actual living and working conditions inside the household without some complaint having first been made. And yet, a workplace where child domestic workers are ruled absolutely by the laws of the family and controlled by their employers is a potential den of violence.

The most common forms of violence child domestic workers have reported experiencing involve:⁷⁷

- **Physical violence**, including beating, kicking, slapping, whipping, pushing, pulling hair, shaving hair, pinching, scalding, burning with an iron, denial of food and water, and overwork;
- **Verbal violence**, including shouting, scolding, screaming, using labels, name calling, insults, threats, obscene language;
- **Emotional torture**, including isolation, discrimination, marginalization, constant reassurance of inferiority, hopelessness;
- **Sexual violence**, including harassment, inappropriate advances, use of sexually explicit language, rape or attempted rape and forced abortion.

Physical violence against child domestic workers is probably the more recognized form of violence that children endure. This is due to the occasional media coverage of such cases. Recently in Thailand, a Burmese child domestic worker filed a case against her Thai employer who beat her on the head until she passed out. Reportedly, the child’s employer became so upset when the child loudly wept about missing her home that she beat the girl uncontrollably. Visayan Forum Foundation in the Philippines and the Foundation for Child Development in Thailand regularly collect reports of similar cases of violence and provide support to the victims. Some of their cases involved burning with iron, slapping with a cooking pan and forced swallowing of detergent.

In Cambodia, 11 per cent of the estimated 27,950 child domestic workers in Phnom Penh experienced either beating with objects or by hand. Many employers justify the physical violence by saying that it is a part of disciplining the children.⁷⁸ In Ulaanbaatar, 17.6 per cent of boy domestic workers and 23.1 per cent of girl domestic workers reported that they had been beaten by the “master”. Broken down by age, more Mongolian children aged 6–11 reported being beaten by the “master” (40 per cent) than children in the other age categories.⁷⁹

Verbal violence may not seem so serious compared to the newspaper images of physically abused child domestic workers. However, the lasting impact of verbal violence in the

⁷⁶ The UN is carrying out a global study on Violence against Children (VAC) to be published and submitted to the UN General Assembly in 2006. The study includes a chapter on work situations.

⁷⁷ Jonathan Blagbrough: Violence against child domestic workers, a paper for Save the Children Alliance workshop (October 2003) with modification by Ayaka Matsuno

⁷⁸ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

⁷⁹ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

children's minds is overwhelming and should not be neglected. Each day of verbal violence places children under emotional torture. Not being treated equally in the household by the use of negative words and looks, inferior food, clothes and accommodation constantly make child domestic workers feel "inferior" as a person. To face the unjustifiable difference between their lives and the employers' children's lives also reinforces their feelings of an inferior destiny and future. Many child domestic workers in Hanoi, for instance, have commented that the main difficulty for them was not the hard work but their employers' attitudes. Of the various emotional distress they endure, such as missing their families, loneliness due to little or no contact with outsiders, restricted freedom with the employers' discipline, the one that hurts the most is the self-pity they feel when seeing the employers' children going to school and receiving concern from their parents.⁸⁰

Philippines

Alita's story

Alita* was 15 years old when she was recruited to work in Manila. She dreamed of having enough money to buy clothes, send money home, return to school and build some savings.

Right after her grade 6 graduation, Alita was taken from Samar in the southern Philippines by Aileen to work as her domestic helper. Alita landed in a household of seven people and into a routine that most times gave her only an hour's sleep.

"Sometimes, I woke at 2 a.m.," Alita narrates. "I wiped the windows, washed the clothes and by 5 a.m., I was cooking. I woke the kids at 6 a.m., gave them a bath, fed and dressed them and took them to school at 8. I pedaled a sidecar [a local form of transportation that consists of a bicycle attached to a fabricated "car" for two passengers] for two hours. And then I went home with two of my younger wards. I washed the plates and then thought about what to cook for lunch. After lunch, I put the kids to sleep."

"When they awoke, we fetched the other kids from school. Upon reaching home, I changed their clothes and then continued with the laundry. I helped them with their homework. Their parents arrived at 10 p.m. Then I would go to market. The kids – aged 12, 10, 8, 6 and 3 – played until midnight. I went to bed at 1 a.m."

All along, Aileen assured Alita her parents were receiving her monthly salary of 1,500 *pesos* (US\$28). Alita wrote to her family, but not knowing how to mail her letters asked Aileen to do it for her. Aileen never sent them.

The household expanded with the arrival of Aileen's ailing mother and Ernie, a male cousin. This meant more people to cook for, more plates to clean, more clothes to wash. And new abuse.

"Aileen's mother asked me to make sure no one took her lemons from the refrigerator," Alita begins, when explaining the scar on her hand. Peering into the refrigerator, Ernie saw the lemons and took some, despite Alita's pleas not to. Ernie then grabbed the hot electric flat iron that Alita was using at the time. "I begged him not to hurt me because I could get burned ... but he went ahead."

"Even Aileen's husband said I deserved it," Alita tearfully recalls.

Source: the Child Labor Video Series produced by ILO-IPEC/UNICEF in 2004, Manila

**Not her real name*

Low self-esteem among child domestic workers is common. The labels put on them to marginalize them as an "inferior" group of human beings to serve a "superior" group have significant impact on how they see themselves. Having no contact with their family, friends and outsiders does not help them develop a healthy perspective on who they are and that

⁸⁰ Nguyen Thi Van Anh & Le Khanh: op.cit., p.5

differs from how the employers describe and treat them. It also makes them feel trapped in a cage, which prompts feelings of hopelessness, depression and loneliness.

Compounding the distress, many child domestic workers, especially girls aged 15–18, are often expected to also serve as sexual outlets for the men or boys of the household. It is extremely difficult to gather information about this type of violence among child domestic workers through research. They fear possible consequences if they disclose “family secrets” to strangers. Even under such alarm, five of 270 children surveyed in rural Mongolia revealed that they had been sexually abused.⁸¹ However limited, such information should not be ignored. Information from other regions, such as Africa, suggests that those who are exploited sexually are even more vulnerable to further exploitation: They may be discarded by the man or if they ask the wife for protection, they may be turned out of the house and abandoned to the street; they may end up in prostitution, having no alternative to make living.

Much of the violence child domestic workers experience is usually inflicted by the employers or the women of the household. However, the adults are not the only ones causing harm. Child family members often see cruelty as a valid relationship with “inferior” members of the household such as the domestic workers. Even another domestic employee trying to impose a hierarchy will abuse the more vulnerable worker.⁸²

By being young, children are especially vulnerable to violence. That they typically come from relatively poor families in rural areas compounds the situation. Their poor economic status and having no alternative but to serve richer people as a domestic worker place them at the bottom of the economic hierarchy. They may even come from ethnic minorities. Many of them are young girls, which doubles their jeopardy as they face both social and gender discriminations and remain at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In addition, as children they are not on equal footing with adults in a power relationship, not to mention an employer–employee relationship. Significant power inequality deprives children of any negotiation opportunity. Moreover, staying far away from their family and friends and not having contact with outsiders also increases their vulnerability to violence.

CDL and Minimum Age for Employment

There are people who argue that what child domestic workers do is not actually “work”; rather, they are providing “helping hands” with household chores. There even has been debate on whether they should be called “workers” and whether they deserve full rights as workers. While it at first seems an innocent tussle over terminology, the implication is of serious concern. In this region, the term “helper” is used in Viet Nam’s Labour Code and Indonesia’s National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and related presidential decrees. In Viet Nam the term is used interchangeably with “domestic worker”, if only because the Labour Code has specific provisions for the protection of persons employed to help in households. However, Indonesians use “helper” precisely because of the implications that it brings to the domestic work sector as a whole.

The fact that they are not regarded as “workers” corresponds to the commonly seen exclusion of the domestic work sector from the application of basic labour legislation (such as the Labour Code), including any minimum age provisions.

The term “helper” also goes hand in hand with the “light work” concept. Light work is defined as work performed by children younger than the minimum working age but older than 12, is not harmful to a child’s health and development and does not prejudice attendance at school and participation in vocational training nor “the capacity to benefit

⁸¹ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

⁸² ILO: Helping hands or shackled lives? op.cit., p.55

from the instruction received".⁸³ Under a special provision for "light work", children younger than the minimum age can work, or "help". Helpers performing light work for employers thus skirt the national minimum age for admission to employment. However, given the physical, emotional and mental capabilities of children raised in a poor family and the expectation that they be at the beck and call of everyone at the employers' household at any time of the day and night, the concept of domestic work as light work may be an adult perspective only.⁸⁴ At the end of their long days, children might be hard pressed to call their work "light".

Table 5: Mean age and age group of child domestic workers, by country

MA: Minimum age for admission to employment as a reference point

Country	Mean age boys	Mean age girls	Mean age group boys	Mean age group girls	CDWs below MA boys	CDWs below MA girls
Cambodia – Phnom Penh; MA – 15	NA	NA	15-17 (43%)	15-17 (65.9%)	7-14 (57%)	7-14 (34.1%)
Indonesia MA – 15	NA	NA	15-17 (36.2% of total domestic workers of 30 years plus)		<15 (5.1% of total)	
Mongolia – Ulaanbaatar MA – 16	13	14	12-14 (47.8% of total)		6-14 (64.5% of total)	
Mongolia – rural	13	13	15-17 (41.9% of total)		6-14 (58.2% of total)	
Philippines (age range: 6–17) MA – 15	16		15-17 (71% of total)		6-14 (28.5% of total)	
*Thailand – BKK MA – 15	17	17	17 (65.4%)	16–17 (88.8%)	12–14 (11.5%)	12–14 (4.4%)
Viet Nam – Hanoi (age range: 12–20) MA – 15	NA	NA	18-20 (60%)	16-17 (55.1%)	12-15 (0%)	12-15 (21.5%)
Viet Nam – HCMC	16	16	15-17 (93.3%)	15-17 (85.9%)	NA	NA

Source: List of research on child domestic labour on page 5

In some countries such as Cambodia where children aged 12–14 can be hired to do "light work" provided it is not hazardous and does not interfere with their education, domestic work can be characterized as "light work". A *draft* Cambodian Ministerial Decree (*Prakas*)⁸⁵ classifies the types of light work and employment that children aged 12–14 can be hired to do and provisions to be satisfied for them. If all these provisions are respected, a 12-year-old can be employed as a child domestic worker. Another Ministerial Decree on the prohibition of hazardous child labour (approved in April 2004) fails to include domestic labour in the list of hazardous work, for which children younger than 18 should not be employed.

And yet the Cambodian Government has included child domestic labour in its National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (NPA-WFCL).⁸⁶ Under ILO Convention No. 182, ratifying States are to remove or prevent from entering all children

⁸³ ILO-IPEC/SIMPOC: op.cit., p.26

⁸⁴ *The phenomenon of child domestic work in Asia*, p. 20

⁸⁵ as of January 2006

⁸⁶ As of January 2006, the NPA-WFCL was in the process of final approval

younger than 18 in the worst forms of child labour and they are to eliminate those practices. Having recently completed ratification process in the country (as of January 2006) and thus committed to eliminating the worst forms of child labour, the Government now needs to rectify the gap between that national plan and its Ministerial Decree provisions regarding child domestic labour.

The Mongolian Labour Law of 1991 was amended in 1993 to allow children aged 14 and 15 (younger than the minimum age of 16) to work up to 30 hours per week with parental consent.

The Indonesian Manpower Act also provides specific protection for children between the ages of 13 and 15 who can be employed only for "light work", with the following requirements (Article 69 (1) (2)):

- a. The entrepreneurs must have written permission from the parents or guardians of the children;
- b. There must be a work agreement between the entrepreneur and parents or guardians;
- c. Maximum working time of three hours a day;
- d. Conducting during the day without disturbing school time;
- e. Occupational safety and health;
- f. A clear employment relationship (between the entrepreneur and the child worker/his or her parent or guardian); and
- g. Receive wages in accordance with the prevailing provisions.

Of course, the "light work" also must not stunt or disrupt a child's physical, mental and social development in any way.

The danger of such special provisions for "light work" is the situation of enforcement and monitoring. Without proper recognition of children working while younger than the minimum age, it is not feasible to monitor them. In most countries, even a birth registration system is not in place and many young people have no proper proof of age or they can even manipulate their papers. There is no monitoring system in place in any country for child domestic labour. Even if communities voluntarily monitor those children's working conditions, it is virtually impossible to determine whether an individual working condition satisfies provisions articulated in the laws. In the case of child domestic labour, as mentioned earlier, it is very difficult for outsiders to assess the real situation in a household and how each child domestic worker is treated. Thus, it is very risky to conclude that domestic work is a "light work" and that it is acceptable for children younger than the minimum age to be employed this way.

CDL and the Worst Forms of Child Labour

According to the spirit of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as well as ILO Conventions No. 29 (Forced Labour Convention), No. 138 (Minimum Age Convention) and No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention), child domestic labour must not be overlooked when tackling the worst forms of child labour. ILO Convention No. 182 addresses domestic labour by providing some condition(s) under which child domestic labour can be considered as one of the worst forms of child labour: Ratifying States are to determine whether to include domestic labour as a hazardous form of child labour (Article 3 (d) of the Convention).

In addition, the ILO Recommendation No.190 urges States to give "special attention" to "the problem of hidden work situations, in which girls are at special risk." The recommendation implicitly includes domestic work and calls for special attention for targeting children employed in households.

The extent and combination of the following condition(s), or even only one of them (e.g. trafficking), renders domestic labour as one of the worst forms of child labour:

WHEN the child...

- is sold or trafficked;
- is bonded, e.g. by debt, or works without pay;
- works in isolation or during the night;
- is abused;
- works excessive hours;
- is exposed to grave safety or health hazards;
- is at risk of physical violence or sexual harassment;
- works at a very young age, i.e. younger than the minimum age for employment.

Existing data from various studies confirm the presence of these conditions in the experiences of child domestic workers.

The following work conditions suggest the degree and nature of exploitation that child domestic workers face in their work place. Application of one condition may not automatically render child domestic labour as the worst form of child labour, however, the combination of such conditions clearly call for immediate attention and support from us to take action against child domestic labour.

➤ Working hours per day

According to the baseline survey in Indonesia, 55.7 per cent of child domestic workers were busy 9–14 hours per day, which is longer than the working hours of adult domestic workers in the same surveyed municipalities. More than 19.7 per cent of them worked more than 15 hours per day.⁸⁷ In Phnom Penh, working hours may not be long when compared to that of Indonesia, yet, 81 per cent of boy domestic workers and 46.6 per cent of girl domestic workers do not have any rest time, and 23 per cent of them complain of exhaustion, 21.1 per cent complain of constant fear and 20.3 per cent complain of insomnia.⁸⁸ In rural Mongolia, 71.9 per cent of girl domestic workers are busy more than nine hours a day.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ University of Indonesia: op.cit.

⁸⁸ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

⁸⁹ Population Teaching and Research Centre, National University of Mongolia: op.cit.

Table 6: Child domestic workers' working hours per day, by country

Country	Working hours per day and sex (boys and girls)							
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
	1–5 hours		6–8 hours		9–13 hours		-	
Cambodia	89.4%	57.6%	7.4%	27.4%	3.2%	15%	-	
	<5 hours		5-8 hours		9-14 hours		15 hours<	
Indonesia	9.8%		14.8%		55.7%		19.7%	
	<3 hours		4–6 hours		7–8 hours		9 hours<	
Mongolia – Ulaanbaatar	31.4%	30.7%	39.2%	43.6%	17.6%	10.3%	11.8%	15.4%
Mongolia – rural	0.6%	2.1%	18.4%	14.5%	24.1%	11.5%	56.9%	71.9%
*Philippines	NA							
	<7 hours		8–11 hours		12–14 hours		14 hours<	
*Thailand	11.5%	2.2%	58.3%	23.6%	26.9%	53.9%	3.8%	19.1%
*Viet Nam – Hanoi	NA							
	8-10 hours		10.5 -12 hours		12.5 – 14 hours		14.5 hours <	
Viet Nam – HCMC ⁹⁰	38.5%	12.6%	23.1%	18.4%	23.1%	36.8%	15.4%	32.2%

Source: List of research on child domestic labour on page 5

➤ Working days per week

Not having any time off has serious implications for children's development and violates national labour laws. However, as shown in Table 7, the majority of child domestic workers are engaged seven days a week without any regular weekly day off.

Not having any day off will have a negative impact on a child's physical, mental and social development. In Thailand, researchers for the rapid assessment of child domestic workers noted that they were less socially developed than other groups of child labourers. When compared with other peers, child domestic workers did not know much about travel routes, dared not to interact with others due to their lack of socialization skills, had lower self-esteem and perceived their work to be of lower value than other children's work.⁹¹

From the service providers' point of view, it is extremely difficult to reach child domestic workers if they don't even have one free day a week. Their accessibility to outsiders and the volume of information they acquire drastically increase when they have time to themselves. In Indonesia, many child domestic workers do not even have one day off per week; hence, a joint campaign of "weekly day of rest" was launched by the State Minister for Women Empowerment and the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration in January 2002 along with JARAK (an NGO network on child labour) and the Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI). The campaign was carried out again with additional partners in 2005 (*For more details, see Part II: Indonesia, Working with the Suppliers of CDWs*).

⁹⁰ The number of hours given includes rest time. In the questionnaire, children were asked to state the time when they started working and when they finished working.

⁹¹ Nawarat Phlainoi: op.cit.

Table 7: Regular weekly day off (at least one day), by country

Country	Yes		No (7 working days)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cambodia	37.7%	21.2%	39.3%	69.6%
Indonesia	1%		99%	
Mongolia - Ulaanbaatar	15.7%	30.8%	51%	41%
Mongolia - rural	23%	24%	39.7%	40.6%
*Philippines	45.1%		54.9%	
*Thailand	57.7%	37.1%	42.3%	62.9%
*Viet Nam - Hanoi	NA		NA	
*Viet Nam - HCMC	6%		94%	

Source: List of research on child domestic labour on page 5

➤ Remuneration

Regardless of the excessive working hours, many child domestic workers receive limited monetary return, if anything at all. Table 8 shows that child domestic workers across the region are paid very little for their services. However, a close look into each country reveals considerable disparity. For example, 73.8 per cent of Cambodian child domestic workers receive no payment⁹² while most Filipino child domestic workers (95.3 per cent) receive a salary; in addition to the salary, 40 per cent of them have days off, 19 per cent receive a monthly allowance and days off, 16 per cent receive other benefits such as a health check-up, educational assistance and salary loans, and 5 per cent are members of the social security scheme.⁹³

In Indonesia, child domestic workers' salaries are significantly lower than the minimum wage in Jakarta. Domestic work is not covered in the Indonesian Labour Law and consequently the minimum monthly wage of US\$82 is not applicable to this sector; the salary range for child domestic workers is considerably low at US\$13–\$16 a month. Occasionally, 79.5 per cent of child domestic workers receive extra money from their employer to supplement their limited monthly salary.⁹⁴

In Thailand, child domestic workers receive a starting monthly salary of 1,500–2,000 baht (US\$37.50–\$50). However, if they work in a rural area or if they are immigrant child workers, they receive as little as 700–1,000 baht (US\$17.50–\$25).⁹⁵

In Mongolia, the survey found that child domestic workers in Ulaanbaatar were paid on average 134,312 *tugrugs* for the 12 months prior to the study. When the amount was divided by 12, the monthly remuneration was approximately 11,000 *tugrugs* (US\$9).

No country except the Philippines has established a minimum wage for domestic workers, not to mention child domestic workers older than the minimum age. The minimum wage cited in the far right column of Table 8 provides a referral point to the monetary returns child domestic workers in the region earn.

⁹² National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

⁹³ Visayan Forum Foundation: *Programmatic listing and databasing of child domestic labourers...*, op.cit.

⁹⁴ University of Indonesia: op.cit.

⁹⁵ Foundation for Child Development: op.cit., p.8

Table 8: Monetary returns of child domestic workers, by country

Country Local currency	Monetary return Yes	Monetary return No	Mean monthly salary boys	Mean monthly salary girls	Min. wage (monthly)
Cambodia – Phnom Penh <i>Riels</i>	26.2%	73.8%	Zero(94.8%) More than 100,000 (2.1%) >US\$25	Zero(58.9%) 40,001– 50,000 (18.4%) US\$10–\$12.5	152,000 (US\$40)
Indonesia <i>rupiah</i>	NA	NA	125,001–150,000 (30.7%) US\$13–\$16		819,100 (US\$82)
Mongolia – Ulaanbaatar <i>tugrugs</i>	44.4%	55.6% (6.7% no return)	For the past 12 months: Less than 40,000 (45.8%) <US\$32.70	For the past 12 months: 40,000– 120,000 (43.8%) US\$32.80– \$98.20	40,000 (US\$2.80)
Mongolia – rural <i>tugrugs</i>	25.5%	74.5% (5.2% no return)	For the past 12 months: Less than 10,000 (31.1%) <US\$8.20	For the past 12 months: 20,000 (US\$16.40)	
Philippines <i>pesos</i>	95.3%	4.7% no response	NA For domestic workers 800 (\$14.30)	NA	9,750 (US\$174)
Thailand – Bangkok <i>baht</i>	96.5%	3.5%	4,001–5,000 (30.8%) US\$92–\$115	2,001–3,000 (31.5%) US\$46–\$70	5,250 (US\$128)
Viet Nam – Hanoi <i>dong</i>	NA NA		150,000–200,000 (72%) US\$9.5–\$12.5		350,000 US\$22**
Viet Nam – HCMC	98%	2%	Average 466,389	Average 410,530	350,000 US\$22**

* calculated at 24 working days per month

** in state sectors

Source: List of research on child domestic labour on page 5

➤ Health status

With or without excessive working hours, children are tired from their multiple tasks and work on a 24-hour on-call basis. More than 10 per cent of child domestic workers surveyed in Hanoi said they had to get up at night, usually to provide care to an elderly person or a baby.⁹⁶ Some 24 per cent of child domestic workers in Cambodia reported that they were exhausted yet suffered from insomnia (19.6 per cent).⁹⁷ In Indonesia, 31.3 per cent of them also stated that they could not sleep and had no appetite (28.9 per cent).⁹⁸

Child domestic workers' health status is closely linked to their emotional development, which was discussed in the earlier section on violence against children.

➤ Deprived of a childhood and life aspirations

For a child, playing and socializing with other children is a crucial part of his/her development as a human being. Usually employers of child domestic workers do not favour their workers having much freedom in contacting outsiders, even with their own families. In Indonesia, around 10 per cent of the surveyed child domestic workers did not have consent from their employer to associate with friends; 15.7 per cent of them did not have any communication with their families.⁹⁹ In Thailand, child domestic workers have fewer chances to communicate and associate with friends compared to factory child workers.¹⁰⁰

The restricted movement may be a reflection of employers' dislike of their family matters being talked about among domestic workers. Employers may also fear losing their workers if they learn about a better workplace. There is also a high likelihood that the restrictions and treatment have a lot to do with employers' need to maintain a power relationship, to control, or that they have a sense of wanting to get the most for their money, even if they are paying very little or nothing at all (they pay in terms of food and shelter at the least). There may also be at play a mentality that regards housework indeed as chores and once there is someone around to do the dirty work, all dirty work is indeed the domain of the domestic worker and everyone else is above helping out. Thus, the child domestic worker has an obligation to be around at all times so that no one else has to do anything that is the work of the hired help.

Not having opportunities to rest or have a personal life and having limited interactions with outsiders, child domestic workers are challenged to develop or keep any life aspirations. In Ho Chi Minh City, 75 per cent and 82 per cent of child domestic workers aged 9–12 and 13–14, respectively, think that it is not easy for them to find a job other than household employment. When they become older, their outlook on life improves slightly; but on average, 68 per cent of them aged 9–17 recognized the difficulty in searching for alternative employment opportunities other than domestic work.¹⁰¹

In Indonesia, YKAI established a centre called *Sanggar Puri* for child domestic workers to interact and receive non-formal education and vocational training. Children there enjoy the opportunity to interact with peers and spend some time away from their workplace to learn something new. Studying at the non-formal education classes and vocational training often does not have immediate impact on their lives. However, there has to be positive mental influences: just being able to see a life beyond their daily routine and regaining a kind of childhood through playing with peers is remarkable for them.

⁹⁶ Nguyen Thi Van Anh & Le Khanh: op.cit.

⁹⁷ National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia: op.cit.

⁹⁸ University of Indonesia: op.cit.

⁹⁹ ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Foundation for Child Development: op.cit.

¹⁰¹ Institute for Economic Research Ho Chi Minh City and LIFE: op.cit.

Summary

In sum, the research data and experiences collected during the Project and presented in the previous sections confirm that child domestic workers run a high risk of experiencing human rights violation one way or the other. Some work conditions can be similar to slavery, which calls for immediate attention and action. Types of exploitation and hazards that they commonly face include:

- Working in isolation and/or being confined to the premises of the employer;
- Long working hours; open-ended and ill-defined working hours; being “on stand-by” 24 hours a day;
- No regular break times or rest days;
- Limited or no opportunities for education;
- Vulnerable to ill health due to physical and mental exhaustion, emotional trauma, etc.;
- Trafficking into domestic labour;
- Being allowed no or limited contact with outsiders and their own families; no channels to discuss or alert others to their problems; and
- Denied their rights as children to special protection and care.



Child Domestic Labour and National Laws and Policies

Child domestic workers often are referred to as “invisible” children. They are indeed “invisible” from public view due to the nature of the work they do. They are also “invisible” in the households as if the only thing that matters to employers is seeing the result of their work rather than child domestic workers as human beings.

Until recently child domestic workers were also largely invisible in national laws and policies. The issue has started to gain visibility at the national policy discussion table as a matter of great concern. Yet, child domestic workers still need more attention and “visible” protection that addresses their needs and concerns.

National Laws

In most cases, only minimum protection is given to child domestic workers by labour laws that prohibit the employment of children younger than the minimum age allowed, by an education law that requires a compulsory education for certain years and by a child protection law that allows for the universal rights of children. In some countries, young workers who are older than the minimum age but younger than 18 years old are protected by specific provisions such as prohibitions on night or holiday work or overtime. These provisions in principle could apply to child domestic workers. But they are too often silent on whether they explicitly provide protection to them.

Across the region, very few legal provisions deal specifically with child domestic workers, even when they are eligible young workers. However, there are components in existing legislation that could be used to better protect young household workers and child workers in general, and in some countries there is pioneering components of legislation that offer promise of greater protection.

➤ Viet Nam

The Viet Nam Labour Code, unlike most in other countries in the region, explicitly contains specific provisions for the protection of “house helpers”: the Labour Code “applies to trainees and apprentices, domestic ‘helps’, and the other categories of workers....” The law requires that labour contracts of such employees may either be oral or written. Remuneration, time of work, time of rest and allowances of domestic “helps” are agreed upon in the contract. It also requires that employers must respect the honour and dignity of domestic “helps” and assume responsibly for their care and treatment when they suffer from sickness and injury. The employer also must pay for travel fares and expenses for their employees to return home at the end of their service, except in cases where the domestic worker voluntarily leaves before the expiration of the contract.

➤ Thailand

There is no specific law addressing child domestic workers; however, the Labour Protection Act of 1998 has relevance. While most of its provisions are not applicable to domestic workers, there are some provisions that can be applied. Use of this law is seen as a positive step forward in recognizing domestic work as a form of employment. The law allows for three areas to benefit domestic workers, namely: wages, annual holiday and sexual harassment, including children, with an elaboration provided in Ministerial Regulations.¹⁰²

¹⁰² Amparita St. Maria: op.cit.

The law, however, fails to cover weekly or monthly holidays and other benefits and, most importantly, the minimum age for domestic work. While some child rights advocates urge better protection for child domestic workers, there are some people hesitant to pursue it. The hesitators tend to believe: i) domestic work does not require the worker to be engaged continuously in a day, ii) there is a lot of break time to rest each day, iii) the working hours are not countable/measurable,¹⁰³ and iv) very limited data is available regarding child domestic workers. Therefore, no clear understanding on how many children can benefit from such protection.

Another law that can benefit child domestic workers is the Child Protection Act, which was enacted in March 2004. Under this law, employers of child domestic workers are defined as “guardians” of the children.

➤ Philippines

In the Philippines, two provisions directly address the particular needs and issues of child domestic workers: Department Order No.4 (Section 4), which states, “Persons between 15 and 18 years of age may be allowed to engage in domestic or household service, subject in all cases to the limitations prescribed under 5 major categories of prohibited hazardous activities ... (such as the carrying of heavy loads, working in dangerous heights or for long hours, or unreasonable confinement to the employer’s premises.)” The same Department Order also requires employers of “house helpers” younger than 18 to give them opportunity to acquire an elementary education. The cost of such education is to be part of the “house helper’s” compensation, unless there is a stipulation to the contrary.

One positive development in setting up legal protection for child domestic workers is a landmark bill that the NGO Visayan Forum drafted, entitled *Batas Kasambahay*, or the “Magna Carta for Domestic Workers”. One of its highlights is a special provision for child domestic workers. The bill seeks to institutionalize better working conditions for domestic workers, to prevent child domestic labour and to protect child domestic workers from exploitation. Although the bill has not yet been enacted, Visayan Forum has managed to raise widespread awareness and support for the bill. (*For more details, see Part II: Philippines, Sowing the Seeds of Attitude Change*)

While pushing the national legislation, some positive developments at the local government level are taking place in terms of legal instruments, such as “ordinances”. Ordinances are locally developed and generate applicable rules that focus on specific issues of concern and are enforceable by the local government that enacts them. Ordinances to make domestic workers – including child domestic workers – more visible and better protected are currently in operation in various parts of the Philippines:

- Quezon City Ordinance No.1472 (2004): “An Ordinance Enjoining all Barangay Officials of Quezon City to Conduct a Massive Registration of Kasambahay and/or Domestic Workers in their Respective Barangays”
- Bacolod City Executive Order No. 02: “Implementing Voluntary Registration of Household Helpers, or Kasambahay, at the Barangay level”
- Municipality of Liloan Ordinance No. 2004-149 “An Ordinance Urging Mandatory Registration of Household Helpers, or Kasambahay, at the Barangay level within the Municipality of Liloan, Southern Leyte”

(*For more details, see Part II: Philippines, Making the Invisible Visible*)

¹⁰³ Foundation for Child Development: op.cit.

➤ Indonesia

There is no labour legislation concerning the employment of domestic workers, let alone child domestic workers. However, the somewhat recently enacted Manpower Act (No. 13/2003) provides a strong basis for the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration (MMT) to act upon. The Manpower Act includes a section for child protection and prohibits the employment and involvement of children in the worst forms of child labour, based on the definition contained in ILO Convention No. 182. Together with the National Plan of Action on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, this legislation can provide legal ground for protecting child domestic workers in hazardous or exploitative conditions.

Another legal instrument that can be used to protect child domestic workers from abuse is the law on child protection (No. 23/2002). This law provides more severe penalties to those found abusing children, in any situation regardless of whether it is in a workplace or not. Compared to the Manpower Act, this law already has been implemented and enforced. The focal point of the child protection issue is the State Ministry of Women Empowerment and specifically the Deputy for Child Protection.

Since January 2001, a new law on regional autonomy has enhanced the independence and self-initiative of provincial and district level governments. Thus, local governments have become increasingly more powerful and important players in decision and policy making at the subnational level.

Several initiatives have already been proposed at the subnational level to protect the rights of domestic workers as well as child domestic workers. For example, in Jakarta there has been a movement to amend the existing local regulation (*Perda* No. 6/1993) on "Improving the Welfare of Domestic Workers". While the original intention was good, this *Perda* focuses more on controlling recruitment agencies for local revenue purposes and does not provide protection for the rights of domestic workers, including children. It completely fails to specify domestic workers' working conditions, such as hours of work per day or a minimum wage. Thus, an amendment is being sought to protect the rights of domestic workers and child domestic workers who are older than the minimum age.

A newly approved local regulation in Jakarta (*Perda* No. 6/2004) concerning labour affairs dedicates one chapter (Chapter XI) to the prosperity of domestic workers. The first part concerns suppliers of domestic workers (Article 50) and the second part concerns employers of domestic workers (Article 51). Article 51 stipulates that the employers must enter into a work agreement in writing with domestic workers and report it to the governor. This is considered a landmark initiative of the Jakarta government. With this clause, both employers' and domestic workers' rights (including relevant provisions for children, depending on whether they are older or younger than the minimum legal working age of 15) and obligations are to be regulated. However, the details must be established by a decree made by the head of the local Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration.

In Yogyakarta and Jakarta, local NGOs have prepared a draft Provincial Regulation on domestic workers and pushed for legislation that would afford domestic workers, including children older than the minimum age, fundamental workers' rights at the provincial level. But there is strong resistance from the local government, as well as employers, to setting a minimum wage, hours of work and to providing a weekly day of rest for domestic workers.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Human Rights Watch: op.cit., p. 57

➤ Cambodia

The draft text of the Ministerial Decree (*Prakas*) on the prohibition of hazardous child labour, which was approved in April 2004, included an item specifically concerning child domestic workers. After proclaiming that “domestic work shall be considered hazardous work”, the item describes the provisions for which a child who is older than 12 can be employed as a domestic worker. However, this item was deleted from the final text of the Ministerial Decree after being reviewed by a technical sub-committee of the Labour Advisory Committee, which oversees legal instruments relevant to labour issues. The reason cited was that the unique, informal and private nature of working conditions of child domestic workers cannot be addressed along with other types of hazardous work. The other types of hazardous work are more industrial-oriented, such as deep sea and off-shore fishing, logging, tanning, etc.

The committee suggested that a separate Ministerial Decree be prepared to address the special needs and concerns of child domestic workers. This issue is expected to be reviewed as a part of a labour law review in the near future.

National Policies

Acknowledging the real situation of children engaged in domestic work, the risks involved and the magnitude of the issue, a number of governments in the region have started taking a firm stance on child domestic labour. Initiatives against the issue are reflected in various national policies and plans:

➤ Cambodia

Child domestic labour is considered hazardous and is included among the priority sectors in the National Plan of Action on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, which is under formal approval process currently. (*For more details, see the section on ILO-IPEC Action to Combat Child Domestic Labour.*)

Existing work by the Project against child domestic labour will be integrated in March 2006 into a new project entitled “Support to the Cambodian National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Time-Bound Approach” (TBP Cambodia). The TBP Cambodia covers child domestic workers as a priority target group and will focus its operation in the capital city of Phnom Penh. The TBP Cambodia aims to withdraw a total of 350 children aged 6–14 and work to prevent another 800 children aged 5–10 from various hazardous child labour situations, including domestic labour, through awareness raising and providing educational and non-educational services. Skills training will be provided to some 400 children aged 14–18 and 400 families will be assisted for improving their capacity to generate income.

➤ Indonesia

Thanks to efforts and advocacy made by civil society groups, child domestic labour is identified as one of 13 worst forms of child labour in the Presidential Decree 59/2002 that forms the basis of the National Plan of Action on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (NPA-WFCL). The NPA-WFCL has opened opportunity for the elimination of exploitation of child domestic workers. However, the recognition of the problem in the 20-year development plan did not lead to any immediate action because child domestic “helpers” were not prioritized in the first five years of the National Plan of Action. Moreover, Ministerial Decree 235/2003 that lists the types of work that are considered harmful to the safety, health or moral development of children younger than 18 fails to include domestic work. As

well, the ILO–IPEC support to the Indonesian National Plan of Action and the Development of the Time-Bound Programme for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (TBP Indonesia) does not include the issue of child domestic labour.

A recent Human Rights Watch report on child domestic workers in Indonesia, titled “*Always on Call: Abuse and Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers in Indonesia*” shines a light on the situation, saying it has not received enough attention from policy makers. The report strongly urges the Government of Indonesia to take action to protect children from abusive child domestic labour and to protect the rights of child domestic workers older than the minimum age. The three UN special rapporteurs¹⁰⁵ and 15 United States senators¹⁰⁶ echoed their genuine concern for child domestic workers in Indonesia through official letters to the Government. In addition, civil society groups and the Project partners in Indonesia have intensified their efforts to raise awareness on the issue. (*For more details, see Part II: Indonesia, Mobilizing Young Creative Minds*)

Taking the issue seriously now, the Ministry of Women Empowerment, through a series of national consultations, is bringing relevant parties together to discuss how best to provide support to child domestic workers. In a meeting with ILO representatives and the Project partners in August 2005, the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration also officially declared his intention to draft domestic worker/child domestic worker-specific legislation to protect their rights as workers.

➤ Mongolia

In December 2002, the Government approved a National Programme for the Development and Protection of Children (2002–2010). This National Programme provides an overall framework of actions to meet goals and obligations that are committed to under the international Conventions on child rights and child labour and other related Conventions that Mongolia has ratified. Eliminating the worst forms of child labour is articulated among the several goals in the National Programme.

To further operationalize the National Programme, the Government drafted a National Subprogramme on Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour. This became the basis for national consultations to prepare for a time-bound programme in Mongolia (TBP Mongolia).

The TBP Mongolia, which started in September 2005 for a period of 52 months, aims to target a total of 6,000 children for withdrawal and prevention from the worst forms of child labour through the provision of educational and non-educational services. One of the immediate objectives of the project is to implement and to document an integrated and sustainable area-based intervention model to combat the worst forms of child labour. There are six forms of child labour prioritized for interventions, including children working for other households and engaged either in herding or domestic tasks. The intervention strategies are being identified through broad-based consultations among local government agencies, employers' and workers' representatives and civil society groups, taking into consideration the specific characteristics of the country.

➤ Philippines

In the Philippines, child domestic labour is recognized as one of the worst forms of child labour and is addressed in the national time-bound programme to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. (*For more details, see the section on ILO–IPEC Action to Combat Child Domestic Labour*)

¹⁰⁵ Special Rapporteurs on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on violence against women, an official letter dated July 12, 2005

¹⁰⁶ 15 US Senators include Senator Tom Harkin, an official letter dated 11 October 2005

➤ Thailand

Although there is a high demand for child domestic workers among households of middle and upper classes in the urban areas, this sector seems not to be a priority for action in the context of the worst forms of child labour. Child domestic labour has not even been identified as a worst form in the national strategies for the time-bound programme on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.¹⁰⁷

One of the reasons apparently is that very few Thai children now work in households, thanks to the successful expansion of education access in remote areas. In recent years, children from the neighbouring countries of Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar have replaced Thai children in domestic services.¹⁰⁸ As well, there is not widespread awareness on the hazards of child domestic labour. During strategic planning meetings in 2001 and 2002, facilitated by the Foundation for Child Development and the National Council for Child and Youth Development¹⁰⁹ in different areas in Thailand and involving local relevant parties, the issue of child domestic labour was not raised as a matter of concern.

However, the proposed national plan of action for eliminating the worst forms of child labour (2004–2009),¹¹⁰ still in draft form, includes children in domestic service as a priority target. And in a 2004 national ILO–IPEC stakeholders meeting to combat human trafficking, participants cited the domestic sector as among the major vulnerable workplaces for migrant children and women, including trafficking victims.

¹⁰⁷ Foundation for Child Development: op.cit

¹⁰⁸ Ampartita S. Sta. Maria: op.cit.

¹⁰⁹ NCYD is an official umbrella NGO designated by a Cabinet Resolution for child and youth development

¹¹⁰ Prepared by the Ministry of Labour in cooperation with ILO–IPEC and Thammasat University's Department of Labour and Welfare Development



ILO-IPEC Action to Combat Child Domestic Labour

Within the ILO, programmes against the exploitative situations of child domestic workers have been implemented since 1992, primarily through IPEC activities. Guided by the UNCRC and ILO Conventions No. 29, No. 138 and No. 182, ILO-IPEC works toward the effective prevention and elimination of child domestic labour by addressing its root causes. In collaboration with other international and national organizations, ILO-IPEC conducts action research on child domestic labour and supports the efforts of governments, workers' and employers' organizations and civil society groups. Those efforts include policy advocacy, awareness raising, prevention, rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration of children found in exploitative/abusive situations. ILO-IPEC strives to raise awareness on the risks and exploitation that child domestic workers may be exposed to and to mobilize public opinion against the exploitative/abusive situations of child domestic labour in a sustaining way.

ILO/Japan/Korea Asia Meeting on Action to Combat Child Domestic Labour

Chiang Mai, Thailand, October 2002

The regional tripartite meeting in Thailand has become a cornerstone of recent ILO-IPEC efforts to combat child domestic labour. For the first time in Asia, a meeting provided an opportunity for social partners to thoroughly discuss action against child domestic labour. At the end of the three-day gathering, the 47 participants from 16 Asia-Pacific countries drafted and adopted a Framework for Follow-up Action in the region.

The framework for action (attached as Annex) articulates the various hazards and exploitation found in child domestic labour and proposes practical strategies and interventions with specific roles and contributions for governments and social partners. For instance, it suggests a set of interventions to prohibit the employment of child domestic workers younger than 15, to bring the working conditions of child domestic workers (older than the minimum age) up to an acceptable level by adopting codes of conduct for employers, to ensure child domestic workers have access to education, including facilities for non-formal education, skills training, evening and weekend schooling facilities and to prevent abuse and exploitation.

This framework has been a guideline for regional efforts against child domestic labour.

Overview of CDL projects in the region

The following lists the ILO-IPEC projects since 2001 that address the situation of child domestic workers as the sole target group or projects that include them as a target population, among others.

Project	Coverage	Budget	Period
CDWs as the sole target group:			
Global Programme to Combat Child Domestic Labour in Indonesia and the Philippines	Indonesia, Philippines	US\$377,285	August 2001–December 03
Combating Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers in Africa and Asia	Cambodia, Indonesia	US\$2,092,423*	February 2002–February 04
The Project Preventing and Eliminating Exploitative Child Domestic Work Through Education and Training in South-East and East Asia	Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam	US\$1,201,383	March 2004–February 06
CDWs as one of several target groups:			
ILO-IPEC Project Supporting the Time-Bound Programme on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the Republic of the Philippines	Philippines	US\$5,199,198	September 2002–December 2006
TBP Cambodia	Cambodia	US\$4,750,000	September 2004–December 2008
TBP Mongolia	Mongolia	US\$2.9 million	September 2005–December 2009

* The total budget covers the operation in Uganda, Zambia, Cambodia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

Time-Bound Programme Philippines

September 2002 – December 2006

The Philippines has been a leader in advocacy on the issue of child domestic labour and in taking concrete action, primarily through the NGO Visayan Forum Foundation. With ILO-IPEC support, Visayan Forum's child domestic worker, or *kasambahay*, programme has provided direct services since 1996 to young household employees, helped them to organize and has mobilized other social actors at different levels. The *kasambahay* programme has expanded to four geographical areas: Metro Manila, Batangas, Bacolod and Davao. It has consistently implemented an effective set of strategies that now form the basis of the core project outline for combating child domestic labour in the time-bound programme.

One important achievement of the Visayan Forum has been the drafting of a landmark bill, *Batas Kasambahay*, or the "Magna Carta for Domestic Workers", previously highlighted.

Another achievement has been establishing a model for providing direct services to child domestic workers, who are one of the most difficult target groups to reach. This intervention model includes provision for temporary shelter, conducting fact-finding investigations, rescuing efforts, setting up dedicated telephone help lines and providing emotional and material support and counselling.

The programme has successfully mobilized current and former child domestic workers to create their own association, *Samahan ng mga Manggagawang Pantahanan sa Pilipinas* (Association and Linkage of Domestic Workers in the Philippines, or SUMAPI). Information sharing and training on their basic rights helps child domestic workers protect themselves and their peers from exploitation. SUMAPI remains an important channel for young domestic workers to develop their social and economic skills and a forum for them to advocate for their rights as workers.

The Visayan Forum's programme is the centre of the time-bound programme strategy on child domestic labour; its current progress is detailed in the Philippine section in Part II.

Global Programme to Combat Child Domestic Labour in Indonesia and the Philippines

August 2001 – December 2003

This project has generated valuable experiences and knowledge on combating child domestic labour. In Indonesia, the project supported benchmark research on domestic workers (both adults and children) in collaboration with the University of Indonesia and the Central Bureau of Statistics. The research is the first of its kind in the country and has been a basis for policy advocacy and awareness-raising efforts. The following TCRAM CDW Project joined the country-level programming in the middle of the project and its achievement details are highlighted in the next section.

In the Philippines, the project enabled the Visayan Forum's *kasambahay* programme to mature and evolve with more social partners. The TBP Philippines has benefited from the experiences and lessons learned during this project. Through this project, IPEC partners in Indonesia visited the Philippines to study the *kasambahay* programme and the work of SUMAPI. They have since mobilized child domestic workers to form similar associations, called TERAS and OPERATA. (*For more details, please see Part II: Indonesia, Standing Up for Our Own Rights*)

TCRAM CDW¹¹¹ Project Phase I: Combating Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers in Africa and Asia

March 2002 – February 2004

The project was carried out in five countries on two continents (Uganda, Zambia, Cambodia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka). In Asia, country programmes were launched in Cambodia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka in 2002 and aimed at raising awareness, preventing young children from entering domestic work, withdrawing and rehabilitating those working under exploitative conditions and providing alternatives such as formal and non-formal education and pre-vocational training. In addition, the programme supported the development of relevant policy related to child domestic labour and strengthened the capabilities of partner organizations to sustain action to combat exploitation of child domestic workers by means of training, information sharing and networking.

¹¹¹ Technical Cooperation Resource Allocation Mechanism (TCRAM) Child Domestic Workers (CDW)

At the subregional level, 35 representatives from key government offices, workers' and employers' organizations and NGOs had the opportunity to learn from practical experiences in public and policy advocacy on child domestic labour in the Philippines in a workshop on "South East and East Asia Capacity Building Toward Sustainable Advocacy for Child Domestic Workers". This workshop is further discussed in the following section.

Significant progress was made during Phase I, including:

- Generating new data about the situation of child domestic labour in Indonesia and Cambodia. This data has been useful for policy development, public advocacy and project interventions;
- Increasing anti-child domestic labour provisions in national policy;
- Developing several model interventions for direct action and advocacy; and
- Nurturing willingness among many new partners in government and workers' and employers' organizations to take action.

Cambodia

The TCRAM CDW project in Cambodia worked to put the issue of child domestic labour into the national agenda and to mobilize social partners to take action against the exploitation of child domestic workers. Within a short timeframe, it made important progress:

Baseline data on child domestic workers was made collected and provided information on the scale of the problem, including the best available estimate of numbers in Phnom Penh, which was the primary location for child domestic work. This became the basis for future programming and policy advocacy.

More partners were mobilized through the creation of a Child Domestic Workers Task Force, hosted by the Phnom Penh Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation (MDSALVY)¹¹². Although the Task Force needed more support to build up its capabilities, especially to function as a planning and implementing team, it was a positive step in government-NGO collaboration and has potential as a platform for advocacy and action.

The child domestic labour issue was brought into policy discussions in which children actively participated. The Children's Conference on Child Domestic Labour (April 2003) produced a set of ten recommendations for the Government as well as an Action Agenda for child domestic workers. The children's recommendations provided input to the National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. With the Government moving toward ratifying ILO Convention No. 182¹¹³, discussions on the worst forms of child labour provided critical opportunities to continue policy discussions on child domestic labour and to raise awareness of the issue.

Initiatives during Phase I of the TCRAM CDW project in Cambodia:

Areas of intervention	Implementing agencies
Prevention	WDA (NGO)
Withdrawal and rehabilitation	VCAO (NGO)
Awareness raising	Children's Committee (NGO)
Research	National Institute of Statistics (GO)
Policy advocacy	Children's Committee (NGO)
Networking and social mobilization	MDSAVY (GO)

¹¹² In 2003, MDSALVY was reorganized as MDSAVY (Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation)

¹¹³ The Royal Government of Cambodia ratified ILO Convention No. 182 in 2005

Activities started in Indonesia in 2001 have focused on research (a national baseline survey of child domestic labour) and policy advocacy. The Indonesia component of the Phase I project used the baseline findings to raise awareness of child domestic labour, and direct action programmes and mini-programmes have been implemented.

An internal final evaluation by ILO-IPEC and partner agencies took place 15–22 December 2003, from which all key partners in the Government, workers' and employers' organizations, and NGOs recognized that efforts to combat child domestic labour was still at an early stage and expressed their commitment to future action.

The main achievements of the TCRAM CDW Project in Indonesia to date include an awareness-raising campaign promoting weekly rest days for domestic workers older than 15 (the minimum age) that was launched in 2002 by the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration, the State Minister of Women Empowerment, JARAK (an NGO network on child labour) and YKAI (the Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation).

As part of the campaign, Radio Republic of Indonesia (RRI) in February 2004 launched a drama series entitled "*Bunga-bunga di Atas Padas*", or "*The Flower on the Stony Ground ~ The Phenomenon of Child Domestic Workers in Indonesia*".¹¹⁴ The drama spanned more than 40 episodes and presented issues related to child domestic workers to raise awareness among the public. ILO-IPEC published a book in Bahasa Indonesia with the same title that ties in with the series; it was the first of its kind, summarizing the key findings of the baseline survey as well as describing ongoing interventions targeting child domestic labour.

Phase I of the Project also made progress in mobilizing public support for a policy that protects the rights of domestic workers, including children. In Jakarta there was a start toward amending the existing local regulation (*Perda*) No. 6 of 1993 concerning recruitment agencies for domestic workers. While the existing *Perda* aimed mainly at controlling the recruitment agencies for local revenue purposes rather than protecting the rights of adult or child domestic workers, the amendment was drafted from a human rights protection perspective. The draft has been reviewed by key players in the Government, workers' and employers' organization and NGOs.

Support has been given to the two NGOs in Greater Jakarta that provide centre-based services to child domestic workers: YKAI in Bekasi district and Rumpun Gema Perempuan in Tangerang district. They have established drop-in centres providing child domestic workers with non-formal education, skills training and recreation space outside of their workplaces. Through the drop-in centres, cases of abuse against child domestic workers have been identified and the child domestic workers have subsequently been removed from their workplace and provided with alternatives. At first, employers were reluctant to allow child domestic workers to participate in the centres' activities. But having observed changes in their sense of well-being and improvements in their job performance, more employers now are willing to let their child domestic workers visit the centres. These centres are extremely useful because they offer opportunities not just for study and learning new skills but also to interact with peers. This eases the young workers away from inward-looking and defeatist attitudes. The centres receive support in cash from the Department of Education and in kind from local communities.

A new collaborative education initiative is being explored by those same two NGOs and the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Ministry is keen to develop a non-formal education module specifically for child domestic workers. Considering the alarming numbers of child domestic workers, reaching them with education will have a significant impact on achievement of basic education targets.

¹¹⁴ The title conveys a message that, given the proper soil to grow on, child domestic workers' talents and inspirations can blossom.

Initiatives during Phase I of the TCRAM CDW project in Indonesia:

Areas of intervention	Implementing agencies
Prevention	-
Withdrawal and rehabilitation	YKAI (NGO), Rumpun Gema Perempuan (NGO)
Awareness raising	Radio Republic of Indonesia (GO), Aisyiyah Muhammadiyah (faith-based organization), Fatayat Nahdlatul Ulama (faith-based organization), YKAI (NGO) through publication of a CDW book
Research	---
Policy advocacy	KOWANI (Indonesian Women's Congress, NGO), independent consultants and JARAK (GO) for <i>Perda</i> Initiative
Networking and social mobilization	JARAK (NGO)

South-East Asia Capacity Building Toward Sustainable Advocacy for Child Domestic Workers

Manila, October 2003

A training workshop on “South-East Asia Capacity Building Toward Sustainable Advocacy for Child Domestic Workers” was another TCRAM CDW project-supported initiative during Phase I. The workshop, organized by the Visayan Forum Foundation, Anti-Slavery International and Global March Against Child Labour, aimed to bring together decision makers and key players for concrete policy changes on the issue of child domestic labour in south-east Asia. Some 35 participants from eight countries (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam) took part in the workshop.

Through this Manila training workshop, the participants initiated thinking on how to plan advocacy on child domestic labour in their respective countries. After the workshop, they are expected to come up with national and regional plans in the areas of public and private advocacy; legislative and policy advocacy; an education agenda and active support to actions against exploitation of child domestic workers. To achieve those goals, the participants requested a tool to plan and implement an effective advocacy action. Phase II of the project will address this concern and prepare an anti-child domestic labour advocacy training manual through regional consultation.

The Project

TCRAM CDW Project Phase II: Preventing and Eliminating Exploitative Child Domestic Work Through Education and Training in South-East and East Asia (RAS/04/60P/NET)

March 2004 – February 2006

Building on existing initiatives supported under Phase I, ILO–IPEC in March 2004 launched another two-year programme in south-east and east Asia, with financial support from the Netherlands. The programme focuses on: i) promoting change in national policies with a view to creating an enabling environment for the progressive elimination of exploitation of child domestic workers as part of national action to combat child labour and ii) supporting direct interventions to child domestic workers.

The Project has put education at the centre of its strategy and focuses on providing access to educational opportunities (formal and non-formal) to targeted child domestic workers' and preventing others from falling into child labour situations by enhancing community support and improving school accessibility. It highlights the important link between trafficking and child domestic labour in its programme so that the prevention activities also benefit child domestic workers and children at risk of domestic labour.

During Phase II, comprehensive intervention packages are being implemented in Indonesia and Cambodia as a continuation of the work under Phase I. At least 2,270 child domestic workers in these countries will benefit from direct action. In other countries, the Project supports selected activities such as research and advocacy initiatives. Currently, three research studies on child domestic labour are ongoing in Mongolia (completed), Lao PDR and Viet Nam. For child domestic labour advocacy, the Project supported the production of an advocacy training manual, which was published in January 2006.

Details of the country programme are discussed in Part II.

World Day Against Child Labour

12 June 2004

The ILO marked the third World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL) with a special focus on child domestic labour. This issue was chosen to be the main theme in 2004 to intensify the awareness-raising efforts globally on children whose work had been undervalued and whose working conditions and life situations had been long ignored. All countries in the subregion (Cambodia, China (Yunnan province), Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam) observed the day with a series of activities. The Project supported those activities and highlighted the important link between education and child domestic labour. Cambodia and Thailand used a slogan of the awareness-raising campaign, "For Every Child: Schoolwork Before Housework. Stop the Worst Forms of Child Domestic Labour."

In Viet Nam, an advocacy meeting with 600 participants was organized on this day at the Opera House in Ho Chi Minh City by the local branch of the Viet Nam Women's Union to raise awareness on child labour situations in the country, with a special focus on child domestic labour. In Mongolia, around 1,000 people participated in a public run in Ulaanbaatar. In Cambodia, 1,200 children marched on the streets of Phnom Penh. A televised roundtable discussion also took place, involving key ministries and NGOs that work on the issue of child domestic labour.

Given the nature of children engaged in domestic work in private households and thus hidden from the public eye and the common regard of child domestic workers as “helpers” or as family members (even if there are elements of exploitation and abuse), the World Day Against Child Labour observation with the child domestic labour theme was a significant challenge to public perceptions and attempt to increase public awareness on the rights of the child domestic workers.

The types of activities and the target audience varied from country to country, based on the general understanding of child domestic labour. In some countries, such as China, Mongolia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam, it was one of the first opportunities to introduce child domestic labour to a general public as one form of child labour. Thus, questions asked in Lao PDR focused more on the concept and problems. The awareness-raising activities inspired public interest for information and knowledge on child domestic labour.

In Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand, where the concept of child domestic labour was previously introduced, the focus of the WDAFL debate was on treatment and comparisons between child domestic labour and other types of the worst forms of child labour. In Indonesia, the book “The Flowers on the Stony Ground: The Phenomenon of Child Domestic Workers in Indonesia” was launched and attracted media attention. In Cambodia, Prime Minister Hun Sen presided over the event and expressed his Government’s commitment to work against the exploitation of child domestic workers. Awareness-raising activities now could go one step further from general awareness raising to policy advocacy, using the information and data acquired from recent studies.

Subregional Training Workshop on CDL Research Methodology

Bangkok, October 2004

A subregional workshop on child domestic labour research methodology was an effective initiative to build up the knowledge base in the region, which will help create an enabling environment to address the issue. The workshop helped participants improve their skills in conducting research on a hidden target group such as child domestic workers and thus benefit future research planned in Mongolia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. Thirty-six researchers, government officials and IPEC colleagues from eight south-east and east Asian countries (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam) and three south Asia countries (India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) participated in the workshop.

The training programme included an overview of data collection methods, mainstreaming gender into research design, country presentations on data collection methods (Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines and Thailand), ethical considerations when interviewing children, legal and occupational safety and health (OSH) aspects of child domestic labour, design of survey questionnaires, tabulating plans and data processing issues and developing terms of reference (TOR) to initiate research. The presentations also provided information on specifics of the country situations and the methodology and major findings of the research undertaken in each.

Participants commented that the discussions and experiences shared helped improve their understanding on the differences of various research methodologies; they cited the presentations on gender and standards issues, TOR development, ethical considerations, data collection methods and development of survey instruments as very useful sessions. However, the participants also expressed a need to increase their skills in research analysis. One of the workshop organizers noted that often data was analysed insufficiently or poorly, despite the abundance of collected data. There was agreement that in the future, ILO-IPEC projects and research institutions need to be provided with comprehensive guidelines on operational definitions, core questionnaires and essential elements for general analysis, for gender analysis and for OSH analysis as well as recommendations for overcoming difficulties and constraints often encountered during research on the worst forms of child labour.

Under the Project, three research studies on child domestic labour were initiated: in Lao PDR, Mongolia and Viet Nam. The subregional workshop was a direct input to the design of those studies.

**Validation Workshop Cum Training of Trainers
for the Advocacy Training Manual on Child Domestic Workers**

Jakarta, September 2005

An idea to prepare a training manual for advocacy on child domestic labour emerged during the 2003 training workshop in Manila previously highlighted in this section. The eventual manual was designed to help practitioners and policy makers develop concrete national and regional advocacy plans on child domestic labour in their respective countries, which was a need identified during that 2003 workshop. The training manual was prepared as a teaching tool and a practical training guide that combines both theoretical aspects of advocacy and specific features of the child domestic labour issue. It reflects contributions from Child Workers in Asia and its Task Force on Child Domestic Work, Visayan Forum Foundation, Anti-Slavery International (ASI), University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights Programme (UP CIDS PST) and ILO-IPEC.

The UP CIDS PST and Visayan Forum, in consultation with CWA, ASI and ILO-IPEC, prepared the first draft, which was then field tested in the Philippines. The revised version was validated in this workshop, which also served as a training of trainers. Around 40 participants from 11 countries, including India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, took part in the workshop to test the training manual and provided valuable comments toward improving its quality. The training manual's design was based on the experiences in south-east and east Asia, yet, it can be a valuable resource for advocates in other regions.

The training manual was published in January 2006 and is available via the Child Workers in Asia and Visayan Forum websites.



Regional Response to Child Domestic Labour

Regional cooperation for information sharing and mutual reinforcement to combat child domestic labour has been very active. Child Workers in Asia and its regional Task Force on Child Domestic Work¹¹⁵ are the main vehicles for such active regional cooperation. ILO-IPEC has been supporting the regional cooperation and working closely with the Task Force to ensure that the action against exploitation of child domestic workers sustains.

Child Workers in Asia (CWA)

CWA is a regional network of NGOs working on child labour issues in Asia. Established in 1985, CWA now brings together more than 70 groups/organizations from 14 countries in south Asia and south-east Asia. CWA has been providing a venue for NGOs to interact and exchange their experiences and knowledge for further action against child labour.

CWA has been providing focused interventions for child domestic workers through its regional task force. Also, it has been maximizing existing resources to advocate the issue of child domestic labour. CWA provides a portal to resources available on the problem by providing a resource centre through its website: www.cwa.tnet.co.th.

CWA also created a special edition newsletter on child domestic labour (Volume 20, Numbers ½, January – April 2004), dedicated to “Making the Invisible Visible: Advocacy for Child Domestic Workers.” The newsletter, inspired by the Manila workshop in 2003, serves as a resource book for advocacy. ILO-IPEC supported its preparation and translation into three local languages (Khmer, Thai and Indonesian).

CWA also has taken a leading role in preparing a training manual for advocates on the rights of child domestic workers. The training manual, validated at the regional training workshop in Indonesia, will be a resource book for its members and others to advocate the issue of child domestic labour throughout Asia.

CWA Task Force on Child Domestic Work

Formed in 1997, this task force of CWA partners entails 17 organizations from south and south-east Asia. While Visayan Forum Foundation remains its convenor, each member organization serves as the focal point for each country. Members work together by sharing experiences and expertise in contributing to national efforts for child domestic workers. Some task force members also are directly organizing child domestic workers in their own countries.

Promoting child participation, facilitating cooperation among NGOs and advancing the necessary collaboration with regional and international initiatives are common elements in the programmes designed by the task force. It also has taken a leading role, together with CWA, in preparing the child domestic labour advocacy training manual.

For the past few years, the Task Force has organized a regional consultation and has been instrumental in setting up field exchange programmes across south and south-east Asia.

¹¹⁵ *Supra* footnote 12

During its Third Regional Consultation on Child Domestic Workers (in Jakarta, September 2005), the Task Force set a two-year agenda aimed at building up the capabilities of its members and partners, strengthening legislative policy advocacy and general public advocacy, generating attention and action to raise awareness of the connection between child domestic work and trafficking, intermediating research actions, ensuring child participation and developing strong alliances at all levels.

The regional consultation was followed by a third field exchange programme (in the Philippines in November 2005), which involved around 30 practitioners, mainly from south-east and east Asia, to expand their understanding of the issues and strategies relating to sustaining interventions for child domestic workers.

The Task Force is currently preparing for the lobby of an international convention on domestic workers to set up action and minimum standards for the sector.

Task Force on Child Domestic Work (TFCDW)

Priorities for the next two years

Capacity building

- Improve the quality and scope of services by updating the documentation of the impact of current direct services, as continuing input to the TFCDW
- Identify national-level follow-up training after all major activities of TFCDW
- Expand work with enforcement agencies, employers groups, bilateral agencies

Legislative policy advocacy and general public advocacy

- Lobby for new national laws, as well as local ordinances, to follow-up the implementing of ILO Convention No. 182
- Follow public interest litigation for south Asia
- Study existing implementation mechanisms in countries with “new laws”
- Work with national and regional media
- Encourage more films on child domestic worker
- Communicate to all members on lobbying agenda at UN agencies

Link CDW issue to trafficking

- Explore how partners in subregions can link services, training and advocacy as a comprehensive response across source, transit and destination areas (such as Nepal to India; Mekong area)
- Incorporate child domestic worker issues in current bonded child labour research

Intermediate research actions (in addition to immediate recommendations)

- Mobilize resources to translate the child domestic worker advocacy manual
- Create a national database and monitoring system for child domestic workers
- Disseminate baseline survey data and children’s perceptions
- Clarify child domestic worker issues and link them to the issue of violence

Child participation

- Enhance participation processes for child domestic workers in existing clubs
- Document, translate as well as disseminate drama and radio campaigns that explore how child domestic workers engage in the part of adult domestic worker movement.

Resource mobilization

- Set up Task Force activities at the national level
- Refer partners wanting to set up activities related to CWA goals

Provided by Roland Pacis, Visayan Forum Foundation

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Anti-Slavery International

Since 1995, Anti-Slavery International (ASI), a UK-based international NGO, has worked closely with local NGO partners in Africa, Latin America and Asia on raising the profile of child domestic labour. It has done this by developing practical tools based on good practices for use by small- and medium-scale NGOs, community-based organizations and others to plan, design, undertake and evaluate research, advocacy and programme interventions on the issue.

Anti-Slavery International's activities in Asia on the issue of child domestic labour have been developed and implemented in cooperation with the Philippine-based Visayan Forum Foundation and other members of the CWA Task Force on Child Domestic Work. In the Philippines, collaboration has focused on pushing for the passage of the *Batas Kasambahay* (Magna Carta of Domestic Workers). In addition to preparing good practice and methodological tools, Anti-Slavery International has, through its partners in south-east and south Asia, facilitated information sharing and capacity building in child domestic labour research, advocacy and programme interventions (for example, through practitioners' meetings in 1996, 2001, 2004 and through regional field exchanges in 2002 and 2005); undertaken research (for example in Chennai, India in 1999); and consulted with current and former child domestic workers on the kinds of services that would best protect them from abuse and exploitation (India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines in 2004).

Anti-Slavery International's handbooks, *Child Domestic Workers: A Handbook for Research and Action*, *Child Domestic Workers: Finding a Voice* and *Child Domestic Workers: A Handbook on Good Practice In Programme Interventions*, can be downloaded from www.antislavery.org.

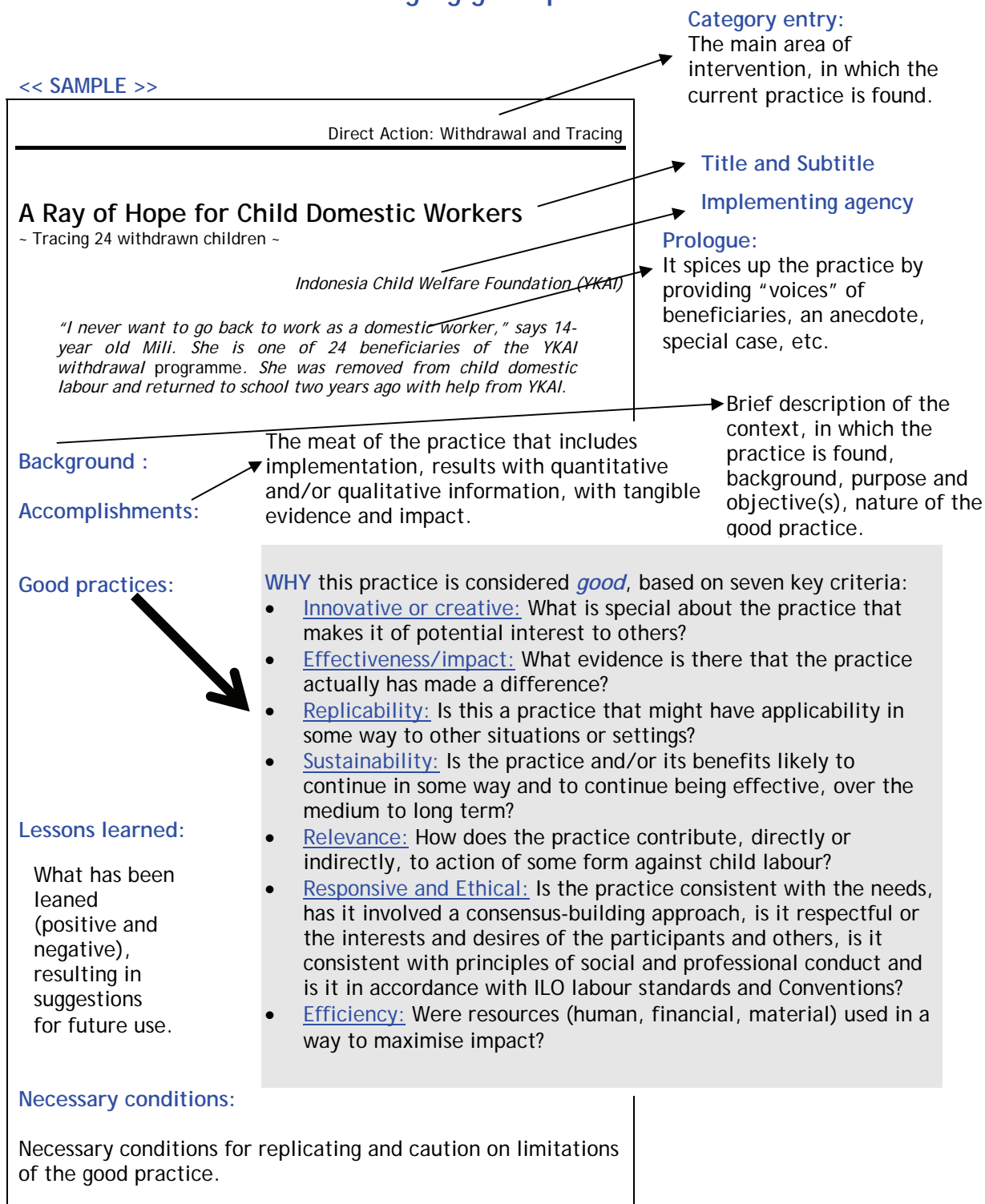
PART II

Emerging Good Practice to Combat Child Domestic Labour in South-east and East Asia

Part II presents examples of emerging good practices (EGPs) to combat child domestic labour in Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. The ILO–IPEC guideline of good practice was used to select and format these practices.

Each of the three country sections starts with an overview of the country operation and actions to combat child domestic labour, followed by details of each emerging good practice presented in the following formula:

HOW TO READ ... Each emerging good practice





Cambodia

Country Programme Overview

Child domestic labour in Cambodia has been a focus of ILO-IPEC programmatic concerns since 2002. Entitled “Preventing and Eliminating Exploitative Child Domestic Work Through Education and Training in Cambodia”, the overarching project has worked with a variety of partners in key child domestic worker-sending (Prey Veng province) and receiving (Phnom Penh) areas of the country. The ILO-IPEC project is the only integrated programme to be found in Cambodia targeting child domestic labour.

The basic project framework entails two interconnected strategies: i) to create an enabling environment for sustainable actions on child domestic labour (such as research, policy change, social mobilization and legal reform) and ii) to assist child domestic workers through direct interventions.

Developing an understanding of the child domestic labour situation in Cambodia has been a crucial prerequisite to the successful implementation of other actions. In 2003, the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) conducted a detailed child domestic worker survey in Phnom Penh – Cambodia’s capital city – and estimated that there were some 27,950 child domestic workers working there. Since its completion in Khmer and English, this report has been disseminated widely and has been used as the basis for decisions on with whom and where to target actions.

Awareness raising and advocacy to change attitudes toward child domestic labour has been a big feature of the project, both by government and NGO partners at the national and provincial levels, as well as in many communities. This has contributed to a number of important policy initiatives. For example, in 2003 a highly successful National Children’s Conference on Child Domestic Labour, organized by the Children’s Committee (a Cambodian youth volunteer organization) with high-level government support, was instrumental in getting the child domestic labour issue into the National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Because of that effort, child domestic labour is now recognized as a priority for action under ILO-IPEC’s time-bound programme, entitled “Support to the Cambodian National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Time Bound Approach (TBP Cambodia)”.

The strengthening of municipal, provincial and local structures that can protect child domestic workers and prevent child domestic labour through social mobilization and capacity building has been a key focus of ILO-IPEC activities. For example, the Municipal Department for Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MDSAVY) coordinates a city-wide task force to discuss policy issues and to take action in individual cases. This task force is connected to district child protection networks in all seven districts of Phnom Penh.

The Non-Formal Education Department (NFED) of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is developing a non-formal curriculum for child domestic workers, based on a successful curriculum for working and out-of-school children. This action also supports the Education for All initiative.

Trade unions have been mobilized to build an understanding of the child domestic labour issue among their members and, through the actions of the Inter-Union Committee on Child Labour (UCCL), are institutionalizing the need for action on child domestic labour by developing a confederation-wide policy on the issue.

In terms of direct assistance, identifying child domestic workers and helping them attend school or non-formal education has been critical. The Women Development Association (WDA), the Provincial Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (PDSAVY) and the Vulnerable Children's Assistance Organization (VCAO) have all been involved in these efforts, which are undertaken as part of their endeavours to strengthen the capacity of local communities to prevent child domestic labour and protect child domestic workers.

The VCAO and the WDA have developed vocational training schemes (both apprenticeships and centre-based) for child domestic workers who, because of their age or other reasons, are unable to go back to school. The aim is to enable them to move on to more stable and sustainable employment.

The following provides a summary of the Cambodia programme:

Areas of interventions	Implementing agencies
Prevention	PDSAVY, WDA, VCAO
Withdrawal & rehabilitation	MDSAVY, VCAO
Awareness raising	Children's Committee, MDSAVY, VCAO, WDA, UCCL
Research	National Institute of Statistics
Advocacy	Children's Committee, UCCL
Networking/social mobilization	MDSAVY, PDSAVY, UCCL
Non-formal Education (NFE) curriculum development	NFED

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Cambodian local terms and acronyms

CC	Children's Committee
CPN	District Child Protection Network
MSALVY (before 2003)	Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational and Skills Training and Youth rehabilitation
In 2003, MSALVY was split into two ministries:	
MSAVY (since 2003)	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth rehabilitation
MLVT (since 2003)	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training
MDSAVY	Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth rehabilitation (for Phnom Penh)
NFED	Non-Formal Education Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
PACT	Project Advisory Committee of Trade Unions Against Child Labour
PDSAVY	Provincial Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth rehabilitation (outside Phnom Penh)
<i>Prakas</i>	An administrative order – a formal instruction to organs of the State, such as ministries and municipal/provincial departments, which can be at national or local levels
UCCL	Inter-Union Committee on Child Labour
VCAO	Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization
WDA	Women Development Association

Explanatory note: Administrative structures in Cambodia

National level	
<u>For the Municipality of Phnom Penh</u>	<u>For places outside Phnom Penh</u>
Municipality	Province (5–10 districts)
Khan	District (5–10 communes)
Sangkat	Commune (approx. 10 villages)
Village	Village (100–200 families)
Group	Group (10–50 families)

Spinning a Protective Web for CDWs

~ Integrated mechanisms for protecting and preventing children from CDW exploitation ~

*Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MDSAVY) –
(formerly the Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational
and Skills Training and Youth Rehabilitation)*

A young orphan boy went to live with his grandparents and suffered 11 years of abuse and beatings as a domestic worker in their house. In 2004 a neighbour reported the situation to the MDSAVY when the boy nearly died. The MDSAVY's authority helped to intervene. They went with the local authorities to negotiate with the grandparents, who said they would hand over the boy in exchange for 3 million riels. When told that they could be subject to police action, the couple said they did not care because they were old and would die soon anyway. The MDSAVY used a permit for temporary withdrawal and took the boy to the commune office for three days to give the grandparents time to think. The boy now lives with a foster family and spends his days in school. While the issue of children working for relatives, especially when not paid, remains debatable in terms of whether they are considered child domestic workers, this example illustrates the collaboration by a local government authority and the community to protect a working child's best interest.

Background

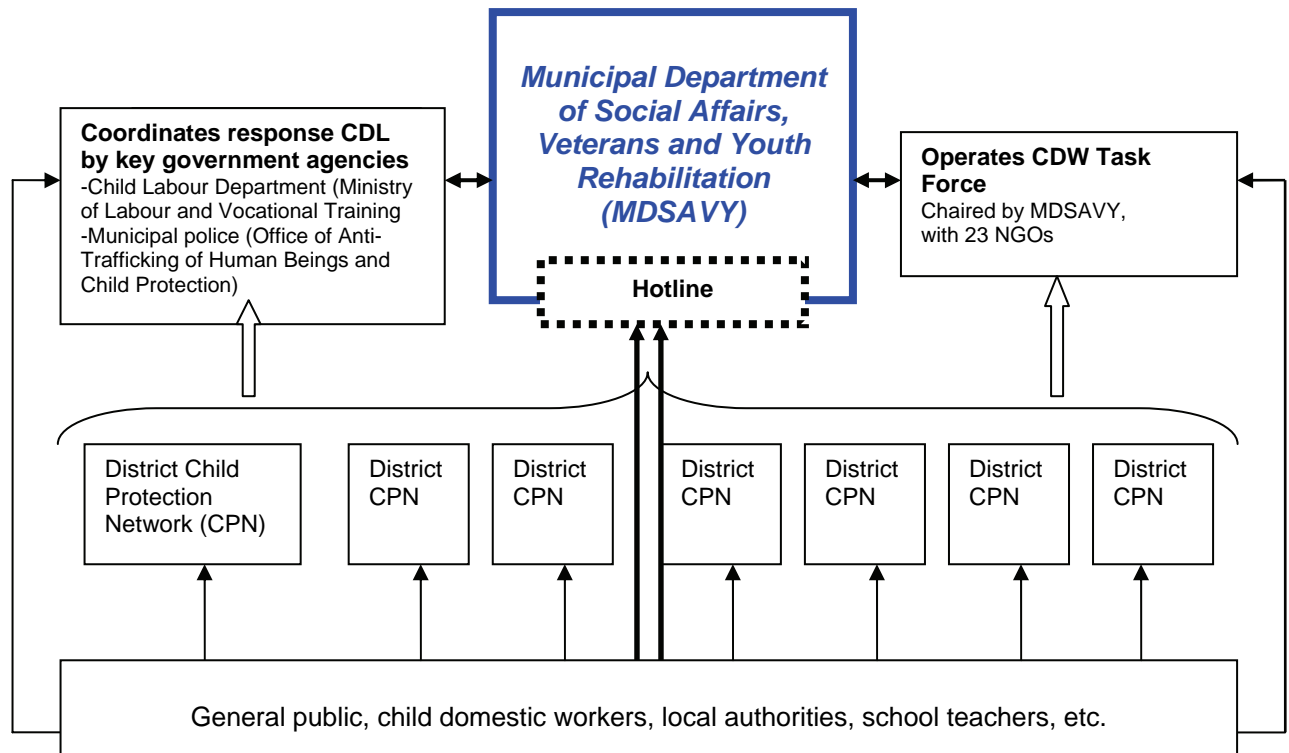
A variety of mechanisms for the protection of child domestic workers in Phnom Penh have been developed and existing mechanisms have been utilized by the **Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation** – the government department charged with protecting children in the capital city. Among them, it has created a network of relevant government agencies and NGOs to ensure comprehensive and coordinated efforts – a kind of protective web for child domestic workers. In terms of direct assistance, the MDSAVY has focused on community-based mechanisms: operating a telephone reporting hotline, conducting interventions and removing children from abusive situations or those at risk. These actions have been complemented by the strengthening of the network's capacity through training.

The **Child Domestic Workers Task Force** is a mechanism to facilitate and coordinate efforts to combat the exploitation of child domestic workers in Phnom Penh. It is also a mechanism for government and non-government coordination. The MDSAVY leads the Task Force, which includes 23 child-centred NGOs. It liaises closely with the Office of Anti-Trafficking of Human Beings and Child Protection of the municipal police as well as with officials from the Child Labour Department of the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training.

Child Protection Networks function at the district level in all seven districts in Phnom Penh; they exist to protect children in abusive and/or exploitative situations – including child domestic workers – by removing them from danger and putting them in a safe place.

The **telephone hotline** was established in Phnom Penh to assist child domestic workers as well as other abused and exploited child workers.

A Protective Web for Child Domestic Workers in Phnom Penh



Accomplishments

The fundamental achievement of the MDSAVY has been its ability to develop structured, sustainable and interconnected mechanisms for protecting child domestic workers at district and city-wide levels in Phnom Penh. This includes the use of Child Protection Networks. The strength of its achievements is due to the close collaboration it nurtured between government agencies and non-government service providers at a number of levels. Recent municipal orders (known as *Prakas*) from the municipal governor to municipal and district units of the MDSAVY have reinforced the cooperation, with the MDSAVY acting as the glue holding the collaboration together.

➤ Child Domestic Workers Task Force

The Child Domestic Workers Task Force currently consists of the MDSAVY and 23 NGOs and meets every two months to share information on child domestic workers and to discuss policy issues. In addition, Task Force members discuss individual interventions and possible service improvements. A key objective is to mainstream child domestic labour issues into the programmes and policies of all of its members. In two concrete examples of the collaboration resulting from the Task Force, members undertook a study tour to exchange experiences on child domestic worker interventions. A cooperation strategy to protect child domestic workers has been developed and is being implemented.

The Task Force initially created a strategy of cooperation to guide its activities for protecting child domestic workers and also created a working group dedicated to intervening in "special cases". For example, a social worker from FRIENDS, an NGO Task Force member, reported that a former child domestic worker who was receiving skills training in their centre had been approached by her mother in the hopes of "re-selling" the girl. Through the Task Force working group, FRIENDS could involve the MDSAVY to obtain

forging an agreement with the mother not to sell her daughter again. The former child domestic worker stayed on at the centre to finish her course.

The Task Force works particularly well for a number of reasons: First, there is a clearly stated common goal to “help children”. Having a specified goal drives the focus of activities. Second, all Task Force members participated in training workshops to ensure that they each fully understand the issue. Third, the Task Force is recognized as a platform for all members, not just the MDSAVY, which requires and encourages active participation from members according to their strengths. It is the combined expertise, knowledge and different experiences of each member that makes the Task Force work so well. Each recognizes that they cannot provide all the required services to effectively assist child domestic workers but that together they can; thus, there is true effectiveness in numbers.

Having a statutory body such as the MDSAVY as steward of the Task Force is a fourth reason for its success. Its influence opens doors. For example, to intervene to protect individual child domestic workers, government permission is needed. The municipal governor in May 2004 provided this in issuing a municipality permit to the MDSAVY so that it can intervene directly to help children in crisis situations. Although it does not give general access to private homes, it allows the MDSAVY to request a warrant from the local authority. This permit is a clear demonstration of commitment at the municipal level to combat child domestic labour.

The Task Force has developed advocacy materials, including commercials for use in cinemas (for more details, see *Speaking Up for CDWs*), posters and a public campaign about the consequences of child domestic labour.

The Task Force also developed a “referral book” that contains information about the Task Force, the Child Protection Networks, other available services and hotline details and is distributed to relevant agencies through municipal-level workshops.

➤ District Child Protection Networks (CPNs)

The Task Force collaborates closely with related bodies and mechanisms, especially the seven district Child Protection Networks (which cover all of Phnom Penh). The Task Force is represented in each of the networks through the deputy governors in each district. This formal link makes it easier to share information and to develop coordinated responses to arising situations.

CPNs can act quickly and decisively to protect children largely because of their structure: They consist of active high-level representatives from the district offices of MDSAVY and the Departments of Education and Women’s Affairs as well as local community leaders and the police. The high-level cooperation, in turn, enhances collaboration among the social workers, the police, school officials and other frontline workers charged with assisting children in difficult situations. The CPNs thus are a bridge between the municipal authorities and the communes and involve key statutory authorities required to take action. Regular meetings ensure the sharing of information and experiences.

District CPNs are a vital link in the chain of protective mechanisms; in collaboration with NGOs, they are the eyes and ears to detect abuse and exploitation of children in their communities, monitor at-risk children and link the needs of targeted children with available government and non-government services, including health care support and local opportunities for schooling and/or vocational training.

Using the training manual developed by the MDSAVY, trainers within the CPN have been trained in the seven districts. The manual is based on the UNCRC as well as ILO Conventions No.138 and No. 182. So far, the trainers have sensitized 1,540 people in 48 one-day district and commune workshops on issues related to child domestic labour, with input from NGOs and others, including children and employers invited to talk of their experiences.

During these workshops, various eye-opening issues and views surfaced – some participants admitted they thought that beating and what constitutes verbal abuse of children are normal. Many believed that domestic work provided children with a valuable experience. In response, trainers referred to the UNCRC to emphasize the rights of children. As a result of the workshops, MDSAVY has become a resource for reporting cases.

To remain proactive on the issue of child domestic labour, each CPN has set itself monthly assistance targets: They must identify at least one child domestic worker requiring removal from their workplace, improve the working conditions of two child domestic workers and prevent two children from entering child domestic labour.

➤ Hotline

The MDSAVY established the hotline as a mechanism for reporting cases and for providing information to concerned individuals. Disseminating information about the service also has helped to deliver key advocacy messages – that the Government is concerned about the plight of child domestic workers and that there is someone who can help. The mobile phone numbers, which staff within the office of the Chief of the Child Welfare Bureau of MDSAVY operate, are disseminated to district CPNs, teachers, local authorities, NGOs, school students and child domestic workers in various fun forms: laminated calendar cards (see photo) and key rings, for instance. Although other NGOs operate hotlines in Phnom Penh, the MDSAVY has the authority to act quickly and decisively to calls.



A Laminated card containing MDSAVY's hotline details and other contact numbers on one side and a calendar on the reverse side

The Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization also has produced laminated cards with the MDSAVY's hotline details and other contact numbers. Their work in communities complements the MDSAVY activities (for more details, see *Community Care*).

More than 100 hotline calls were received and responded to between October 2004 and October 2005. This is three times as many as received in the previous two years, reflecting a greater level of awareness and concern about child domestic labour.

People calling the hotline are required to provide as much information as possible about a particular situation and the child concerned. In cases where urgent intervention is required, the information is referred to the relevant district CPN for follow-up, including immediate investigation by the municipal police. A number of children have been removed from abusive situations as a result of this service and court action has been taken in two cases.

Good practices

The *effectiveness* of the web of protection for child domestic workers in Phnom Penh is in large part due to the institutional commitment of MDSAVY and the individual commitment of key staff to protecting child domestic workers. The commitment of other branches of government, such as the municipal governor, has been instrumental in allowing MDSAVY to protect child domestic workers effectively.

Regular communication and a shared sense of purpose and ownership of the Task Force has created trust between government and non-government partners, enabling effective coordination to take place. The complementary skills of the different partners mean that

action is taken *efficiently* and without duplication of efforts. Also, MDSAVY has maximized the use of existing structures and has provided intensive capacity-building training.

The leadership of the Task Force and of the district Community Protection Networks by a government body with the commitment and authority to act means that action can be taken quickly and decisively, which *directly benefits child domestic workers*.

The actions are *sustainable* as a result of MDSAVY's efforts to train key government and non-government partners (such as the police and other district officials), staff and a large number of other relevant persons.

Lessons learned

- Having the authority to take action on child domestic labour that is provided by the municipality permit has been a crucial element in giving MDSAVY the “teeth” to take quick and decisive action.
- Developing trust between government and non-government partners enables coordination to run smoothly, efficiently and without duplication of efforts.
- MDSAVY officials think the protective web in Phnom Penh can be strengthened further by extending the Community Protection Networks to the commune level. This, they believe, will result in more reporting of abuse/exploitation of child domestic workers.
- The MDSAVY is also keen to encourage the development of more child-to-child self-help and mutual-help groups within communities that, among other benefits for child domestic workers, will help the department to reach and assist more children in need.

Necessary conditions

- The institutional commitment of a government body with the authority to take action and the dedication of key individual staff members makes an incredible difference in what can be done most effectively and quickly to protect child domestic workers.
- Good coordination between government and non-government partners maximizes their efforts and reduces duplication. Creating an environment of trust encourages better communication and coordination, which has been shown in Cambodia to have a direct benefit to child domestic workers.

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Community Care

~ Building the capacity of local communities to prevent child domestic labour ~

*Provincial Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (PDSAVY),
Women Development Association (WDA),
Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization (VCAO)*

Background

Two of the three initiatives in this section (by WDA and VCAO) describe work that is being undertaken directly with communities to prevent child domestic labour (one in Prey Veng province and one in Phnom Penh). While the PDSAVY does not work directly with local communities, its actions have been significant in enabling community efforts in Prey Veng province to succeed.

The Prey Veng¹¹⁶ **Provincial Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation** has established Child Protection Networks in all its 12 districts and a Provincial Child Rights Protection Committee with high-level representation from provincial officials that functions to: oversee data gathering about the child domestic labour situation by the district CPNs; rescue and shelter children from abusive labour and to reintegrate them; and encourage and coordinate efforts to protect children in the province. The PDSAVY offers awareness-raising training workshops on child domestic labour and child trafficking at the provincial level and in communes.

Also in the province, the **Women Development Association** has been working with existing local structures – including the local Child Protection Networks, which consist of Commune Councils (involving the commune chief, deputy chief and clerk), Village Development Committees, the Village Women’s Unit, the village chief and the local director of schools – to build awareness of the impact of child domestic labour and other worst forms of child labour. Their work has strengthened the capacity of local authorities to act.

In Phnom Penh, the **Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization** approach has been to establish Village Safety Nets (VSNs) to mobilize all key authority figures and relevant parties at the village level to prevent child domestic labour and protect child domestic workers from exploitation and abuse. Having a VSN creates a “safe village” where the authorities are aware of and monitor the child domestic labour situation, parents act to protect their children, children are given information and other tools to protect themselves and others, and local leaders and respected persons – such as teachers, doctors and the police – are primed to take action.

¹¹⁶ Prey Veng province is the sixth largest CDW-sending area in Cambodia and is a province prone to child trafficking – for domestic work as well as other forms of child labour.

Accomplishments

➤ Creating an enabling environment

By establishing a provincial Child Rights Protection Committee and corresponding structures at the district level in the 12 districts of Prey Veng – as well as in undertaking awareness-raising training workshops in communes – the PDSAVY has created an environment that is more keenly aware of child domestic labour issues and more open to taking action.

The Provincial Workshop on Awareness Raising, Protection and Prevention of the Worst Forms of Child Domestic Labour was as important for increasing an understanding of the issues among officials as the publicity it generated. The provincial governor presided, which gave the workshop added legitimacy in the eyes of local officials and the media.

The PDSAVY has organized similar workshops in four communes – identified through its research as locations requiring particular attention. These workshops have been the catalyst to further actions to strengthen the ability of local leaders, school teachers, parents and children to work collaboratively to identify at-risk children and to prevent them from entering potentially abusive situations.

Village social work volunteers have become focal points in their communities in coordinating actions on child domestic labour. The head of the district level office of the PDSAVY manages the volunteers, giving advice and encouragement.

In targeted communes and villages, the PDSAVY encourages parents or guardians through the local volunteers or through school directors and teachers to pledge, in a written statement, that they will send their children to school or to courses in the PDSAVY's vocational training centre.

➤ Strengthening local structures and authorities to act on CDL

A number of local administrative structures and personnel exist at commune and village levels in Cambodia. These include the Commune Councils, Village Development Committees, Child Rights Protection Networks, Village Women Units, village chiefs and local school directors. Each plays an important role in the communities they serve. In Prey Veng province, the WDA works with these local structures and persons to develop their capacities in preventing child domestic labour.

The first step the WDA has taken is to increase the understanding of the issue as well as other worst forms of child labour among the local leaders and officials. As a result of opening their eyes, the WDA has convinced the local leaders to include child domestic workers as a priority group in village and commune development planning. Because planning at this level is done collaboratively, incorporating the child domestic labour issue provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the issues and makes acting to combat child domestic labour a priority.

Workshops involving local leaders have been an effective method for imparting information on laws and the situation of children and for obtaining commitment from the participants to take action by signing up to a declaration to protect those vulnerable to child domestic labour in their communities.

The WDA conducts regular meetings with influential local officials to identify families vulnerable to sending a child into domestic work or into a worst form of child labour. They then work with a targeted family to find alternatives. This may include involving the at-risk children in one of the WDA vocational training programmes or working with local schools to prevent a child from dropping out. As the monitoring mechanism becomes more established, local leaders initiate meetings and take decisions about what action is required and who will follow up.

➤ Village “Safety Net” programmes

According to VCAO, which has pioneered this approach, the key to building an effective Village Safety Net for child domestic workers is to get those people who have the potential to affect their lives – for better or for worse – to understand the problems associated with child domestic labour and to understand what they can do to help children.

VCAO has identified a range of people who are in a position to assist child domestic workers in the local community. These include commune, village and group chiefs, those with responsibility for women’s affairs and social affairs in the communes, the local police, school teachers and commune medical personnel – basically, all those who come into contact with children through their work.

The key to getting these officials to take action is that they must understand their potential for helping child domestic workers and that it is their responsibility to take action. To achieve this, VCAO has trained trainers through workshops in nine communes in the Tuol Kok district of Phnom Penh. They include child domestic workers, school children and parents in the workshops as well. VCAO’s activities complement the MDSAVY’s efforts to protect child domestic workers at the municipal and district level (see *Spinning a Protective Web for CDWs*).

Apart from being beneficiaries of the programme, children have an important role to play in disseminating information about the issues. VCAO has organised peer groups of children who report instances of abuse, keep the organization informed of what is happening in the community and who serve as a direct link to other children in domestic work.

As previously mentioned, VCAO also has pioneered “star cards”, an innovative method of disseminating information. A picture of a popular movie or music star appears on one side and the reverse contains a series of numbers that people can call either to ask for help or to report cases of a child in danger or at risk (see photo). With their favourite stars on them, children are prone to hang onto the cards. Some 25,000 cards have been produced for distribution through schools, local authorities, factories and businesses, phone booths, bars, markets and discos.

During the training of trainers workshops, children and adults are separated when it comes to group work to identify and define the situation of child domestic workers. In the session that follows, the participants join up again to compare and discuss the issues of concern they raised. The differences in comments from the children and the adults tend to be eye-opening for all and a lively discussion usually ensues. VCAO staff steer this discussion toward proposals for community solutions to the issues being raised and for how the participants can help each other to improve the situation of child domestic workers in their locality. At the end of the workshop, the participants commit to taking action – commitments that VCAO follows up on through regular meetings with each of them.

A key result of this approach, VCAO staff have noted, is that local leaders who had previously assumed no responsibility over the situation of child domestic workers have become much more willing to take responsibility.



Front and reverse of a “star card” containing hotline numbers; the attractive design makes them desirable

Good practices

Strengthening the capacity of existing local structures to recognize and take action ensures local *ownership* and the likelihood that the efforts will be *sustained* – especially in communes and villages where concern for child domestic labour has been included in their mainstream development plans.

Having local leaders disseminate information and key messages about child domestic labour has been very important to the willingness of community members to take action. In this context, the respected and influential people have been *effective* in getting the message across and ensuring that it is taken seriously.

Collaboration between local authorities (PDSAVY) and local NGOs (such as WDA) has been important in *maximizing resources and sustaining the impact* in communes and villages across Prey Veng province. Their roles are seen as complementary – with the PDSAVY having the power to instruct and the NGOs being able to persuade. By connecting with existing mechanisms – such as those to prevent trafficking, project partners are maximizing their use.

VCAO's work in communes and villages *complements* and *strengthens* the web of protection for child domestic workers that the MDSAVY has developed at the municipal and district levels.

Lessons learned

- Identifying the right messenger – in this case, respected and influential community leaders – for disseminating information about child domestic labour results in greater interest in the issue by community members and a higher level of participation in actions to prevent child domestic labour.
- Capacity building and dissemination of information should not stop with local leaders. To make awareness raising more effective, dissemination methods need to ensure that *all* community members – including those without education – understand the message and participate equally in discussions. Children, including child domestic workers, *must* also participate in discussions, with their views carrying equal weight.
- Seeking formal agreements, such as through written “contracts”, with parents to send their children to school or to vocational training has proven to be an effective method to encourage them to keep to their commitments.

Necessary conditions

The support of local leaders and officials is central to the success of any initiative. They are role models, they set the tone, they give direction; without their support it is very difficult to sustain any work in the local communities.

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Send Me to School and Help Me to Stay There!

~ Formal and non-formal education to prevent child domestic labour ~

*Non-Formal Education Department (NFED) of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
Women Development Association (WDA)*

Prachon, a grade 6 teacher at Chbar Ampov I primary school in Phnom Penh is an energetic supporter of efforts to prevent children from dropping out for household employment. How was he persuaded to become so involved? *"I participated in a WDA training that gave me information about child domestic labour. It really opened my eyes. I knew after the training that I must do something to help these children. Now I get information from the WDA that I hand out to children in my class. I find the vulnerable children in my class and pass that information to the WDA to follow up in the local community. And we keep each other informed if there are issues to be addressed. If I could, I would like to talk to employers of child domestic workers, to motivate them to send these children to my school."*

Background

There have been three basic approaches to the ILO–IPEC education provision for child domestic workers in Cambodia:

- Enrolling and supporting them in the public education system (formal schools);
- Providing non-formal education that follows a state-approved curriculum; or
- Providing vocational training for children who are usually older than the minimum working age (*see Developing Skills for a Better Future*).

The ILO–IPEC Cambodian project has adopted two main strategies to support education for child domestic workers, with its partners: The [Non-Formal Education Department](#) has focused on developing an NFE curriculum and, together with the [Women Development Association](#), takes ongoing direct action to get children into school and to keep them there.

The WDA has developed a three-pronged approach for preventing children from dropping out and getting those children who have back into school:

- Working in schools with teachers;
- Working in schools with children – child-to-child; and
- Working in communities surrounding the schools through community-watch schemes.

The NFED originally developed a curriculum for working children and out-of-school children up to grade 4. This was subsequently adapted for use specifically with child domestic workers and expanded up to grade 6, which completes primary schooling.

Accomplishments

➤ Preventing school drop-outs

Local community intervention is needed to prevent children from dropping out of school. As with other efforts, the WDA's experience shows that advocacy to promote an understanding of the situation that child domestic workers face is essential if prevention activities, such as going to school, are to work on a sustainable basis. The WDA collaborates with community networks such as "child watch" groups involving advocates and local authorities to disseminate information among parents. The WDA also goes directly to schools, mobilizing students and their teachers. This advocacy has resulted in, for example, negotiations to waive the daily school fees for poorer students and rapid intervention to provide children slipping into domestic work and their parents with counselling support to keep them in school.

An ongoing relationship with schools is vital to ensure that child domestic workers do not drop out. The WDA has encouraged schools to develop a support programme to help children at risk – providing clothes, school materials and other incentives to keep children in school. The relationship with the school director/principal is particularly important. For example, once sensitized from the WDA advocacy, many directors and teachers have become very active in following up on absenteeism and in monitoring vulnerable children.

The WDA's approach is to target schools located in communities where child domestic labour has been identified. A meeting is then arranged with the school director, who is persuaded to commit the school to preventing drop-outs by:

- Mobilizing teachers to monitor children and assist those vulnerable to dropping out; and
- Developing Active Child Teams to undertake child-to-child advocacy (*see Speaking Up for Child Domestic Workers*).

With the support of the school director, the WDA helps teachers to understand the issues and to get involved in monitoring. The key way in which teachers have assisted poor and/or vulnerable children is by agreeing to drop the daily fee they charge children. This is not an easy sacrifice for teachers who are poorly paid, but WDA advocacy has convinced them of the importance of being a role model for children. Teachers also have assisted in other ways:

- In some locations, schools have set up a small fund for use in keeping children from dropping out – providing small grants or donations in kind to keep a child in school.
- They have shown flexibility in their teaching methods to suit the needs of the children concerned.
- They motivate their students to learn about the situation of child domestic labour and work with the Active Child Teams.
- They have followed up cases of extended absenteeism with parents.

In the local communities surrounding the schools, the WDA has encouraged the development of community watch groups in which local villagers come together to identify children vulnerable to child domestic labour and to monitor the situation. They counsel parents and involve the WDA in cases where further parental persuasion is required.

However, sometimes despite these efforts and possibly the wishes of parents to complete their education, a child leaves school to work. This then is where the importance of school-based monitoring by teachers and monitoring by the Active Child Teams plays another crucial role.

The WDA has found that it takes about two years to achieve sustainable active participation by teachers in a school. Despite agreements with school directors, some teachers are reluctant to stop charging daily fees to all the children in their class. In these cases, WDA empathizes with the teachers' poor pay but tries to persuade them that the children are in

an even worse situation than they are and that the children need their help. They will also discuss the situation with the school director to try to work out a compromise.

At the Chbar Ampov I primary school in Phnom Penh, there has been good cooperation with the WDA for three years. As part of their commitment to assist poor and vulnerable children to receive education, teachers from the school visit surrounding villages to encourage out-of-school children to begin or return to classes. The WDA and the village heads help them locate and negotiate with the children's sometimes-reluctant parents. As a result of these actions, coupled with the greater village awareness of the dangers of child domestic labour and the importance of education (through advocacy and the monitoring efforts of the community watch group), 233 children have been identified and have returned to school.

➤ **Developing and instituting a non-formal education curriculum for child domestic workers**

The Non-Formal Education Department has been an active partner in ILO-IPEC's child labour programme for a number of years. NFED first developed a non-formal education curriculum for working children and out-of-school children consisting of four components – literacy, health education, life skills and practical skills training – with accompanying materials for teachers. The curriculum takes learners who complete it up to grade 4 of primary school.

As a state-recognized non-formal education programme, that NFE curriculum has equivalency with the public school system, meaning that those who complete the course are able to re-enter the public school system at the level they have reached.

Those who wish to re-enter formal schooling after relatively short absences from the system (no more than three months per year for three years) are able to undertake summer programmes when school is closed during August and September. This "catch-up" summer programme enables them to continue with their education once formal school re-opens.

For those children who have never or barely attended school, the full NFE curriculum was piloted in 2000 in a primary school in the Punhealeur district of Cambodia's Kandal province. Those involved in the programme were not required to wear a school uniform (a relatively expensive item) and were provided with the books and materials they needed. Children attended classes for two hours per day, six days per week, for nine months.

In 2004, 154 such classes were opened throughout Cambodia involving retired teachers and volunteer teachers (who receive a short teacher training course) and 4,858 children had completed the full programme as of September 2005. More than half of them were girls. The qualification they received had a value equivalent to grade 4 in the formal system.

Based on the experiences of the pilot programme and the findings of the National Institute of Statistics survey of the child domestic labour situation in Phnom Penh, the curriculum was expanded in 2005 to grade 6 and new modules were developed that fit into that curriculum but make it more relevant to child domestic workers.

The NFED then conducted a sample survey of 225 child domestic workers (165 girls and 60 boys) and the same number of parents in three districts of Phnom Penh and two in Kampong Cham province¹¹⁷ to determine which aspects of the curriculum should be focused on and why. Literacy and vocational skills emerged as the two most important aspects.

In developing the survey questionnaire, the NFED organized a two-day workshop involving other government ministries and NGOs with specific experience of working with child domestic workers, including MDSAVY, the Ministries of Women Affairs, Planning, Labour and Vocational Training, the WDA, VCAO and World Vision.

¹¹⁷ Kampong Cham is the largest CDW-sending province in Cambodia.

Containing books for learners and teacher guides, the curriculum is currently being finalized. Modules that make it relevant to child domestic workers include, in literacy for example, stories of child domestic workers, information on child rights, lessons on moral issues and messages about violence being unacceptable. NFE teachers will receive specific training on child domestic labour issues and the new aspects of the curriculum.

It is too early to see the impact that the new modules might have. However, the prospects are quite hopeful because the basic curriculum has been very successfully tried and tested.

Good practices

If they can be successfully promoted and targeted, the *sustainability* of the new NFE modules is assured to some extent by the fact that it fits into an ongoing, national and tried-and-tested state system. In some of the schools that the WDA works in, the directors and teachers sustain the efforts themselves through changes they have made in their teaching practices and in their advocacy.

In WDA's case, there are examples of *direct benefits* to those vulnerable to child domestic work through the interventions of teachers and other school students. Although there are no results yet of the impact of the new NFE modules, thousands of working and out-of-school children have already benefited from the implementation of the NFE system.

Lessons learned

- WDA has found that sustainable active participation by teachers can be a slow process, as many remain resistant to helping child domestic workers – especially if this means a loss of income. Continued advocacy with them, by providing information about the situation of child domestic workers and appealing to their sense of duty and commitment, is the key to changing their attitudes. An ongoing close relationship with each school is also necessary to motivate and to provide awareness-raising training and back-up support.
- Although the WDA's approach has proven to be effective, without a fundamental change in teachers' salaries, the development of responsive curricula and the implementation of fully free education, among other things, it is difficult for many children to go to school and stay there. It is therefore important to work at the policy level at the same time as working directly in schools.

Necessary conditions

Getting and sustaining the support of school authorities, particularly the school director, is critical to being able to mobilize teachers and students to take action.

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Developing Skills for a Better Future

~ Apprenticeships and centre-based vocational training for child domestic workers ~

*Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization (VCAO)
Women Development Association (WDA)*

The 14-year-old girl studying hairdressing at one of the VCAO vocational training centres in the Tuol Kok district of Phnom Penh currently earns 30,000 riels per month (US\$7.5) as a full-time domestic worker. For her, spending an hour a day to learn a trade, three times per week – the only time off that her employer will allow – is her only chance to escape a life of drudgery and exploitation.

Background

The [Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization](#) and the [Women Development Association](#) have pioneered the development of vocational training opportunities for child domestic workers and for those at risk of child domestic labour who are older than the minimum working age of 15 years. Both NGOs undertake these actions as part of wider programmes to assist child domestic workers.

Vocational training equips those who have dropped out of school with practical skills for future employment opportunities, thereby preventing them from entering potentially exploitative work, such as child domestic work. The schemes are also a “way out” for those in child domestic labour who want more stable and better-paid jobs.

The WDA has adopted an apprenticeship approach – placing at-risk children with sympathetic local employers to learn a trade while generating an income. The WDA scheme has resulted in the training of 58 children in local businesses (35 girls and 23 boys).

The VCAO operates three vocational training centres in the Tuol Kok district of Phnom Penh, with space for 35–40 children in each. The centres are non-residential, meaning that child domestic workers remain with their employers while taking a course. However, the vocational training courses are not open to everyone; careful selections of trainees are made after discussions with them, their employers and their parents and according to their individual needs and the market employment options.

Since VCAO began its centre-based vocational training in October 2003, 204 child domestic workers have completed courses in hairdressing, sewing, cooking and literacy. Most of the graduates have left domestic service and have been employed in local salons, workshops and restaurants, or, together in groups, have opened small businesses of their own. Some have become trainers and are now employed by VCAO to teach their skills to others. Twenty-seven graduates have become garment factory workers.

In cases where a child domestic worker is found to be in an abusive or severely exploited situation, VCAO is able to rescue the person from the situation and provides training in one of its centres.

Centre-based vocational training (of the kind that VCAO provides) is more formal than “learning on the job” and the training period is longer. However, both have theoretical and practical elements, as well as the opportunity (to some extent) for trainees to interact with customers and to earn money while they are receiving training.

Accomplishments

➤ Market analysis

Both the WDA and VCAO have analysed the markets to ensure that the children learn skills that are truly marketable and can lead them out of child domestic labour and into better employment opportunities. Children are asked what they would like to learn. By careful targeting of vocational training – sensitive to market demands and to the needs of child domestic workers – the children can learn skills to generate a sustainable income.

In the parts of Phnom Penh where the schemes are operational, skills such as sewing, cutting hair and cosmetology, motorbike maintenance and repair, food preparation and radio and TV repair enable those who acquire them to earn a decent income. These are transferable skills that can be used in Phnom Penh as well as other parts of Cambodia to start and sustain a business. Graduates of the schemes have reported an increase in their self-confidence as a result of learning the new skills and finding customers who prefer their services.

Children chosen for vocational training have been carefully selected after discussions with them, their employers and their parents and according to their individual needs and the market employment options.

➤ Selecting children for vocational training

VCAO undertakes a rigorous selection process to ensure: that the skills being offered match the needs of the child domestic workers and that the transfer of skills is to those most in need; that there is likely to be enough commitment from the child to complete the course and make use of the skills and from her employing family to give her the time off to complete the course, which is often for only one or two hours per day for up to 15 months.

VCAO social workers and trainers make village visits, in cooperation with village leaders, to map the location of child domestic workers of all ages. They then make household visits to talk to employers and to ask their permission to allow the child domestic worker to participate in the vocational training. The child domestic worker in these households then registers and the information is put into a database, meaning that they become more visible in their communities and more easily monitored and, therefore, protected.

The VCAO social worker profiles in detail a child in question to establish her family situation (in terms of her position in her own family and her situation with her employers), level of education, length of service as a domestic worker and any other factors that have contributed to her situation as a child domestic worker. This profiling is partly to ensure that the training is a good match, but it also serves to screen out children of employers who are keen to undertake the training too. As a result of the profiling, the trainer gauges the child's likely level of commitment to the vocational training process and the likelihood that the child will use these skills to generate a wage capable of improving her/his situation and increasing her/his self-confidence.

Those children identified as child domestic workers are divided into groups according to their age. Those younger than the minimum legal working age (mostly 12- to 13-year-olds) are referred to others who can assist them to re-start their formal schooling or be provided with some type of non-formal education (although some may seek pre-vocational training in exceptional circumstances). The 15- to 17-year-olds (in the case of VCAO training, 90 per cent are girls) are selected for vocational training in one of three areas: sewing, food preparation, and beauty/make-up and hairdressing. Numeracy and top-up literacy skills are also part of the training package – essential requirements in running a business.

Trainees are regularly monitored, giving them the chance to feedback on how they are doing and if there are any problems. Advice is provided to trainees after the course on how to start up a business or gain employment with others, and small loans are given to those

children who lack the capital to start a business. After training, many decide to go back to their home village to start a business there. Others who cannot or do not wish to return continue to work in Phnom Penh using their new skills. VCAO has made contact with a host of small businesses in the local area willing to provide employment opportunities for those who stay in Phnom Penh. VCAO also has set up a beauty salon, a tailoring shop and a restaurant in targeted communities to provide an income to some of those who have completed the training – with the profits ploughed back into further work with child domestic workers. Some graduates of the training have returned to the centres as trainers.

➤ Generating commitment

Generating commitment to the vocational training process is essential. In the case of apprenticeships, formal agreements are made:

- Between the children's parents and the WDA, to ensure parental support for the vocational training process and in encouraging the child to complete the course;
- Between the training provider (the local shop or workshop owner), the trainee (child) and their parents to ensure that the child is committed to the training; and
- Between the training provider and WDA, to ensure that the provider gives training that is effective and complete enough for the trainee to ultimately earn a living and thus is not exploiting the child.

The WDA apprenticeships usually last 6 to 12 months, as the children are in the training location for several hours each day. The training providers – owners of local businesses – are briefed to understand the difficulties the children live with and are encouraged to support the children in additional ways, such as providing clothes, food or other daily incentives and by taking extra care to monitor their progress. In the case of WDA, project social workers conduct follow-up visits every two weeks with the training providers, the children and their parents to make sure that the training is running smoothly and to deal with arising problems.

Good practices

Both the apprenticeship and centre-based approaches developed by WDA and VCAO have proved to be *effective* in providing marketable skills that allow older children to leave domestic service or prevent them from becoming child domestic workers. The approaches have *directly benefited* more than 250 older children to earn a sustainable income – whether they stay in Phnom Penh or return to their provinces of origin.

The practices have been *responsive* to the localized needs of the targeted beneficiaries. For example, VCAO's centre-based training timetables have been developed with the hours available to child domestic workers who still live and work with their employers and the times of day that are most suitable to them.

The WDA approach is a particularly *sustainable* model because it involves local businesses in the training process and allows trainees to earn money while working.

Lessons learned

- The practices have shown that generating commitment among a child's parents/guardians for the vocational training is very important. Parents and guardians must take responsibility for encouraging the child to undertake and complete the course. Without this commitment, there is a strong chance that the child could slip (back) into child domestic labour.

- Children to be involved in the vocational training must be thoroughly profiled to ensure that the training being provided is the best “fit” for them and that the skills they are learning will be put to use in generating an income and not wasted.
- Regular follow-up visits to children and the training providers are needed during apprenticeships to deal with any potential problems and to keep all parties motivated to completing the process.
- A thorough analysis of the local market and of potential employment opportunities is essential to provide the most effective and useful vocational training to children.
- Creating commitment among the training providers to offer additional support to their trainees has a positive impact in motivating them to work scrupulously and to complete the training.
- A survey of 189 children currently involved in or who have completed the VCAO vocational training courses emphasized that the individual attention they received from the trainer was an important component in motivating them to complete the course. Seeing and interacting with paying customers also improved their self-confidence.

Necessary conditions

- Ascertaining the skills that will most usefully prepare children to exit domestic labour and find less risky, more stable work is a fundamental prerequisite to developing a vocational training programme.
- To fully assess the impact of vocational training, it is necessary to monitor beneficiaries once they have finished their training. Monitoring also provides useful information in making adjustments to improve the service being provided and in better targeting those who will gain the most benefit from it.
- Having a pool of willing and decent employers who will train young people is necessary for establishing an apprentice approach.

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Speaking Up for CDWs

~ Child participation in advocacy, awareness raising and social mobilization ~

*Children's Committee (CC)
Women Development Association (WDA)*

"There are many organizations working with children, but not many of them are truly child-led. We really have the voice and the commitment to speak up for child domestic workers."

So Kunthy, Children's Committee

Background

Two examples presented in this emerging good practice involve the active participation of children in awareness raising and social mobilization. Children can be active agents for change and can effectively reach out to children in ways adults cannot. Both the [Children's Committee](#) and [Women Development Association](#) work very closely with children in schools to mobilize them to speak up for children in domestic labour.

The WDA is a Cambodian NGO active in efforts to prevent child domestic labour and in protecting child domestic workers in both sending and receiving areas. Its particular focus is to raise awareness about child rights, the impact of child domestic labour and the value of education for children. The CC is a Cambodian youth volunteer organization with membership of more than 800 children aged 13–17 years from across Cambodia. It exists to raise awareness among authorities and the general public about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and to encourage children's participation in combating child labour exploitation in general and child domestic labour in particular.

The CC has experiences in organizing national children conferences since 2000. The conference is a venue for children and youth to speak up for their rights. The National Children's Conference on Child Domestic Labour in 2003 was the third national conference the CC organized and the first to focus on child domestic labour. In parallel, the CC mobilized school children to produce a series of six television programmes, called "My Child, Your Child" in 2002–2004. The programmes were broadcast in Phnom Penh on weekends, targeting children and their parents. Thirty students from different schools participated in each of the programmes, which raised awareness of child domestic labour in a variety of interactive ways and gave momentum in the lead-up to the national conference.

Through the television programmes, the CC in October 2004 established [Child Watch Clubs](#) (CWCs) to mobilize young viewers to be proactive in monitoring and reporting on the situation of child domestic workers in their neighbourhoods. Around 90 children aged 8–17 years meet every Sunday in CWCs to discuss child domestic labour issues. Notably, the CWCs have been involved in the development of two public education commercials, or "educational spots", that ran for two months in movie theatres.

The WDA has established [Active Child Teams](#) (ACTs) as a mechanism for older primary school children to disseminate information about child labour exploitation to their friends in school and to monitor the situation of school children vulnerable to dropping out.

Accomplishments

➤ National Children's Conference on Child Domestic Labour

Organized by the CC under the banner, "Behavioural Change Toward a Brighter Future for Children", the National Children's Conference on Child Domestic Labour (April 2003) was an awareness- raising event involving 150 children from 18 provinces and cities throughout Cambodia.

In addition, the participation by high-ranking government officials, including the then-Minister of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation, brought considerable legitimacy to event. While few child domestic workers participated (due to the time constraints in coordinating with them and difficulties obtaining consent to participate from their employers), the impact of those who did was very influential in ensuring that the discussions were down to earth, passionate and relevant. One child domestic worker stood up in the middle of a Q&A session and started revealing her life experience. She burst into tears, saying that it meant a lot for her to have someone listen to her and care for her, just like this conference. Another girl, Lina, a 15-year-old child domestic worker said, *"It was wonderful to speak out what I had on my mind. I could participate in the conference as my employer had allowed me to go, but many others unfortunately could not join me."*

The MSALVY support was essential toward ensuring that recommendations resulting from the conference had an impact on government policy. These recommendations were taken into consideration in drafting the National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

The participating children presented ten recommendations to the Government of Cambodia, the general public and to national and international organizations and other institutions working for children, which have been translated into English as follows:

1. We recommend the Royal Government of Cambodia to draft and set up regulations and a management structure for child domestic workers to make it easy to prevent and protect children from child domestic labour.
2. We recommend the Royal Government of Cambodia to take actions and promote authority-based information sharing on child domestic workers to search for measures against the abuse and exploitation of child labour.
3. We recommend the Royal Government of Cambodia to take an immediate step for emergency intervention for child domestic workers at risk of being exploited when information from neighbours, child victims, parents or caretakers is provided.
4. We recommend the Royal Government of Cambodia to lead a national movement against child labour, particularly for those under the minimum age for employment to protect the best interest of children and a better future for them.
5. We recommend the Royal Government of Cambodia, especially the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation, to play the leading role in organizing a national movement on the World Day Against Child Labour on 12 June every year.
6. We recommend mass media, especially state-owned mass media such as national radio and TV, to broadcast and disseminate stories regarding child domestic workers freely and more intensively.
7. We recommend the Royal Government of Cambodia to take effective measures to ensure that all children have the possibility to gain education and continue their basic education; in particular, the Royal Government of Cambodia should create a policy of compulsory education for all children younger than 12 years.

8. We recommend the Royal Government of Cambodia to take useful measures to eradicate any financial pressure for students in the forms of additional class fee, purchase of class materials and other tuitions that may threaten the continuation of education for the poor.
9. We recommend house owners not to use children below the minimum age for employment stated by the law and not to abuse children mentally, physically and sexually, as well as to allow children to have access to health care and educational services and/or vocational training.
10. We recommend national and international organizations and the general public that work on child issues to cooperate with authorities to protect child domestic workers. In particular, ILO-IPEC to please donate financial and technical supports to the Royal Government of Cambodia and non-government organizations for children to gain education, health care or vocational training to ensure that child domestic workers can have opportunities for further development for gainful employment in the future and to eradicate the worst forms of child labour.

➤ “My Child, Your Child”

The CC developed a series of six television programmes in collaboration with TV-3, a Phnom Penh broadcasting station. The programmes – each shown twice – aimed to provide information to children and their parents about the impact of child domestic labour. The programmes involved children from a number of schools in Phnom Penh and used a variety of methods to impart key messages about the impact of child domestic labour, including the performance of songs written by CC members, role playing and a quiz.

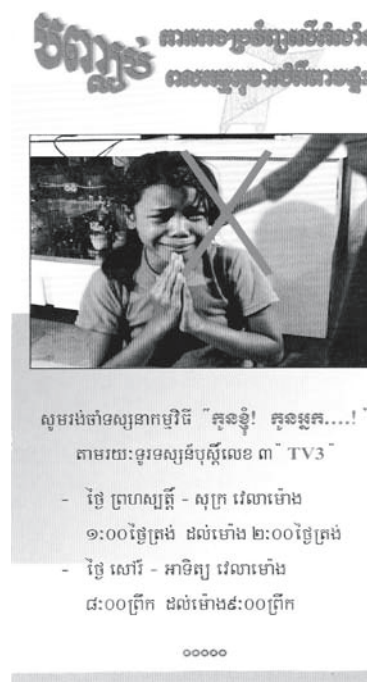
According to CC staff, TV-3 executives were reluctant to make the programmes at first but were persuaded to produce and air the shows as an educational output to assist disadvantaged children.

A leaflet (see picture) was prepared to promote the programmes and to reinforce their messages. Containing statistics on child domestic labour, information about how employers and children can assist child domestic workers, as well as details of available hotlines, the leaflets were widely disseminated by the CC and TV-3 in schools and other locations. The programmes led to the development of Child Watch Clubs.

➤ Child Watch Clubs

Child Watch Clubs are groups consisting mostly of school children who meet to increase their understanding of child domestic labour and other child rights and labour issues, as well as to share information about the specific situation of child domestic workers in their own homes and localities. Organized and monitored by Children’s Committee members, the CWC meetings are conducted on Sundays at flexible times to maximize participation. Children are divided into separate groups for discussions, based on their age and level of knowledge of the issues.

More than 120 children (55 girls and 68 boys) aged 8–17 years have participated in the CWCs since they began in October 2004, although about 90 children attend regularly. Numbers of



Leaflet to promote My Child, Your Child TV programme

new recruits are increasing through the school-based promotion of Children's Committee activities, as well as by word of mouth among friends. Membership requires the completion of an application form endorsed by their parents. Individual membership ID cards provide recognition of their ongoing involvement.

The CWC meetings are highly interactive affairs. Composing and singing songs, role-playing performances, games and quizzes are activities designed to make the meetings enjoyable and to keep members motivated. CWCs members have composed two songs about child rights, which were printed in the form of booklets containing child rights messages (*see picture*).

The clubs serve as both a sensitization centre and a channel for children to act on what they have learned by becoming agents for attitude change toward child domestic workers in their own households and localities.

➤ Educational spots

The CWCs have been involved in the development of two public education commercials, or educational spots, designed to educate Cambodian cinema-goers about the situation of child domestic workers.

The first spot aimed at parents and focused on the importance of valuing their offspring as children and not as property to be taken advantage of by sending them into domestic service. Actual child domestic workers acted in this spot. The underlying message of the feature was the need for parents to understand the consequences of their actions in sending children into domestic labour.



Songbooks containing words of child rights songs and other child rights information

The second spot targeted employers and their families, encouraging them to understand child domestic labour from the perspective of the child in their care. Emphasis was given to the importance of education for children and allowing and encouraging child domestic workers to partake in the same educational opportunities as the employers' own children. The spot, which involved actors from local stage schools, also encouraged better treatment of child domestic workers.

CWC members wrote and discussed potential storylines for the spots, with two stories finally selected. A professional producer was contracted and the chosen themes were then scripted and edited with the participation of CWC members.

The spots were broadcast four times a day in two cinemas for one month; nearly 25,000 people were estimated to have seen them. Significantly, cinema owners were persuaded to show the spots at a reduced rate after advocacy by Children's Committee members with them about the child domestic labour issue. Both spots encouraged viewers to take action and broadcast hotline numbers for further information and to report abuses.

From 25 July to 12 September 2005 (the time that the spots were shown), a sample survey was conducted of 800 people to evaluate the impact of the educational spots. Each person was interviewed individually through a questionnaire, with the majority of respondents (75 per cent) aged 16–25.

Of the 677 people who said they had seen the spots, more than 80 per cent could remember the content in detail. Some 209 people could recall the underlying message of the spot – that childhood is a time for learning and playing, not for child domestic labour.

More than half of respondents said they now knew more about the situation of child domestic workers and of the difficulties they face, and 90 per cent were convinced that children should not be employed as domestic workers.

➤ Active Child Teams

Child-to-child information dissemination by children in schools has been another important method of “getting the message across”.

The WDA set up the Active Child Teams as a mechanism for older primary school children (aged from 11 years) to disseminate information about child labour exploitation to their friends in school and, more particularly, to monitor the situation of school children vulnerable to dropping out. The goal is to help them continue their studies. As of September 2005, there were nine ACTs – one in Phnom Penh and the others in Prey Veng province, a major CDW-sending area.

ACTs are self-supporting groups of four children (usually two girls and two boys) that, in addition to intervening directly with children in school, report child labour cases – often child domestic labour cases – to the school and local authorities for follow-up action. They also perform a similar function in the local communities in which they live.

New Active Child Team members are recruited from grades 5 and 6 students – the oldest children in the primary school.¹¹⁸ To set up an ACT in a school, WDA personnel talk with the director and teachers to seek agreement from them. Getting the school authorities on board is crucial in ensuring that the system works, as ACTs closely collaborate with their teachers. An assembly of all grade 5 and 6 students is then called and information is provided about ACTs and their purpose. An election is then conducted in which the children vote for those they consider to be the most suitable candidates. It is important that the children elect the ACT members, as they must have the respect of their peers. The WDA provides training to the four elected members to help them work together as a team and have confidence to approach other children.

Because the Cambodian public education system operates separate morning and afternoon schools, two ACT members are part of the morning session and the other two are elected from the afternoon session.¹¹⁹

The ACT members typically conduct information-disseminating activities with friends and other school children during a communal time; in one school, the team does this during the period each day when the school comes together to sing the national anthem. Sarath, an ACT member, once commented, *“I was happy when my friend listened to what I had to say about child domestic labour and took a leaflet to read.”*

There have been a number of successes. In Prey Veng, for example, an ACT was able to persuade two school friends from dropping out. The children had planned to leave school and find work to support their families – in this case without their parents’ knowledge. The ACT members spoke to the children’s parents, who are now actively encouraging their children to complete their studies.

¹¹⁸ Grade 5 and 6 children are, in theory, 11 or 12 years old. In practice, however, they can be up to 15 or 16 years of age, as many children have missed some years of schooling and are older when they reach these grades.

¹¹⁹ Due to the lack of classroom space and a shortage of teachers in Cambodia, there are two separate school sessions; children either go to school during the morning or afternoon.

Good practices

It is clear that the involvement and participation of children can have a significant impact on anti-child domestic labour efforts. The practices highlighted here were chosen because they reveal a good understanding of local structures and mindsets and because of their ability to tailor interventions that most effectively harness the abilities of children to influence others around them. In particular, the child participation has been an *effective* tool in bringing the issue of child domestic labour up for discussion; for example, in the instance of the National Children's Conference on Child Domestic Labour, the voices of children seemed to have been listened to much more carefully and had greater leverage than that of adults.

As is shown by their accomplishments, these practices contribute both directly (e.g. through school monitoring) or indirectly (e.g. through advocacy) to *relevant* preventative as well as protective actions on child domestic labour. The practices are also *sustainable*, both in terms of the ownership that is created among the child advocates and by the way in which the practices have been rooted – in schools, for example. *Impact* can be seen at many levels; for example, in reaching individual children in schools. In the case of the National Children's Conference on Child Domestic Labour, national policy has been influenced by getting the support of the MSAVY and high-ranking officials – ensuring that the child domestic labour issue will remain at the heart of national policy and planning for several years.

The strength of these strategies lies in the *consensus building* and *democratic child-to-child approaches* that have been used to implement them. There is no doubt that children listen to and learn a lot from their peers and that the children involved have themselves gained a lot in terms of respect and pride from taking on a civic responsibility toward other children, such as representing them and their views at meetings, developing advocacy materials for them or about them, or participating in awareness-raising and monitoring groups such as Child Watch Clubs and Active Child Teams.

The approaches are also *efficient*. Empowering children to get the message across can be seen to have a significant impact – with few resource implications beyond the time and energy to build their capacity.

Lessons learned

- In future ACT work, the WDA is considering the recruitment of younger primary school children (e.g. those from grades 4 and 5) to give the elected ACTs a longer life span – at the end of grade 6, children move to a different school. Because the ACTs become embedded in schools (where teachers and the school authorities are prepared to sustain the actions of the students, especially in ACT hand-over periods), opportunities could expand to include school-wide campaigns in addition to current one-on-one advocacy.
- The development of the educational spots and the television programmes involved a lot of work and were relatively expensive to prepare, yet have been shown to be effective in reaching large audiences. For these reasons, the Children's Committee is trying to encourage further dissemination of the spots, through more cinemas, television and via the radio. Promoting the spots and the television programmes is also important – creating an interest in and discussion about the broadcasts before they are aired. In the event that further spots are developed, the CC suggests they would be even more powerful if real child domestic workers told their actual stories.
- In terms of the National Children's Conference on Child Domestic Labour, the involvement of the relevant government ministry gave the conference added value and strength – especially in its ability to influence policy development.

Necessary conditions

- The individual children involved in actions such as advocacy need the assistance of a strong organization to build their capacities and to support their activities, whether this is a child-led organization like the Children's Committee or a respected NGO, such as WDA.
- Because child advocates grow out of childhood and move on, there is a need to continually seek out and build the capacity of subsequent generations of children to become advocates to sustain the child-to-child activity. In the case of the Children's Committee, leaders who have reached 18 years can become advisors to new leaders (if the new leaders desire it) to ensure that the knowledge and experience they have gained is not lost. In the case of ACTs, training new members is regularly needed.

Further reading

Report of a Child Domestic Worker Survey in Phnom Penh, which was conducted in 2003 (National Institute of Statistics in collaboration with ILO-IPEC, Cambodia, 2004)

Various advocacy materials, including brochures, song books, educational spots (CD-Rom) etc. available via the Children's Committee (CD-Rom from ILO-IPEC)

Draft report on the findings of a sample survey to evaluate the impact of educational spots on child domestic labour, available from ILO-IPEC Cambodia

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Child Domestic Labour is a Trade Union Issue

~ Trade union efforts to combat child domestic labour ~

Inter-Union Committee for Child Labour (UCCL)

"Our trade union structure and membership are our strengths," notes a UCCL member. "We are able to get information about child domestic labour to many thousands of people who will listen to us because we are fellow trade unionists."

Background

The **Inter-Union Committee for Child Labour** was established in 2001 through the efforts of the ILO's Workers Education Project.¹²⁰ In July 2004, Cambodia's two trade union confederations – the Cambodian Confederation of Trade Unions (CCTU) and the Confederation of Free Democratic Trade Unions of Cambodia (CFDTUC)¹²¹ signed a memorandum of understanding to support joint initiatives for eliminating child labour. The UCCL became the mechanism for taking this initiative forward.

The UCCL's purpose is to support awareness raising on child labour among union members, to build their capacity in advocating against child labour issues and to promote union participation in preventing child labour and protecting child workers.¹²² While initially the UCCL's focus was on young workers in the manufacturing sector, emphasis recently has shifted toward child domestic labour.

Since 2005, child domestic labour has been the centre of UCCL action, which has involved developing training materials about the problem for trade union leaders and members, undertaking a survey of members to measure the incidence of those who employ or who know child domestic workers and creating a joint union policy on child domestic labour.

Accomplishments

➤ A sample survey

Based on the findings of the 2003 National Institute of Statistics study on child domestic workers, in collaboration with ILO-IPEC Cambodia, the UCCL developed a questionnaire to survey a sample of trade union members who originate from the major CDW-sending areas of Cambodia. The purpose of the survey was to identify targets among the trade union population for awareness-raising activities about the impact of child domestic labour.

Some 1,155 union members (175 trade union leaders and 980 union members) working in 41 garment factories and three hotels in Phnom Penh were interviewed for the survey. Of

¹²⁰ Trade unions have a particularly unique and important role to play in combating child labour. ILO has been supporting the trade union movement in Cambodia and maximizing its unique role to eliminate child labour through a technical cooperation project entitled "Workers Education Assistance to the Cambodian Trade Union Movement", in short, ILO's Workers Education Project (WEP).

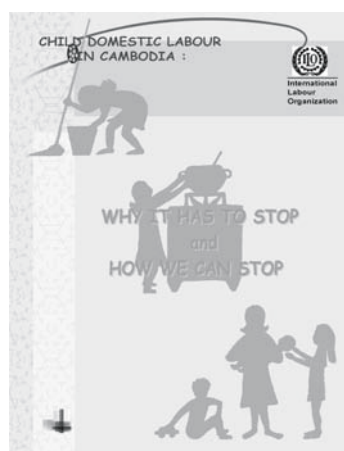
¹²¹ Between them, these confederations represent approximately 340,000 workers.

¹²² Membership of the Cambodian Confederation of Trade Unions is from trade unions representing a variety of sectors, including: garments, weaving, shoes, construction industries, forestry, food, tobacco, rubber plantations, salt field workers, the brewing industry, restaurant and port workers. The Confederation of Free Democratic Trade Unions of Cambodia's member unions include those representing workers engaged in rubber production, shoe and garment manufacturing, restaurants, as well as teachers, nurses, private pharmacy workers, traders, taxi-motorbike riders and workers engaged in the tourism sector.

them, 67 (5.8 per cent) reported that they had relatives, including siblings and their own children, working as child domestic workers. A further 86 (7.4 per cent) union members reported that they were aware of relatives or friends who employed child domestic workers, or they themselves employed child domestic workers. The majority of respondents employing child domestic workers stated that they were relatives and that most had time to go to school.

➤ Awareness-raising training

Based on the survey findings, 60 trade unions leaders and 600 trade union members are currently the focus of ongoing awareness-raising attention by the UCCL, with the primary targets being those who admitted to employing child domestic workers or who know of others who do. Training workshops take place in groups of 30. The training guide was modified from an awareness-raising kit called “Trade Unions and Child Labour”, which was produced through the ILO’s Workers Education Project.



Brochure containing facts, figures and actions to combat child domestic labour in Cambodia; the Khmer version is part of the material distributed to all participants in the awareness- raising training workshops

Training is structured around imparting practical information to raise the understanding of child labour in general and in its worst forms, as well as specific information about child domestic labour and its impact on the children concerned. In the final session of the one-day workshop, participants are encouraged to discuss the trade union response to the issue and to commit themselves to taking action.

As this is a training of trainers, participants are expected to disseminate what they have learned to other trade union colleagues. The materials, including a trainers’ guide that was prepared for the workshops, are given to participants to facilitate their further dissemination activities.

“Before training” and “after training” forms have been developed to measure the immediate impact of the awareness-raising training on individual participants, and a further form has been prepared for completion after several weeks, to see how the new trainers are putting the knowledge and skills they have learned into practice.

UCCL also plans to ensure that the trainers’ guide and other training materials, which include stickers, posters, leaflets and brochures, will also be used by other institutions and NGOs as part of their awareness-raising activities. The UCCL would like to see training and distribution of advocacy material country-wide.

➤ Trade union policy

The results of the survey of trade union members suggested the need for an internal statement on child labour and on child domestic labour in particular. Such a statement was developed using Cambodian Children’s Day (1 June) and the World Day Against Child Labour (12 June) as the impetus for stimulating interest and concern.

Based on this statement, a workshop was conducted by the UCCL to consider developing a confederation-wide policy. The workshop involved trade union representatives, UCCL members, ILO–IPEC and representatives from the ILO’s Worker Education Project. As a result, a ten-point policy was drafted, the key purposes of which are to: strengthen efforts to prevent and eliminate child domestic labour by raising awareness of the issue throughout the union membership and to indicate trade union commitment to tackling child domestic labour (see box).

To become fully integrated into the current trade union policy framework on child labour, it required an official endorsement by the Project Advisory Committee of Trade Unions (PACT) Against Child Labour – a joint CCTU and CFDTUC committee overseeing union actions on child labour. On 3 December 2005, the finalized policy was formally launched and disseminated widely by PACT – and has become binding for all members of CCTU and CFDTUC.

The policy that has been developed is unusual in that, in addition to general statements of intent, it contains detailed information about what union members should do in practice. It will be interesting to see if this results in union members taking more practical action to assist child domestic workers directly. In particular, a minimum wage is specified as well as a commitment by all union members to take action to assist individual child domestic workers in a number of ways.

Ten-point policy on preventing and eliminating child domestic labour
(final, paraphrased)

1. CCTU and CFDTUC are strongly committed to fight against the exploitation of child domestic labour and the worst forms of child labour;
2. No Union member will employ child domestic workers younger than 15 (Cambodian Labour Law Article 177);
3. All Union members commit themselves to helping child domestic workers younger than 15 years to attend public schools as well as non-formal education classes and to assist 15–18 year olds to participate in skills training – through negotiation with employers, NGOs and the relevant local authorities;
4. Union members commit themselves to undertaking advocacy and, in particular, to disseminating information about the impact of child domestic labour to other Union members, as well as information about Cambodian Labour Law and ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182, the National Programme of Action on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, Cambodian Millennium Development Goals and Education for All initiatives;
5. As stated in point 2, no Union member will employ child domestic workers younger than 15 years. In relation to child domestic workers aged 15 years and older, Union members commit themselves to working with employers of child domestic workers to create healthy and safe working conditions. This includes:
 - Suitable shelter;
 - Enough food;
 - Opportunities for recreation;
 - Providing one day off per week, and at the weekend, as well as on national and international holidays, and the opportunity for the child to visit parents (Cambodian Labour Law Articles 146 and 147);
 - Providing opportunities to receive education and skills training;
 - Providing appropriate wages for her/his work – at a monthly minimum of 60,000 *riels* (US\$15), excluding food, accommodation and other benefits like education materials, clothes, bonus wages, etc.);
 - Ensuring that the child receives medical treatment and health care to meet her/his needs.
6. Union members commit themselves to passing on any information about child labour exploitation and the abuse of child domestic workers they may come across to relevant authorities and NGOs, in order that the child can be removed from the hazardous situation;

7. Union members must exemplify good practice through their conduct, both in terms of personally adhering to this policy and helping to monitor its effective implementation. For example, members should assist child domestic workers younger than 15 to go to school or non-formal education and help 15–18 year olds to attend vocational training;
8. Union members are encouraged to assist in implementing the Cambodian National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and ILO Conventions No.138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and No.182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, as well as in upholding the Cambodian Labour Law;
9. The Union commits itself to assisting in the development of national policy and laws to eliminate the worst forms of child domestic labour; and
10. This policy shall take effect as of the date of signature. (signed on 3 December 2005)

Good practices

It is often difficult to sustain awareness raising in the long term. However, by institutionalizing the need for awareness raising and other actions on child domestic labour through a binding union policy, *sustainability* of these efforts has, to some extent, been assured.

Because trade union structures and processes in different countries are often quite similar, there is a good chance of *replicating* the development of similar policies in other locations.

The *consensus-building* approach that has been followed is likely to encourage a high level of commitment to taking action against child domestic labour. The survey, involving direct contact with union members, began the awareness-raising process and has made the job of motivating and mobilizing participants in the training workshops much easier. The involvement of union leaders as well as ordinary members in the awareness-raising training contributed to creating a wide interest and commitment to taking action against child domestic labour – and was the catalyst for motivating the swift development of the trade union policy.

Lessons learned

- Working through unions is important and strategic because it has been shown that a number of union members either employ child domestic workers or have relatives who are child domestic workers. Trade unions provide a structure and an enabling environment in which to raise awareness – especially because union members are more likely to listen to one another. This has proven important in communicating messages and in influencing practices and behaviour.
- UCCL consists of trade unionists from a variety of unions from across the spectrum of Confederation members. Although sometimes hard on the individuals concerned, who have added UCCL activities to their normal workloads, this approach has ensured a continued connection and good relations with individual member unions in the movement.
- The reluctance of some trade union leaders to release members to work part-time with the UCCL has largely been overcome as a result of UCCL members convincing them that this work should be considered mainstream trade union business.

Necessary conditions

- Setting up the UCCL was the crucial first step in demonstrating union commitment to child labour issues. As a precursor to this, the ILO's Worker Education Project was instrumental in generating trade unionist commitment to taking action on child labour issues. Members of UCCL's committee have come from across the spectrum of industries and sectors and have helped to ensure a broad interest from across the trade union community.

Further reading

Child Domestic Worker Survey in Phnom Penh, report of the survey conducted in 2003 by the National Institute of Statistics in collaboration with ILO-IPEC (Cambodia, 2004).

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Indonesia

Country Programme Overview

According to the ILO study¹²³ on child domestic labour in Indonesia, an estimated 700,000 children younger than 18 have household jobs in the country. Their working situations are very serious and that calls for immediate attention and support from the society at large. Some 19.7 per cent of the child domestic workers surveyed in the ILO study work longer than 15 hours a day; 99 per cent of them do not have even one day of weekly rest. Around 31 per cent of them receive 125,001–150,000 *rupiah* (US\$13–\$16) per month as their monthly salary. Nearly 93 per cent of them are girls.

It is likely that the number of child domestic workers is on the rise. The recent trend of overseas migration seems to put pressure on children to seek jobs as domestic workers to fill in the demand–supply gap of domestic workers in the country. Indonesia has become the second largest exporter of labour, after the Philippines. At least 72 per cent of Indonesian legal migrant workers are women; 72 per cent of which find employment in the domestic sector.¹²⁴

A recent Human Rights Watch publication, *Always on Call: Abuse and Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers in Indonesia*, echoes the same concerns for child domestic workers. The report, based on interviews with 44 child domestic workers, government officials and concerned parties, underscores the seriousness of the issue and appeals to different parties, including the Government of Indonesia and the ILO, to take immediate action.

However, as earlier mentioned, the first phase (five years) of the National Plan of Action on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (NPA-WFCL) does not prioritize child domestic “helpers”¹²⁵ as an immediate target. Thus, they are not included in the time-bound programme Indonesia. A complementary programme to specifically target child domestic workers has been designed and currently ongoing. The programme leads the national efforts against child domestic labour to the second phase (ten years) of the NPA-WFCL that starts in 2007 when the remaining seven sectors, including child domestic labour, are to be addressed.

That programme consists of dual strategies: The first part focuses on promoting change in the policy and enabling environment through awareness raising, policy advocacy and direct support to policy development.

For instance, the Faculty of Films and Television, Jakarta Institute of Arts (FFTV-IKJ) raised awareness on child domestic labour through the production of short films; a community radio station was established in one child domestic worker-sending area to increase awareness on child trafficking and child domestic labour among local people; and the 2002 “Weekly day of rest” campaign was revived in 2005 by the Association of Indonesian Domestic Worker Suppliers (APPSI) in collaboration with the Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI) and others.

APPSI is a new partner in the movement to combat child domestic labour. By getting a suppliers’ association on board, the programme intends to reach out to the maximum numbers of potential child domestic workers and existing child domestic workers to protect their rights as children. A recent APPSI-led public rally to advocate the rights of (child) domestic workers successfully generated interests from both the public and policy makers.

¹²³ ILO: *Bunga-bunga di Atas Padas*: op.cit.

¹²⁴ Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, 2003

¹²⁵ The Indonesian Government prefers to use the term “helpers” instead of workers; please see Part I of this report for details.

The Ministry of Women Empowerment (MWE) for a while has been committed to fighting against child domestic labour but now the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration (MMT) also has expressed its interest to develop a national policy on (child) domestic “helpers”. This may be triggered by the recent heightened public concerns, supported by a series of awareness raising efforts.

Currently, the MWE is drafting a guideline on direct assistance for child domestic “helpers” through national consultations. With this guideline, a referral system to respond to the abuse and exploitation of child domestic workers is to be operationalized with multiple service providers. The MWE and MMT have agreed to issue a joint ministerial decree to support this guideline.

The second part of the strategy focuses on maturing direct intervention programmes to prevent children from domestic employment, to protect existing child domestic workers and to withdraw others who are younger than the legal minimum age of 15. Based on the interventions initiated during Phase I of the TCRAM CDW Project, YKAI and Rumpun Gema Perempuan (RGP) are providing direct assistance to child domestic workers, especially educational opportunities (formal and non-formal).

The following provides a summary of the Indonesia programme:

Areas of intervention	Implementing agencies
Policy development	Ministry of Women’s Empowerment, Local government of Karawang
Policy advocacy	YKAI (NGO) in collaboration with JARAK (networking NGO), APPSI (employers’ association)
Awareness raising	IKJ (University), a community organization in collaboration with YKAI (NGO)
Research	---
Prevention	YKAI (NGO), Rumpun Gema Perempuan (NGO), APPSI (employers’ association)
Withdrawal & rehabilitation	YKAI (NGO), Rumpun Gema Perempuan (NGO)
Publication	English version of CDL baseline survey in 2003

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Indonesian local terms and acronyms

APPSI	Association of Indonesian Domestic Worker Suppliers
<i>Attensi</i>	A yellow sheet to gather listeners' messages and requests for the <i>Radio Pelangi</i> community station
BAPPEDA	The district development agency
<i>barongsay</i>	A Chinese traditional dance
BPMS	Board of Community and Social Empowerment
<i>Bunga-bunga di Atas Padas</i>	<i>Flowers on the Stony Ground - The Phenomenon of Child Domestic Workers in Indonesia</i> , a book and radio series
DISNAKER	District Office of Manpower
DKJ	Jakarta's Art Council
FFTV-IKJ	<i>Fakultas Film Dan Televisi - Institute Kesenian Jakarta</i> , or Faculty of Film and Television - Jakarta Institute of Arts
<i>Griya Rumpum</i>	A RGP-run centre for child domestic workers
ISM	Indofood Sukses Makmur, a large national food company
JARAK	A networking organization that has been conducting advocacy work to prevent children from trafficking
KOMPAS	A national newspaper
MMT	Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration
<i>monte</i>	A bead product, handicraft
OPERATA	<i>Organisasi Pekerja Rumah Tangga Anak</i> , the Organization of Child Domestic Workers
<i>Perda</i>	a local regulation
Radio Pelangi	Radio Rainbow, a community radio station in Panyingkiran village, Karawang district
RGP	Rumpum Gema Perempuan, a national NGO
<i>Sanggar Puri</i>	A YKAI-run centre for child domestic workers
<i>Suara Griya</i>	"The Voice of the House", a newsletter from OPERATA
YKAI	<i>Yayasan Kesejahteraan Anak Indonesia</i> , Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation, a national NGO

A Ray of Hope for Child Domestic Workers

~ Tracing 24 withdrawn children ~

Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI)

"I never want to go back to work as a domestic worker," says 14-year old Mili. She is one of 24 beneficiaries of YKAI's withdrawal programme. She was removed from child domestic labour and returned to school two years ago with help from YKAI. She now lives with her younger sister Andri, 7, alone in Kebumen district of Central Java province. Her only income is the money that her mother sends from Jakarta working as a domestic worker. She can only spend 6,000 rupiah (approx. US\$0.65) a day. They live in a wooden shanty house without windows or electricity. With the two sisters living alone in dire poverty, Mili is still motivated to continue her study. In fact, she ranks first in her junior high school class. Mili adds, "I prefer living alone with my sister to living with my employer in Jakarta."

Background

The **Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI)** started working for child domestic workers in Bekasi, a suburb of Jakarta thick with middle-class families and a known place to find domestic work employment. Under the TCRAM CDW Project Phase I, YKAI established a drop-in centre for child domestic workers called *Sanggar Puri* where they can meet others during the weekends. At *Sanggar Puri*, children can receive non-formal education and vocational training courses such as sawing, handicraft and *monte* (beading). The centre employs three social workers and teachers for non-formal education and vocational training.

One of the primary activities of *Sanggar Puri* is its "withdrawal" programme. It targets mostly children younger than the legal minimum age of employment (15 years) and aims to remove them from their labour situation to resume their education with scholarship support. Under Phase I, YKAI intended to withdraw 25 children but eventually 24 children were removed. Under the current Phase II, YKAI hopes to withdraw 50 more, all of them girls.

After two years of the withdrawal programme under Phase I, YKAI social workers continue to regularly monitor the situation of the 24 children. To review the children's current situations, YKAI conducted a post-project monitoring mission. The mission team visited nine of the 24 children to see what had become of them after returning to school.

Accomplishments

➤ Selecting targeted children

The withdrawal process is not easy. First of all, the targeted children need to be identified by the social workers. This essentially means they have to be among the child domestic workers visiting *Sanggar Puri* or have some access to outsiders, as many of the child domestic workers in Bekasi work seven days a week without any rest or any contact with outsiders. However, to get around this challenge, the social workers regularly visit each household in targeted communities to identify child domestic workers and negotiate with the employers to give their child domestic workers some free time to visit the centre.

The YKAI social workers then select children for the withdrawal programme based on age, motivation to resume education, likelihood for withdrawal and the degree of exploitation/abuse in the workplace. However, the worse the working conditions are, typically the harder it is for outsiders to reach the child domestic workers in those households. Resistance from the employers is too overwhelming to first reach them, even more so to withdraw them.

➤ Consultations

Once the targeted child domestic workers are selected, the social workers meet many times with them, their employers and eventually with their parents back home. Because many of the children come from different places to work in the Jakarta area, it is not easy to get in touch with their parents. Eventually the social workers find them and visit at least once before the withdrawal takes place to assess the feasibility of sending them back to their parents. Not all the parents agree to let their children stop working and go back to school, even with the scholarships provided by YKAI. Some of them need the additional income their child provides or at least the reduced expenditure they create by leaving home. Some simply do not see the benefit of educating their daughters.

In the case of Mili (from the prologue), she was determined to take advantage of the chance to go back to school. She is a very bright girl and could easily pass the entrance exam of the best junior secondary school in Bekasi, even when she was still engaged as a domestic worker. Her motivation was high. But her mother was working somewhere unknown in Jakarta. Thus, the social workers contacted her uncle who decided to take her in, be her guardian and let her continue studying.

Employers' reactions vary significantly from one to another. During Phase I, three employers refused to release their child employees. Although they might have been the children who needed to have the assistance from YKAI the most, there was nothing the social workers could do once employers shut the doors in front of them. Those children, all of them younger than 15, remain as child domestic workers. Mili's case was the most difficult case, recalls Ms. Muindasari, a YKAI social worker. Her employer at first said "No" to the idea of her leaving. Ms. Muindasari repeatedly visited the woman until she finally consented to let Mili go.

Tuti's story

When Tuti's* father died, she and her mother left their village to find domestic worker jobs in Jakarta. She was 11 years old.

Tuti soon found an employer in Bekasi, a suburb of Jakarta, but was separated from her mother. At first, her pregnant employer was kind to her and treated her as a part of family. But after the baby was born, she became harsh with Tuti. Tuti worked under constant harassment and verbal abuse. Being yelled at all the time, she felt useless and unwanted. She had not been paid for her work for over a year and a half when she discovered the *Sanggar Puri* centre for child domestic workers, run by the YKAI NGO.

There she learned the *monte* (beading) skill. After six months, YKAI social workers successfully removed the 12-year-old girl from her job. She was keen to continue her education and went back to school.

Now she studies in a junior high school and her academic performance is outstanding. Although she lives alone with her younger sister in a very financially difficult situation, she is motivated to finish her schooling.

*Not her real name

➤ Withdrawal of child domestic workers

The targeted children are withdrawn only once a year, when the new academic school year starts in July. YKAI provides a scholarship of 1 million *rupiah* (approx. US\$106) for each child to cover three-years of school expenses, such as registration fee, books, uniform, etc. Although school tuition is free for compulsory education at public school in Indonesia, hidden expenses for schooling add up to around 700,000 *rupiah* (US\$74) per year. Thus, the amount YKAI provides is not at all enough to cover the actual expenses for three years. However, it is considered as an incentive and subsidy and that the parents' must share in the responsibility of sending their children to school. YKAI social workers discuss this point with parents and emphasize the benefits of education.

The YKAI social workers accompany each child back to her home and make sure that she is registered at school to start the next academic year. The social workers visit the school and meet with the relevant teachers to discuss a returning child. It is very important to involve schools as part of the monitoring mechanism for each child. After all, with the YKAI social workers based in Jakarta, their monitoring and follow up is done at a distance and they need to develop contacts close to each child who can play a role. A strong tie with the school is a key to success for the withdrawal programme. The aim of the withdrawal programme is to send targeted children back to school and to help them finish their education.

Apart from schools, YKAI also establishes relationships with possible contact persons, such as community leaders, neighbours, etc. They can keep YKAI informed on the situation of each child and alert them to problems. If something happens at home or in school, which makes it difficult for the child to continue studying, YKAI may need to intervene.

This happened with Eli Susanti, a 15-year-old former child domestic worker in Karawang district. Her class teacher accused Eli of being lazy and having an "improper attitude" in class. Eli felt the teacher's attitude made it too hard to continue studying. A YKAI social worker intervened, hearing out both sides. The teacher discouraged Eli to continue her study as she had not been in the class regularly. But he could not explain what he meant by an "improper attitude." The YKAI social worker explained Eli's situation to him. She had missed class for four days once because she lost one of her shoes. She was too embarrassed to go to school barefooted but had to wait for her father to buy her a new pair. A street vendor selling leaves, her father only earns 20,000 *rupiah* (US\$2) a day. Thus, it took a while for him to buy her a new pair.

With her father not too keen to let Eli continue studying and her teacher discouraging her, Eli was under tremendous pressure to drop out again when the social worker contacted her. The social worker helped her go back to school, smoothing over the relationship with her teacher and encouraging her father to support her studies. Eli is enthusiastic about her future to become a doctor. She wants to fight to continue her study and YKAI social workers will closely follow her case.

➤ Monitoring the 24 children

Monitoring the 24 withdrawn children continues throughout Phase II as does the withdrawal of another 50 children. Because all the girls live far from each other and far from *Sanggar Puri*, monitoring them is extremely challenging and labour-intensive. YKAI made agreements with the schools to monitor the children's attendance and performance. In some cases, YKAI identified contact persons in respective communities who can provide



Children and staff of Sanggar Puri, YKAI

information about the children whenever required.

YKAI social workers contact each school at the end of every semester to discuss each child in the programme and her academic performance. The social workers also connect with the parents and the contact persons in the community every three months to monitor the situation and to make sure that they are continuing their studies. Not everyone can be reached by phone. Thus, the social workers travel by bus and/or motorbike to visit the children from time to time. Ms. Muindasari has travelled as far as 300 km to visit a child.

➤ Tracing nine children

After two years of the withdrawal operation, YKAI conducted a post-project monitoring mission. Ms. Muindasari took along an ILO-IPEC senior programme officer and a journalist from the leading newspaper in Indonesia (KOMPAS) to visit nine children in Bekasi, Karawang, Subang, Indramayu, Cirebon, Kuningan (West Java Province) and Kebumen (Central Java Province). Due to the time constraints, they could not visit all 24 withdrawn children, who are scattered around the country.

This was the first attempt to visit several children at once. The purpose of the mission was to review the children's status, both academically and socially, after two years of their being withdrawn from child domestic labour. All nine children reported that they had no desire to return to Jakarta or to domestic work. The mission team also found that all 24 children, except three girls, were still studying at school. The three girls unfortunately dropped out due to family situations and marital status.

Although the others are still in school, they remain in very difficult financial situations. Some are even on the verge of dropping out. YKAI's scholarships can provide the registration fee and some school expenses; however, hidden requirements for schooling such as a monthly school maintenance fee and the cost of extra curricula activities are a huge burden for poor families. Pak Daslim, the father of one child in the programme, questioned the benefit of schooling, as he sees many educated persons unemployed. While his daughter's previous income may have been meagre, he argued, she was at least contributing to his household income, not to his expenditures. His argument underscores how essential it is to address the root causes of child domestic labour together with the consequences. Poverty is definitely one of the reasons why children leave school to work. Without improving the family economic situation, the withdrawn children may not remain free from child labour. The KOMPAS journalist stressed this point in her subsequent article, "Poverty, the Root of the Child Domestic Labour Problem" (KOMPAS, 2 July 2005).

It was strategically very clever to invite a journalist to join the mission. YKAI expected to raise awareness on the issue of child domestic labour and the impact of its programme to each targeted child through the media. Following up with the mission, the KOMPAS Sunday edition ran a two-page article (24 April 2005) based on the interviews that the journalist had done with the nine withdrawn children she met. She featured four children's cases and discussed child domestic labour, poverty, education, trafficking and the YKAI programme. After seeing the YKAI activities and knowing the real situations of child domestic workers in this country through interviews with the former child domestic workers, the KOMPAS journalist now follows the issue very closely and has become an advocate for eliminating child domestic labour. YKAI's strategic ally with journalists prepares the general public for social change and helps pressure them to bring the issue of child domestic labour to the table of policy discussions.

Good practices

Accompanying the children back to their home villages is essential to helping them settle into a “new” and old environment. The YKAI social workers establish ties with schools and the parents. Working closely with the schools, YKAI can make sure that the children remain at school. In addition, it is *effective* to identify contact persons who can be informants on the situation of each child because it is physically very challenging to monitor them from afar. The contact persons can be community leaders, teachers or someone reliable in the community. Through those contact persons, YKAI can detect any problems regarding the withdrawn children at an early stage. In two situations, YKAI has transferred children to different schools due to problems at the school they first returned to.

Continuous monitoring of the withdrawn children is extremely *relevant* to ensure a long-lasting impact of the interventions provided by the TCRAM CDW Project. Usually, this type of monitoring is beyond the project implementation period and is not possible due to funding arrangements. However, children’s lives continue beyond the project period, thus practitioners should be responsible, at least partially, to the outcomes of the interventions.

Involving journalists in the project implementation may be a double-edged sword. It could bring a negative impact on the project and beneficiaries if the journalists did not fully understand the issues and/or situations. However, it can be very *strategic* and can bring about a bigger *impact* if the project staff convince journalists to take up for the project and/or issue. They can disseminate the information to a wider audience in a very convincing way. They also can pressure the government for policy change by forming a critical mass of concern.

Lessons learned

- Providing one-time scholarships to the withdrawn children is not enough for them to continue studying. The withdrawal programme needs to include interventions to address the economic situation of the families of the children. Having said that, it is extremely challenging to address it, as the targeted beneficiaries do not stay at the same place and probably it goes beyond just one project’s scope.
- Investing time and efforts in the relationship with journalists is worthwhile in trying to raise awareness on the issue.

Necessary conditions

- Without very committed and hardworking social workers, this type of intervention cannot be carried out. Negotiations with employers require patience and perseverance.
- The implementing agency needs to have credibility and a trusting relationship with local authorities, schools and all persons relevant to operate a withdrawal operation.

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Standing Up for Our Rights

~ A solidarity organization of child domestic workers ~

OPERATA¹²⁶ and Rumpum Gema Perempuan (RGP)

"I had never imagined having an opportunity to join an organization like OPERATA. Now I have friends and learn many things. If I have a problem, my friends will lend me a hand to help and to support. I also learn about my rights and benefit from sharing my knowledge with my friends."

Umi Munawaroh, a member of OPERATA, November 2005

Background

OPERATA, a solidarity organization of child domestic workers living in Pamulang, a suburb of Jakarta, began in May 2004. Its establishment was inspired by the experience of SUMAPI in the Philippines (see *Philippines, Finding a Voice*).

Rumpum Gema Perempuan (RGP), a national NGO, has been working with women's and children's issues in Indonesia since 2000. Considering the significant role that domestic workers play in Indonesian families and in helping women in the households, RGP started to work on the issue related to domestic workers in 2002 with research conducted with the Centre for Development Studies at Atmadjaya Catholic University in Jakarta. RGP began supporting child domestic workers in Pamulang, a suburb of Jakarta in 2003 with a centre-based intervention.

The programme coordinator of RGP joined an exchange programme in 2004 that was facilitated by JARAK, a NGO network, and a child domestic workers task force in Indonesia, to learn about the action against child domestic labour in the Philippines. The coordinator met members of SUMAPI and was impressed with the importance of child domestic workers' standing up for their rights. Child domestic workers, in general, have low self-esteem due to the fact that they work at the disposal of their employers. Also due to their restricted access to information and outsiders, they feel that they are alone facing their hardships. RGP believed that to support such children, focussing on their self empowerment would prove to be indispensable. The coordinator shared what she learned from the SUMAPI experience during the usual Saturday night discussion session with child domestic workers in Pamulang.

The child domestic workers in Pamulang were very excited to learn about SUMAPI and soon were motivated to establish a similar organization by themselves. They thought that by establishing an organization for child domestic workers, they could be united and their voices could be heard. OPERATA was established to provide a forum for child domestic workers to discuss their concerns and interests together and to support each other to enjoy their rights as children and as child domestic workers.

¹²⁶ OPERATA, means *Organisasi Pekerja Rumah Tangga Anak* (Organization of Child Domestic Workers).

Accomplishments

➤ The RGP strategy

When RGP first established its centre for child domestic workers in the Pamulang subdistrict called *Griya Rumpum* in July 2003, not many child domestic workers could actually come and join activities. RGP provides multi-dimensional support such as non-formal education, skills development training, discussion forums, social counselling, etc. While working together with child domestic workers in Pamulang, RGP realized that child domestic workers have special characteristics, situations and needs: They work seven days a week and have never been given time off; they work from dawn to dusk and at the employers' disposal; and it is extremely difficult for them to leave their employers' house to join any RGP activity. RGP staff quickly realized that without employers' support, its programme for child domestic workers would not work in the community. RGP, therefore, decided to use a gradual and less confrontational approach for the progressive elimination of child domestic labour by building a broad alliance with key parties, including employers of child domestic workers, community leaders and relevant local government agencies.

The RGP strategy directly works in three dimensions: First, it is imperative to cultivate a friendly relationship with employers and community members to gain their support for the programme. Some of the employers strongly oppose the idea of letting their employees have free time and join the activities provided by RGP. They do not see any value in investing time and opportunity for their child domestic workers to grow as children. To tackle this situation, RGP sends its social workers to visit door to door, talking to each employer, disseminating information about its programmes for child domestic workers and negotiating with them on their child domestic workers' free time if any. RGP also makes special efforts to work more intensively with Neighbourhood Associations and Household Associations that are independent and powerful mechanisms under local governance. Having them involved in the programme, RGP can communicate with employers more easily. Support from the community as a whole can produce good peer pressure and a monitoring of each individual household.

Second, RGP provides social support to child domestic workers directly through its *Griya Rumpum* centre. The centre is the only place for child domestic workers to mingle with each other and feel free from their responsibilities as child domestic workers. Prior to the establishment of *Griya Rumpum*, most child domestic workers did not have any chance to meet each other or access the outside world. They had been practically confined to their employers' households without any access to outsiders. At *Griya Rumpum*, child domestic workers can take non-formal education classes, skills development classes including English and computer classes and receive social and religious counselling. While working with the children gathered in *Griya Rumpum*, RGP realized that it was extremely important to work with child domestic workers to change their mindsets on how they saw their lives and to enhance their inner strengths to overcome emotional stresses, such as loneliness, depression, apathy, etc. They also realized the importance of empowering them to protect themselves from potential exploitation and abuses by offering appropriate information and support for emergency cases.

Third, OPERATA is a forum for child domestic workers to be united, find mutual support to empower themselves and to voice their concerns, to learn from each other and to build on their potential. RGP plays the role of facilitator for OPERATA to grow as an organization. It supports OPERATA by providing information, opportunities for experience and funding.

➤ Organization of OPERATA

The child domestic workers conducted several meetings to decide the vision, mission and purpose of OPERATA and its organizational structure. Around 80 people have joined OPERATA and half of them have been very actively involved in its regular meetings. OPERATA does not limit its membership to girls, although current members all are girls.

Some key management positions were selected through elections: chairperson, secretary, treasurer and programme coordinator. Each member has an equal voice and role in the decision-making processes. To decide any organizational matter, decisions are made collectively in a spirit of trust. Voting is reserved as the last resort.

Each member receives a membership card; they have to contribute 500 *rupiah* (US\$0.05) per week per person to OPERATA. The membership contributions are considered “*Solidarity funds*” and support members in two ways: 1) cover medical costs and 2) cover death-in-the-family expenses. So far, OPERATA has collected 400,000 *rupiah* (US\$40).

OPERATA members meet three Saturdays in each month, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at *Griya Rumpum*. One Saturday is for a regular organizational meeting and the other two meetings are for serial discussions of specific topics.

OPERATA

Vision

The achievement of equality for domestic workers and child domestic workers in every sphere of their lives, such as families, working places, education canter and communities; and

The freedom of domestic workers and child domestic workers from all forms of violence, discrimination and injustice.

Mission

1. We, OPERATA, organize regular discussions related to children’s and women’s issues;
2. We, OPERATA, conduct campaigns on anti-violence against women, children, domestic workers and child domestic workers;
3. We, OPERATA, support the effort toward the progressive elimination of child domestic labour among anyone younger than 15;
4. We, OPERATA, work collectively toward the fulfilment of rights as workers, women, children, citizens and as human beings.

Purpose

1. To bring child domestic workers together to fulfil their basic human rights to participate, be united and involved in decision-making processes;
2. To enhance child domestic workers’ knowledge and understanding of their rights as children, women and workers;
3. To provide opportunities for child domestic workers to develop their ability, capacity and potential;
4. To improve their self-esteem, self-confidence and self-reliance to be able to express their interests and to negotiate with their employers and members of communities; and
5. To encourage child domestic workers to share their concerns, interests and experiences among themselves to learn from each other and strengthen their solidarity.

➤ Activities of OPERATA

OPERATA has a wide range of activities, from regular meetings to publishing a newsletter. All the activities are decided by the OPERATA members with support from RGP and include:

1. Regular meeting once a month;
2. Serial discussion, twice a month, to highlight the issue of child domestic labour and related issues;
3. "Art Rehearsal" and performance;
4. Islamic gathering (*Pengajian dan Tadarusan*);
5. Excursions;
6. Community social work (*kerja bakti*, or cleaning the environment) and participation in community events;
7. Support for the activities in *Griya Rumpun*; and
8. Publishing OPERATA's newsletter.

The serial discussions are organized to raise awareness of child domestic workers on basic human rights and provide opportunities for them to deepen their understanding of their rights. RGP developed a module for the serial discussions, called a "*Module for awareness raising for child domestic workers*" and which consists of 13 topics.

RGP tested the module during a six-month period in collaboration with OPERATA and eventually was transferred to OPERATA for implementing. OPERATA has authority to modify it based on their inputs and to utilize it in their serial discussions, adding on relevant issues as they see fit. A recent discussion centred on a review of an ILO-IPEC publication (which was based on a radio series), "*Bunga-bunga di Atas Padas (The Flowers on the Stony Ground ~ The Phenomenon of Child Domestic Workers in Indonesia)*" and initiated a book review among themselves. The book contains an overview of the situation of child domestic workers from its history to current programmes to support them.

A significant impact of the serial discussions is that the members can join the meetings. Initially the members needed to persuade their employers to allow them to leave their houses. Having been sensitized to their rights gives them much more confidence and strength in dealing with any problem that they may face in their workplace. RGP's policy is to be there to help the members if they encounter any problem that they cannot solve on their own, but they are encouraged to first try by themselves to change the situation.

Another important activity is the Art Rehearsal, which provides opportunities for the children to explore their creativity through art forms. Through the Art Rehearsal, they can express their feelings, interests, hopes and dreams, which is not necessarily easy to do in their daily life. In the safe environment of OPERATA, the members are free to express themselves through poetry, drama, singing and composing songs, choreographing and dancing. The Art Rehearsal helps

Module for Awareness Raising for CDWs

- Poverty and child domestic labour
- Introduction to sex and gender
- Introduction to ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182
- UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UN CRC)
- The global picture of children and child labour
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- National policy regarding child labour
- Reproductive rights and healthy relationships
- Rights as child domestic workers and the struggle for respect of them
- Violation of human rights against women and the referral system for abuse victims
- Ability to communicate and negotiate with employers
- Building solidarity and empathy
- The reason to be united

them to build their self confidence and contributes to building positive images of themselves and their lives, as some voices of OPERATA members reflect:

"I'm happy in joining the Art Rehearsal. I didn't realize that I had talent in drama and could perform it on stage along with my friends." Etty, 2005

"Reciting poetry is my dream, and I'm totally satisfied with my performance because I can share my feelings to all!" Sofia, 2005

The Art Rehearsal is also a tool for raising awareness among the public and community members on the issue of child domestic labour. RGP organizes an art performance by OPERATA on Indonesian Independence Day as well as other opportunities. People, especially employers, have commented they enjoyed the art performances by their child domestic workers. While the performances contain many subtle messages, their primary point is to publicize clearly and loudly that child domestic workers have the right to fair treatment and to be respected.

OPERATA publishes its newsletter, *Suara Griya* (The Voice of the House), once every three months and helps to empower the child domestic workers. The members decide the content and produce the articles, short stories and poetry themselves; thus it becomes a communication tool to share experiences and thoughts and to support each other. They can learn from each other's experiences and support each other through letters from the readers. The newsletter helps ease the psychological stress in their daily lives.

Last, the Islamic gathering (*Pengajian dan Tadrusan*) is another powerful forum for child domestic workers to find their inner strength to overcome some hardships in their lives. Many child domestic workers come from religious communities. They are accustomed to religious activities in their home towns; some of them are graduates of religious (Islamic) schools. Thus, it is crucial for them to maintain their religious beliefs and spiritual tradition in their new environment. Spiritual guidance is helpful for them to see their lives positively and to be strong when they face difficulties. The Islamic gathering serves as psychosocial support. As well, the participants learn that the Koran can provide a good basis for understanding basic human rights. For instance, Allah states in the Koran:

"Treat your wives and your slaves equally as human beings"

"Pay your workers before they get tired"

"Trafficking in humans is prohibited. If you are involved in trafficking, you will be grouped as the enemy of Muhammad prophet."

Good practices

The RGP support aims at changing the mindsets of children and the way they perceive themselves and their lives. Once they are enlightened by an understanding of basic human rights, they can be empowered to take charge of their lives. Activities to reinforce their empowerment and build up their self confidence can *sustain* a stronger self-image.

By making the targeted beneficiaries as active change agents of the project, the project is *responsive* to the needs and concerns of the targeted children.

It was *strategic* that RGP involved employers of child domestic workers, community leaders and relevant local government agencies. Without their support, child domestic workers cannot join the activities planned for them. Initially, it was very difficult for RGP to gather child domestic workers in the targeted community. The social workers were not seen positively as they would entice child domestic workers into leaving their employers. However, through community meetings with the Neighbourhood Association and the Household Association, RGP gradually managed to establish its presence and support for their work.

Lessons learned

- RGP facilitation is definitely needed; however, for the children to take charge of the activities of OPERATA, RGP should not over-facilitate the members.
- It is easier for religious children, in this case Muslims, to relate to the concept of human rights when it is introduced in the framework of the Koran.
- Employers of child domestic workers can be more accessible when RGP gains support from the neighbourhood and household associations.
- Given opportunities to express themselves through art forms, child domestic workers find they have talents and potential just like any other child their age.

Necessary conditions

- Without support from the communities and employers of child domestic workers, it is not possible to provide support for child domestic workers, not to mention to mobilize them to organize a solidarity organization.
- Some free time needs to be allowed for child domestic workers to participate in OPERATA and the activities by RGP. A regulation for a weekly day off should be established.

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Stop Child Trafficking From Our Village!

~ Setting up a local regulation to protect children and women from trafficking ~

Local government of Karawang district

Background

The district of Karawang is located about 65 km east of Jakarta. It is one of the largest districts in the province of West Java, with a population of around 2 million in an 1,800 km² area. In recent years, many factories have moved into the district, yet people still think of Karawang as one of the major rice producers in the country. The district has some serious social concerns such as poverty, large number of unemployed and underemployed adults and youth, early marriages and low educational attainment among children. As well, trafficking in children has become a major problem.

In April 2005, YKAI and ILO-IPEC Jakarta organized a consultation workshop with local stakeholders in Karawang to discuss alarming data on trafficking from Panyingkiran, a village in the district: During the previous year (2004), some 400 cases of child trafficking (all of them girls) were recorded in the village of about 1,600 households. Out of the 400, around 340 cases involved child trafficking to the Middle East, mostly Saudi Arabia and into domestic labour. It seems as though there are established channels for young people to seek employment as domestic workers abroad; children use false identification to make their way into these channels. While many young people in the village (both boys and girls) lack employment opportunities, seeking jobs outside (in country and/or abroad) seems to be a growing trend.

Accomplishments

The local government of Karawang district decided to take a serious step toward protecting children and women from trafficking phenomenon. The district development agency (BAPPEDA), after acknowledging the problem of child trafficking, especially for the purpose of child domestic labour, proposed a local regulation (commonly known as *Perda*) against it. At the same time, BAPPEDA also realized the need to raise awareness on the issue among the local people so that the newly prepared *Perda* would be supported and would have value in combating trafficking.

To raise awareness and to involve the whole community in preparing the *Perda*, the district officials turned to public dialogues: one to discuss the *Perda* and the other to discuss the problem with Panyingkiran villagers. They then developed a community radio station, *Radio Pelangi*, to promote government messages on education and human trafficking prevention.

➤ Public dialogue at the district city hall

The public dialogue took place on 1 June 2005 at the district city hall, with support from the local government of Karawang, the Ministry of Women Empowerment, YKAI, JARAK¹²⁷ and ILO. The Minister of Women Empowerment and the ILO Jakarta Office director participated in the dialogue and supported the local government's initiative to issue the *Perda* against the trafficking of children with a special focus on child domestic labour.

¹²⁷ JARAK is a networking organization that has been conducting advocacy work to prevent child trafficking. With the support from ILO, JARAK has been organizing public dialogues in five districts in the north coast of West Java province: Indramayu, Cirebon, Subang, Bekasi and also Karawang.

During the opening ceremony, the head of BAPPEDA acknowledged the problem of trafficking in Karawang and called for immediate action to improve the human development indicators for the district. The Minister of Women Empowerment urged the local government to issue the *Perda* against trafficking and reiterated the importance of education by appealing to parents to send their children to school. The ILO director encouraged the work of the local government and talked of the need for active participation from the community to make a difference.



H.E. Ms. Meutia H. Swasono, Minister of Women Empowerment gives an interview to the press

Two former child domestic workers made powerful testimonies during the opening of the public dialogue. Adik, who worked as a child domestic worker in Saudi Arabia, shared her experience of being a “working machine” for a family of seven children. She worked from 5 a.m. to 2 a.m. of the next day, everyday, without any payment. When she complained, the employer threatened to cut both her hands. After experiencing the life of a slave, Adik strongly recommended that the local government help children like her in two ways: to reduce the school expenses¹²⁸ so that everyone could go to school and to create job opportunities locally.

More than 200 locals, including the head of the district, local high-ranking officials, parliament members, political party leaders, community leaders, religious leaders, educators, health providers, interested children and their families, participated in the public dialogue. They discussed the issue of trafficking in general and trafficking for the purpose of child domestic labour in particular. After the public dialogue, the participants reached a common understanding that the issue of child trafficking in Karawang was a pressing issue and the proposed *Perda* was a good instrument to combat it.

➤ Community dialogue in Panyingkiran village

Parallel to the public dialogue, another public awareness-raising event was organized in Panyingkiran village, where the trafficking problem is most acute. More than 1,000 people, both adults and children, attended. Village youth, mobilized by YKAI social workers, presented a drama performance of a story about two sisters who were trafficked to Saudi Arabia as child domestic workers. The performance aimed to educate the public on the risks involved in the “lucrative” employment opportunity in Saudi Arabia. It was produced based on real stories that were gathered from returning children who worked as child domestic workers. One of the issues touched upon was the problem of out-of-marriage pregnancies. In this particular village, 20 former domestic workers from the Middle East have given birth to babies with Arab fathers, though the mothers have no proper marriage arrangement.

The community dialogue turned out to be the biggest event in the history of the village, and generated overwhelming attention to the issue of trafficking among villagers. The event was covered by five national newspapers and five national TV stations (Trans TV, Metro TV, SCTV, RCTI and TVRI). One station even aired an investigative report with one of the former child domestic workers who gave her testimony during the public dialogue. The Media Indonesia (national media), Pikiran Rakyat (provincial media) and Radar Karawang (local media) also covered the event.

¹²⁸ In principle, basic education is free in Karawang. However, there are many costs for a child to go to school, such as costs for text books, school uniforms, transportation, extra curricula activities, school maintenance, etc.

➤ Community radio

Radio Pelangi (Radio Reinbow), the community radio station specifically created to provide a forum for anti-trafficking messages, aired a special session on the community dialogue in the evenings. The experience of *Radio Pelangi* is discussed in the next section, *Power to the Community*.

➤ Preparing the *Perda* against trafficking

The idea of preparing a *Perda* initiated in early January 2005 and was very well received at the public dialogue in June. As a result, the local government of Karawang publicly announced its political commitment to issue the *Perda*. BAPPEDA conducted several consultation meetings; the Board of Community and Social Empowerment (BPMS) became the focal point for issuing the *Perda* against trafficking. A drafting team consisting of 11 members from BAPPEDA, BPMS, the District Office of Manpower (DISNAKER), the District Office of Social Welfare, the District Legal Office, the University of Karawang, YKAI and JARAK was set up.

The members frequently met to discuss the scope and contents of the *Perda*. The discussions heated up regarding whether this *Perda* should cover trafficking in general (human trafficking) or should focus only on trafficking in children and women. A position paper for the *Perda* in the context of national initiatives for anti-trafficking was prepared to identify its exact objectives and scope. After the long debate, the drafting team decided that the proposed *Perda* will focus on trafficking in children and women. Their decision was based on movements at the national level where two bills related to human trafficking are now being prepared; one against trafficking in general and the other on migration. The team's decision reflected an interest in avoiding duplication.

As of December 2005, the *Perda* of the Karawang district concerning the elimination of trafficking in women and children had been drafted and ready for public discussion.

The proposed *Perda* highlights “domestic work employments” as a possible purpose for trafficking in children and women and declares the determination of the local government of Karawang to establish a “trafficking in children and women-free zone” (Chapter II, Article 2, 1&3). It also emphasizes the importance of education and that local governments (both district and village levels) are obliged “to ensure that each child can join the nine years of compulsory schooling” (Chapter IV, Article 4e). As per this *Perda*, a woman who intends to work outside of her village/subdistrict shall be obliged to have a letter of recommendation to work there (SRBD/K) issued by the village/subdistrict government (Chapter V, Article 5). Finally, to supervise and monitor the implementation of the *Perda*, a committee for eliminating trafficking in children and women was established. The draft document emphasizes the need for people's participation to implement the *Perda* by preventing and eliminating trafficking in children and women, rehabilitating its victims and by reporting trafficking cases to the Committee (Chapter VIII, Article 9).

Good practices

The *link* between child domestic labour and trafficking in Karawang is obvious. But even in less obvious cases, this link deserves more attention in the fight against trafficking. Typically discussions on trafficking in children and women assume the purpose is for commercial sex work, but trafficking services many demands, including child domestic labour.

The government of Karawang district took a very *proactive* step toward protecting its children and women from trafficking by creating a legal framework. This initiative sets a good precedent in the country, which other districts and provinces can follow. Having the Ministry of Women Empowerment as a strong supporter of the initiative will help keep a government committed to its development.

During the preparation of the *Perda*, the local government of Karawang involved *people's participation* through broad-based consultations, awareness-raising campaigns and radio programmes. In this way, the proposed *Perda* was articulated among people well in advance of its issuance, generating better support for acceptance as well as implementation.

The local government of Karawang also maximized people's interests in trafficking issues and opportunities to combat it by integrating child domestic labour into the ongoing discussion on trafficking. Trafficking issues are hot topics globally and nationally, thus some anti-trafficking initiatives may be already in place at the local level. Instead of duplicating efforts, it is *effective* to piggy-back on existing efforts against child domestic labour.

Lessons learned

- Bringing a government minister and high-ranking officials from the national level to the public events in Karawang intensified people's interest in the issue and accelerated the process of drafting the *Perda*. The strong encouragement from the Minister of Women Empowerment and the very public stand the local government of Karawang took in making its political commitment created a situation in which there was no turning back.
- From the early stage, the drafting committee involved a variety of key stakeholders in the district. Sometimes when many parties are involved, coordination can become cumbersome and difficult. In this case, having a very committed focal point and support from the members helped to create more of collaborative spirit among members from different parties and their differences became a strength that fuelled a common mission; acceptance by the local parliament is expected, largely due to the spirit of working together, which was instrumental in achieving a speedy process.

Necessary conditions

- Honesty to admit a problem and a strong political commitment of the local government to respond to it is absolutely crucial to bringing about awareness and necessary legal measures that can be used to truly protect young people.

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Power to the Community

~ FM92.5 Radio Pelangi (Radio Rainbow) ~

*The Radio Organization of Panyingkiran Village, Karawang
with support from YKAI*

"I want to listen to Radio Pelangi!" the head of Karawang district pronounced one day. He had overheard that Radio Pelangi was very popular among its local Panyingkiran villagers and he wanted to hear the programmes while he was sitting at his office in the city of Karawang. After only six months in operation, Radio Pelangi now has wider coverage with a higher radio transmitting pole. The pole was donated by the head of district and the costs that were incurred for setting it up (1.5 million rupiah) were provided by the local village fund. The district head now listens to Radio Pelangi and uses it as a communication tool to send messages to the people of Karawang.

Background

A community radio station, *Radio Pelangi* (Radio Rainbow) was established in April 2005 in Panyingkiran village (in Karawang district) with coverage of around 10 km radius. Karawang district is a major child domestic worker-sending area (400 cases of child trafficking were recorded in 2004). Some 340 of those cases involved the trafficking of children to the Middle East, mostly to Saudi Arabia, to become child domestic workers.

The local government of Karawang has taken several initiatives to stop child trafficking. One is to establish a community radio in Panyingkiran village to raise awareness on the human trafficking phenomenon and to change the mindsets parents who send their daughters abroad to work as child domestic workers.

This initiative replicates a community radio station established in another ILO-IPEC project area in Indramayu district, also as an anti-trafficking activity. Community radio is a powerful tool to reach locals and has been proven effective in changing perceptions and behaviours. In the case of Indramayu, there were many commercial radio stations operating when the community radio station was set up. Thus, competition among stations was intense. However, no commercial radio has coverage in Panyingkiran village. Thus there was a better environment for higher listenership to *Radio Pelangi's* programmes and messages.

Accomplishments

➤ Establishing Radio Pelangi and developing broadcasters

Social workers from the Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI) mobilized 25 people in the village, including 18 broadcasters, interested in belonging to a "radio organization" (RO). The RO became the developers, obtaining space for the station in the village community centre. To officially set up the station, the RO needed to acquire a local operating licence. The RO obtained a letter of recommendation from the local office of information. The application and recommendation letter were submitted to the Ministry of Communication; the RO remains waiting for the official endorsement by the Indonesian Broadcasting Committee.

Meanwhile, it obtained permission for the station to start transmitting its programming. In addition to the donated space, community members helped to soundproof the broadcasting room and have donated CDs. Twenty-three locals with no experiences volunteered to be



Child broadcasters on air

the broadcasters: 13 of them are younger than 18 and equal numbers of males and females. With professionals helping, YKAI organized a series of trainings for the volunteers. In addition to broadcasting skills and radio operation, the topics of the training covered social issues such as trafficking, child labour, child domestic labour, etc. This quickly proved necessary; during one of the first sessions, the resource person asked for responses on the meaning of “trafficking”. One person described it as “something related to traffic on the street.”

➤ Schedule

The radio operates daily from 5 a.m. to 12 p.m. with a mix of music, local news, community guidance, awareness-raising messages, etc., as Table 9 shows. Even the head of the village has his air time turn, with a special programme focussing on “community guidance”.

Table 9: Radio Pelangi: Monday to Saturday programming

<i>Time</i>	<i>Programme</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>Broadcaster</i>
05:00 - 05:30 am	Sunrise meaningful (religious programme opening)		
05:30 - 07:00 am	Music for the people before work	<i>Dangdut</i> (Indonesian songs)	Abah Agung
07:00 - 08:00 am	YKAI's information	<i>Tarling</i> (Sundanese traditional music)	Kuwu Japrat (YKAI)
08:00 - 09:30 am	Morning newsletter	<i>Dangdut</i> (Indonesian songs)	Leo/Eva
09:30 - 11:00 am	The world of information	Bollywood songs	Thio/Rindu
11:00 - 12:30 am	Afternoon music	Pop music	Diwa/Evi
12:30 - 02:00 pm	Oldies songs	Oldies/pop music	Leo/Imey
02:00 - 04:00 pm	Sundanese music	Sundanese music/ Jaipong	Ewo/Opi
04:00 - 05:30 pm	Young people's planet	Pop music	Bagja/Gadis
05:30 - 06:30 pm	Religious rhythm	<i>Nasyid</i> / religious music	Abah Agung
06:30 - 08:00 pm	Pop hits	pop music	Marcel Nining/ Fltri
08:00 - 10:00 pm	Consultation bureau	<i>Dangdut</i> (Indonesian Song)	Roy/CH
10:00 - 12:00 pm	Midnight music	<i>Tarling</i> (Sundanese traditional music)	Bang Kumis/ Abah Anom

➤ The response

“I suddenly have many more friends than ever!” boasts one of the broadcasters. “They know me because of *Radio Pelangi*. Everyone listens to the radio and has a request for me.”

The response from the listeners has been overwhelming. Because there was no radio transmission previously in this village, thus, *Radio Pelangi* quickly gained popularity. The station receives 100–150 “request sheets”, known as *Attensi*; ten of the broadcasters who have mobile phones receive also around 50 requests daily via SMS messages. The requests can be for a particular song or to send a message to someone in the village.

The yellow *Attensi* requesting sheets are sold at street vendors and small shops in the village for 400 *rupiah* (US\$0.04), although “urgent” messages cost 500 *rupiah* (US\$0.05). Once purchased, they place the request on a board at the radio station, under a particular broadcaster’s name. In addition to generating funds, the request sheets measure the popularity of the programmes and broadcasters and are an effective communication tool between the listeners and the broadcasters.



Attensi on the board

The enrolment rate of children in the village to junior secondary school significantly improved from 30 per cent to 98 per cent in 2005/2006 academic year starting in July 2005.

Good practices

The most important success element of this practice is the strong *sense of ownership* of the community radio by the local people. The radio cannot run without contributions from the community. From the beginning, the community has been the main drivers of the initiative.

In addition, the sense of ownership makes the programme run in a *sustainable* manner. The income is generated from the sale of the request sheets; other income-generating plans are being developed. With a strong support from the listeners, the community radio can keep improving and sustain its operation.

It was also very *strategic* to set up a community radio in a targeted village. If Panyingkiran village had had access to other commercial radios, setting up a community radio probably would not have been as effective. Prior to launching the initiative, the supporting NGO did its homework and carefully examined the local culture and identified it as a “verbal” one rather than a “reading” one. But they also noticed that television does not have wide coverage. Hence, community radio seemed the ideal medium for the audience.

Lessons learned

- It is necessary for broadcasters to be properly trained on social issues. It is too risky to assume that everyone has a common understanding and perception of issues. The more listeners *Radio Pelangi* has, the more careful planning and training is required for the broadcasters, considering the impact of each broadcast.
- Gaining a support from the local government is essential to set up a successful community radio. A similar attempt to set up a community radio station failed due to a lack of support from the local government. The local government of Karawang has taken the problem of child trafficking seriously and has taken a positive initiative by supporting a local response.
- The community radio is a powerful tool to reach a local audience. This can facilitate a future policy advocacy plan on the issue of child domestic labour and trafficking by directly informing and involving the people concerned.

Necessary conditions

- Without motivated and committed volunteers, the community radio cannot operate.
- Assistance from professionals is critical initially to provide professional service. The targeted community may be interested to work on the programme but most likely lacks information required to start it up and to operate it. Achieving the right balance between facilitation by outsiders and local motivation is necessary to have a professional service and yet one that locals feel they own.
- The lack of commercial radio competition is probably considerably beneficial.

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Mobilizing Young Creative Minds

~ A film festival to raise awareness on child domestic labour ~

Faculty of Films and Television, Jakarta Institute of Arts (FFTV-IKJ)

Background

To raise new and broader awareness on the issue of child domestic labour requires thinking “out of the conventional box”. It is a tough challenge as the target audience is the general public. Anyone can potentially be an employer of a child domestic worker, and they may not be particularly interested in social issues, such as child rights, child protection and child domestic labour.

To reach the general public, ILO-IPEC decided to work with the [Faculty of Films and Television, Jakarta Institute of Arts \(FFTV-IKJ\)](#). FFTV-IKJ is prestigious in producing films; one of its students recently won an international film award. The initial idea was to mobilize the FFTV-IKJ students to produce short films featuring the issue of child domestic labour and to organize a film festival to showcase them. The Project counted on young creative minds to think freely on the issue of child domestic labour and to cast a new light on the subject and possible responses.

To begin, ILO-IPEC organized a five-day workshop (December 2004) at IKJ for the faculty members and students of FFTV-IKJ to learn about the situation of child domestic workers in Indonesia. The Indonesia Child Welfare Fund (YKAI), an NGO running a centre for child domestic workers in Bekasi, a Jakarta suburb, joined the workshop as a resource organization. Participants, some of whom have child domestic workers at home, had not regarded child domestic labour as a source of inspiration for their projects. The biggest challenge presented to the students was how to make the life of child domestic workers, which may seem monotonous, into a story that would appeal to the public audience. Another challenge was how best to capture the life of child domestic workers, which is hidden from public view. The workshop provided a good forum to discuss the issue as well as concerns that directors may have in producing stories.

After the workshop, FFTV-IKJ and ILO-IPEC jointly decided that ten short films (drama-based) would be produced by student producers under the supervision of technical artistic teachers of IKJ. One hundred scripts were submitted by students and ten scripts were selected by the dean, associate dean and a member of the FFTV-IKJ in May 2005. The criteria used for selection were the message of the script, attitude toward the issue of child domestic labour and the creator’s motivation. Three female and six male directors (one male director has two entries) were selected.

IKJ decided that it would organize a film festival where the final productions would be released, in connection with National Children’s Day (July 23). The timing of the film festival was strategically chosen as a way of bringing together a large number of high-level government functionaries and civil society organizations, thereby ensuring that wide publicity was given to the issue of child domestic labour.

Accomplishments

➤ Partnerships to support the film festival – organization committee

Originally, the film festival was to be a stand-alone event by IKJ, but it grew to be an official and highlight of National Children's Day, which the Ministry of Health led in 2005.

An organization committee was set up to support and to mobilize partnerships for the film festival and involved the Jakarta Institute of Arts, Jakarta's Art Council (DKJ), the Ministry of Women Empowerment, YKAI and ILO-IPEC. The organization committee met several times prior to the film festival to discuss implementation arrangements and building on their partnerships. For example, the committee sent an official request to the Ministry of Health to make the event official for National Children's Day. The committee met with the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration to request his support for the event; he agreed to join (though he could not make it ultimately).

The committee also mobilized private sector support. Indofood Sukeses Makmur (ISM, a large national food company) provided snacks for 500 children and 100 scholarships for children from Indramayu (central Java) and Karawang districts. ISM also donated books for mobile libraries in Indramayu and Karawang, where ILO-IPEC projects operate. In addition, McDonalds provided free lunch meals for 500 participating children.

Appeals were made to KOMPAS, the national newspaper with the largest circulation, to cover the event, which started announcing the film festival three days prior.

➤ The film festival

The film festival took place at the mini theater of Taman Ismail Marzuki Hall where some 400 people came to view the three finalist films selected by seven judges: *Srengenge* (the Sun), *Minah* and *Bulan Sapotong* (Half Moon). Four of the judges were child domestic workers whom YKAI had selected, the dean and deputy dean of FFTV-IKJ and the ILO-IPEC country director. The Minister of Women Empowerment and the Minister of Health opened the ceremonies.

Some 250 beneficiaries from the Greater Jakarta area (Jakarta, Bogor, Bekasi, Tangerang and Karawang) and Indramayu were invited to the film festival. The following provides a brief synopsis of each of the three finalist films:

Srengenge (the Sun) By Emil Heradi

Outline: The story is of Marsih, a village girl who sacrifices herself for her family and leaves home to find employment. Having been raised by her grandfather with her younger brothers, she feels obligated to provide for her family and send her brothers to school. Sudrun takes Marsih to the house of Boss Wiryo, who has a dark past. She has to work day and night as a domestic worker. Her only hope is her friend, Rewang. But a series of misfortune strikes Marsih, including the mysterious death of Rewang. In weariness and distress, Marsih finds her own sun in her mind and tries to live her life with a positive spirit, just like the sun in the sky.

Minah by Secilia

Outline: Minah, a 14-year old child domestic worker, longed to continue her education to senior high school. She hoped to get a certificate from high school so that she could get a better job in a factory with higher salary and freedom, rather than become a domestic worker. She struggles to convince her employer to send her to school. However, nobody, including her own mother, supports her in continuing her education. Feeling hopeless and helpless, Minah faces her predicament alone.

Outline: Two young sisters, Ida (15 years old) and Ita (14 years old), came from Cianjur to Jakarta to work as domestic workers. One night, Ita is brutally raped by her employer who is a high-ranking government official. The sisters run away from the house to a shelter for children. They feel relieved being welcome at the shelter; however, after settling in, the employer's daughter comes to the shelter to take them back to her house. Without any alternative, Ida and Ita run away from the shelter and go wherever their hearts desire.

Srengenge took the top honour of the festival with an unanimous decision. The film was selected based on the relevancy of its message to the issue of child domestic labour as well as its technical and artistic points. In his acceptance speech, the director of the film underscored the importance of the partnership between ILO-IPEC and FFTV-IKJ to provide a venue for young people to express their concerns for children's issues, such as child domestic labour. He commented that film is a powerful tool to send important messages to a general audience without direct confrontation.

➤ Synchronized events

To support the film festival and to take advantage of the National Children's Day, two other events were planned: a public rally at Hotel Indonesia Square, which is one of the busiest intersections in Jakarta, and a bazaar and entertainment stage for participating children outside the film festival theatre.

The **Association of Indonesia Domestic Workers' Suppliers**, one of the Project partners, mobilized more than 1,500 people from its members and (child) domestic workers to the rally. As a Chinese traditional dance, *Barongsay*, and *Betawi* music performed, they handed out balloons and flyers with messages. (see *Working with the Suppliers of CDW*)

YKAI and *Sanggar Puri* (a centre for child domestic workers) members organized the bazaar and entertainment stage. Products made by child domestic workers were exhibited for sale. After the film festival, the Ministers of MWE and Health, the ILO director and other VIP guests visited the bazaar and interacted with the children.

Outside of the mini theatre, an outdoor stage was set up where children's dance and song performances were presented.

Good practices

The ten films proved to be unique and creative. It was a very *innovative* way to involve young creative minds to raise awareness on child domestic labour among the general public.

It was *efficient* to work with university students. They may not be professional in producing awareness-raising tools yet, but under the supervision of the teachers, a degree of quality was guaranteed. The students were very enthusiastic to have an opportunity to produce their own pieces that were fully funded by ILO-IPEC. The cost of producing the ten films was equivalent to the price for one professional film.

As expected, the film festival and the rally generated significant media attention. The timing of the film festival was selected *strategically* to make very public the issue of children who are kept hidden from public view as well as public concern.

The very successful film festival was strongly supported by a wide-range of *partnerships*. Several NGOs focused on child domestic workers teamed with IKJ: the Minister of Women Empowerment volunteered to chair the organization committee for the film festival; the

Ministry of Health, as the lead ministry to celebrate National Children's Day, took the film festival on board; private sector sponsors (ISM and McDonalds) brought in welcomed support on the day of the event; the ILO-IPEC support made the event much bigger than originally planned and thus reached a wider audience.

Lessons learned

- For student producers to be creative yet ethical in producing their films, an initial workshop with resource persons was critical to deepen their knowledge on the subject as well as learn an ethical approach to child domestic labour.
- Timing of the event was a key to generating significant interest in the event and the subject. It is recommended that any awareness-raising event be organized in consideration of other national public events.
- There should be a plenty of time to prepare a public event. The film festival, which was originally planned as a relatively small event, grew into a major function requiring many partners mobilized for support. Without proper time allocation, it would not have been possible.
- Because the producers were students, it was necessary to have a good technical supervision from the faculty teachers.

Necessary conditions

Communicating messages about child domestic labour to as wide an audience as possible requires creative minds and innovative thinking and even, sometimes, non-traditional ways of doing things.

When working with multiple ministries and/or partners, it is crucial to have a leading actor or an organization committee to proactively coordinate and monitor activities.

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Working with the Suppliers of CDWs

~ Torn between the business interest and social responsibility ~

Association of Indonesian Domestic Worker Suppliers (APPSI)

“When I say ‘No’ to one girl, I will lose all ten girls”, explains Mr. Sugito, Chairperson of APPSI. “Usually an agent will bring ten or more girls from rural areas, who will look for a job as a domestic worker. Let’s say one is a girl younger than 15. I would say ‘No’ to her, but I still want to take the other nine girls to place them as domestic workers. That is what we do as a domestic worker supplier.” He sighs and continues. “What will happen is that the agent will not leave all ten girls with me. He takes them to another supplier all together. That will be easier for him to manage.” Torn between his business interest and his commitment to not hire under-aged workers, Mr. Sugito faces a huge challenge as a Chairperson of APPSI.

Background

Currently there are 123 domestic worker suppliers in Greater Jakarta (Jakarta, Bogor, Tangerang and Bekasi). The [Association of Indonesian Domestic Worker Suppliers](#), the only association for domestic worker suppliers in Indonesia, has around 50 members.

According to APPSI, the highest demand from employers are for children 13–16 years of age because they are cheaper than adult domestic workers, easier to handle and submissive. Child domestic workers are paid around 125,000–150,000 *rupiah* (US\$13–\$16) per month, which is 50 per cent less than the average income of adult domestic workers.

With this overwhelming demand, APPSI has been recruiting and placing children younger than 15, knowing that the minimum age for employment in Indonesia is 15 years old. It is estimated that about 30–40 per cent of the total domestic workers provided with placement services are younger than 15. In the case of the APPSI members, about 20 per cent of the recruited domestic workers are children younger than the minimum age. About 60 per cent of the child domestic workers recruited through APPSI members come from Lampung province, located 120 km from Jakarta.

Each month on average, APPSI members place around 100 domestic workers in a household per supplier (5,000 domestic workers per month with 50 suppliers) and in the peak season, after the Muslim holiday of Eid, it rises to around 300 domestic workers per supplier. If indeed 20 per cent of those numbers are under-aged, working with APPSI is very strategic in having an immediate impact on the number of child domestic workers.

With interest from APPSI to collaborate, ILO–IPEC supported a project with them aiming to achieve the following three objectives.

1. To reach a consensus among Association members on not recruiting or placing child domestic workers younger than 15;
2. To improve pre-placement briefings for adult domestic workers and child domestic workers (15 years and older); and
3. To build capacity of the APPSI staff members to handle abuse cases reported by domestic workers.

Achieving that consensus among the APPSI members has been a serious challenge for the APPSI secretariat. Several workshops were conducted with members to discuss the issue of child domestic labour and relevant laws and regulations to generate support for a proposed APPSI policy. The proposal called for APPSI members not to recruit or place children younger than 15 in domestic service jobs, following the national requirement for the minimum age for employment.

This proposed policy was not received well at all. The chairperson was pressed for an explanation with regard to why APPSI would need to introduce such a policy and what APPSI was aiming at as an association. Some members were offended by the risk of inducing a huge business loss by not recruiting a high-demand group. APPSI is a relatively new association and its members are still sceptical of the benefit of its membership. In the workshops, some members asked why APPSI needed to protect the rights of domestic workers and what the mandate and the role of APPSI were. This is a business association, thus, the members expect business benefits; they do not expect it to be a welfare association.

A small breakthrough occurred when the owner of the largest domestic workers' supplier service in Jakarta was convinced of the cause and announced in front of other members that she would commit to not recruit children younger than 15. Her vocal commitment triggered more support to the proposed policy. However, too many members remained unmoved and blocked the policy's acceptance.

APPSI as an association made a strategic decision. With its role and mandate being questioned, the secretariat decided to focus on improving its benefits to the members and supporting the improvement of each member's business. By differentiating APPSI and its members from the rest of suppliers by improving its quality of service, APPSI members could better carve a niche for themselves in the market. Taking that route, the APPSI secretariat saw that it could present its proposed new policy on the non-recruitment and non-placement of children younger than 15 as a way of building a stronger identity for the association. ILO-IPEC agreed to provide more intensive technical as well as moral support to APPSI, so that the immediate business loss that the proposed policy represented could be offset by the long-term business gain from a stronger identity and solidarity, based on pro-human rights services.

Accomplishments

➤ Establishing a strong APPSI identity wins support for policy against underage placements

APPSI requested help from ILO-IPEC for intensive technical support to help improve its value as an association and to give members more obvious benefit. To this end, ILO-IPEC assisted in setting up a centralized database to help members share information and work more closely to place domestic workers in response to the needs of their clients. A database specialist was engaged to work with APPSI to customize the system.

The specialist developed a database called "dBase APPSI" in consultation with APPSI members, based on their existing data/information systems. He prepared a system in CD-ROM with an accompanying step-by-step manual to operate the database. The system can organize profiles of each domestic worker, employer, supplier as well as agent. Each supplier currently maintains its own database; however, the idea is to share information among the APPSI members to maximize the information, resources and opportunities. For example, if there is a very problematic employer who tends to abuse the domestic workers sent to him by supplier A, other members can be alerted and avoid doing business with that employer. The database also can provide information for monitoring child domestic workers younger than 18 but older than the legal minimum working age.

Database training was provided to 30 APPSI members in September 2005 who found it thrilling to have their own website (www.appsiindonesia.org) and the communal database

system. The participating members quickly saw new value in their APPSI membership; those who participated in the workshop unanimously agreed to the new policy on under-aged children. Later, they officially signed the agreement saying that they would not recruit or place children younger than 15 as domestic workers.

➤ Public rally on National Children's Day

To proclaim its new stance toward child domestic labour, APPSI joined the celebration for National Children's Day (23 July 2005). It was a great opportunity to make APPSI's strong determination to abolish employment of under-aged child domestic workers to its members as well as the public. APPSI, jointly with a local NGO, mobilized almost 1,500 (child) domestic workers and students to a public rally at Hotel Indonesia Square, which is located at one of the busiest intersections in Jakarta.

APPSI originally planned to organize the rally by itself with its 50 members, domestic workers and child domestic workers. But as there were other events being planned to showcase films on child domestic labour by film student in connection with National Children's Day, the organizers discussed collaboration with APPSI to link their events, thus maximizing the publicity and public appeal.

During the rally, APPSI members handed out leaflets demanding:

- 1) The employment of child domestic workers younger than 15 be stopped;
- 2) A weekly day of rest for domestic workers/child domestic workers; and
- 3) Free access to education for children from poor families.



Public rally at Hotel Indonesia Square on National Children's Day, 2005

Once committed to anti-child labour, APPSI used the rally as an opportunity to revive a campaign for a weekly day of rest, which previously had not been well followed up once it had been launched by the Ministries of Women Empowerment and Manpower and Transmigration in 2002. MWE is very keen to continue the campaign as part of its new commitment to protect working conditions of child domestic workers older than the legal age and to abolish employment of child domestic workers younger than 15.

APPSI's position on supporting education came about as a reaction to its initial experiences in implementing its new policy. When APPSI members started turning away children who already had left their hometown to go to Jakarta in search of employment opportunities, the secretariat realized that they needed to consider the consequences of the APPSI policy and that prevention work needed to be organized at the origin of the migration flow. Otherwise, APPSI's saying "no" to children at the destination of labour migration will not protect or promote their child rights. As they had already left home, they would look for anyone who would say "yes".

One suggestion was to link APPSI with NGO partners, such as the Indonesia Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI) and Rumpum Gema Perempuan (RGP) so that they could provide services and temporary shelters for the children whom the suppliers were turning down, before being returned to their villages. The secretariat realized that without addressing the root causes, children may come back to the cities one way or another to seek employment opportunity. Promoting basic education, they decided, would better prevent children from migrating to the cities.

The rally attracted huge media attention. Print media (such as TEMPO, Media Indonesia, Indopos, Jakarta Post, Pos Kota and Pikiran Rakyat), five national TV stations, three radio stations and Internet media such as Detik online.com and Hukum online covered the event. This was the first time that suppliers of domestic workers gathered to rally for the rights of children and domestic workers. With this rally, APPSI established a high-profile image of an honourable recruitment agency.

Good practices

It was a very *strategic* choice to work on the demand side of the issue and thus to work with APPSI, which has great potential to contribute to the fight against child domestic labour by mobilizing suppliers as well as agents who recruit and place children to work as domestic workers.

From the beginning, difficulties were expected as APPSI members are profit-driven. Not surprising, the APPSI secretariat, once it was on board in the anti-child labour movement, encountered resistance from within. What was *effective* was that instead of giving up or risking the loss of member by imposing a policy against under-aged placements, the secretariat chose to create a something-for-something situation. It focused on building the capacity of the association and establishing a strong identity by improving services to its members. It also created a public image that generated external pressure on it and its members to behave according to what it had proclaimed. By having public and government support for its new policy on child domestic labour, it was easier for APPSI members to reach a consensus on the otherwise controversial subject.

APPSI is very *proactive* in going into partnership with NGOs and government institutions. APPSI knows its place, role, advantage and limitation. It is not possible to work alone to abolish child domestic labour; therefore, bringing other key parties, including the media, onboard to support its initiative maximises the opportunity to bring about true impact.

Lessons learned

- To gain acceptance for a highly controversial proposal, the people pushing it realized eventually that they had to offer something in exchange. They needed to provide mutual benefit. Because the APPSI members are business-minded people, they quickly figured out that the effective use of information technology could benefit their business. Bringing in an IT specialist to create a database and website turned the wind 180 degrees in favour of the policy banning the placement of under-aged children.
- Sometimes great change is possible but not overnight and considerable persistence as well as willingness to rethink the strategy will eventually lead to accomplishment. The APPSI secretariat had little support at the beginning for its new policy; a series of workshops helped improve the situation but after rethinking its strategy, when the secretariat approached the issue from a different angle and offered more benefits to its members, that it won them over to accepting the policy.
- A new initiative may bring unexpected consequences and challenges that cannot be tackled alone. APPSI quickly saw the need to go into partnership with other organizations that can provide different kinds of services to children who have come to

Jakarta in search for a job. Protecting children requires a range of actors joining forces and working together at different points to cover all the bases of vulnerability.

Necessary conditions

There needs to be open-mindedness and willingness to commit by key figures on the demand side of the child domestic labour issue. In this case, the APPSI secretariat was first convinced but it had a long haul to change the mindsets of its members. Also external support to backstop the new initiative was crucial to encourage and push the movement forward.

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Philippines

Country Programme Overview

Child domestic workers are one of the largest single categories of working children in the Philippines.

According to the 1995 National Statistics Office (NSO) Labor Force Survey, there were 301,701 domestic workers aged up to 19 years, the majority of whom were older teenagers. The same survey estimated that there were almost 30,000 child domestic workers aged between 10 and 14 years.

From its 2001 survey on children aged 5–17, the estimated that 120,000 children were working away from home, employed in private households. Visayan Forum Foundation, a Philippine NGO that has pioneered actions on child domestic labour in the Philippines for more than ten years, estimates that the actual figure of child domestic workers in the Philippines is likely to be at least 1 million.

Child domestic workers in the Philippines work an average of 15 hours each day but are on call literally 24 hours. While the tasks that the children perform may not necessarily be dangerous, the combination of tasks and the long hours that they are forced to work make them hazardous. Pay is low – if the child is paid at all. Days off may be limited to one per month, or there may be no day off at all. Working away from home and without the possibility of communicating with their families, children are under the complete control of the employers, kept isolated and thus vulnerable to abuse. Employers sometimes sell items to child domestic workers, who may go for months without a salary to pay for them, rather than being accused of ingratitude. The cost of mistakes made by the child may be deducted from the salary or deductions made to repay a loan from the employer in times of family crisis.

There is little opportunity for many to go to school; even those who can, find that their studies get disturbed by their heavy workload and long hours. Their pay may be reduced to cover transportation costs or deducted for the time that a domestic worker attends school. Poorer regions such as the islands of the Visayas and Mindanao are traditional sources of child domestic workers – the majority of whom come from large farming and fishing families; many of them eventually end up in the capital of Manila. However, regions can be both senders and receivers of child domestic workers because major cities within them also generate local demand and supply. For example, provincial cities such as Batangas, Bacolod and Davao contain significant numbers of child domestic workers who are attracted by the potential to continue their education while working – an option that is not open to them in their rural areas of origin.

For older child domestic workers (usually aged 15–17 years) who have built up confidence and experience working in provincial cities, Manila is the next obvious destination for better-paid work. Younger siblings may follow an older brother or sister to the capital in the hope of finding a job, or they may come with friends or relatives, often facilitated by an illegal recruiter. Deceived by recruiters' promises of well-paid jobs and lulled into a false sense of security by travelling with friends or relatives, children are trafficked to an unfamiliar place whose language they are not used to. Recent studies show that many experience fear and intimidation during the recruitment and trafficking process. Some such children begin their working lives in debt to recruiters who paid their transportation and lodging prior to finding an employer. Domestic worker is such an accepted occupation for children that this is often used as the lure by which traffickers attract them, only to send them instead into other worst forms of labour situations, such as commercial sexual exploitation.

Efforts to combat child domestic labour in the Philippines are highly developed and offer much to learn from. In particular, the Visayan Forum Foundation, which has pioneered work on the CDW issue in the Philippines, has been active on this issue for more than ten years, with support from ILO-IPEC's country and time-bound programmes, among others.

A characteristic of interventions on child domestic labour in the Philippines has been the broad alliance of a wide variety of government and non-government partners that has been created to improve the situation of child domestic workers. For example, the Department of Labour and Employment and the Department of Social Welfare and Development have been particularly active at the national as well as local levels.

A particular feature of **national level** actions on child domestic labour has been the sustained **advocacy** on legislative and policy reform, led by the Visayan Forum. Support from national legislators lends strength and a sense of urgency and importance to the child domestic labour effort. Local government officials, including councillors, mayors and *barangay* officials, continue to be very involved as well; for example, in developing and implementing **local ordinances** to make child domestic workers more visible and enable them to access services.

Advocacy by community groups, the **organizing activities of child domestic workers themselves** – through SUMAPI, for example – and actions to encourage and maintain children in **education**, remain the bedrock of anti-child domestic labour actions. Individual Catholic and other church leaders and religious institutions, such as the Religious of Mary Immaculate, have been particularly effective advocates and educators. Academics and social partners including **trade unions**, such as the Federation of Free Workers, are also active on this issue.

Underpinning the emerging good practices that are described in this country section are several key elements that characterize the work that has been undertaken:

Building sustainable partnerships has been essential to the success of all other strategies, whether they involve putting in place a national network of institutions or empowering a local community to develop and maintain a neighbourhood "child watch" scheme. These partnerships are the essential ingredient for making other actions possible. Key to building sustainable partnerships, according to the Visayan Forum Foundation, is the need to galvanize and support the efforts of other institutions and individuals consistent with their particular mandates and expertise.

There is a need to deal with child domestic labour in a holistic way. From early on, it was recognized that child domestic labour must be seen in the broader context of domestic work and surrounding social issues. This is in part because the root causes of the issue – poverty, inequality, an unjust social order and ingrained traditions and perceptions – also characterize the domestic work sector in general and are common to many other societal issues.

Recognizing and understanding the relationship between employer and employee and the different expectations that lie on both sides is crucial to understanding how best to intervene and in what ways. In the Visayan Forum's analysis, improving the relationship between employer and employee lies at the heart of improving the situation of child domestic workers, as it avoids or reduces many of the problems that emanate from unmet expectations on both sides. For their part, employers must understand the importance of the role that the domestic worker – in this case the child domestic worker – plays in their lives and in the lives of their families. By the same token, child domestic workers must recognize their value and assert their rights.

Embodying some of the concepts outlined above, as well as other operational principles, the Visayan Forum has developed a set of what it calls "sustainability principles" – principles for sustainable interventions on the child domestic labour issue that buttress the various strategies discussed in the emerging good practices that follow.

Visayan Forum's sustainability principles

(Principles for sustainable interventions for child domestic workers)

1. Put first and foremost their best interests as children: treat them first as children and second as workers;
2. Put in place a national network of institutions with special facilities for abused and runaway domestic workers;
3. Promote free, accessible and quality education for child domestic workers and make it relevant to their special needs as working children;
4. Make the invisible visible;
5. Improving the employer–employee relationship is central to any analysis and intervention for any child domestic worker;
6. Reaffirm the right to decent work and recognize that child domestic workers are productive members of society;
7. Improving the skills and productivity of domestic workers requires support and commitment from employers;
8. Work for a blanket ban on child domestic work in the Philippines for those younger than the legal minimum age for admission to employment, which is 15 years.

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Philippine local terms and acronyms

<i>Batas Kasambahay</i>	Magna Carta of Domestic Workers (Bill) currently being considered in the Philippine Senate and House of Representatives
<i>barangay</i>	Smallest unit of local government; a village or community consisting of approximately 1,000 families
DECS	Department of Education, Culture and Sports
DOLE	Department of Labour and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
<i>kasambahay</i>	Household partner; this is the preferred local term for describing a domestic worker
<i>nanay</i>	mother
PHIC	Philippines Health Insurance Corporation
SSS	Social Security System
SUMAPI	<i>Samahan at Ugnayan ng mga Manggagawang Pantahanan sa Pilipinas</i> , or Association and Linkage of Domestic Workers in the Philippines

Sowing the Seeds of Attitude Change

~ National level advocacy for legislative and policy reform ~

Visayan Forum Foundation

"For over a decade now, Visayan Forum has championed the cause of these massive marginalized migrant workers with the institution and implementation of various activities and projects for their welfare and protection. They have unceasingly worked and striven hard for the realization of a legislative instrument that would finally bring this informal and unrecognized sector within the ambit and protection of the law. As the chair of the Committee of Labour, Employment and Human Resources, I have pledged to exert my very best in seeing to it that the passage of this long over-due and much-deserved Batas Kasambahay will be enacted. With the steadfast help and support of all our stakeholders, I have faith that in the near future, we shall be in possession of a law that shall pave the way for a valued and dignified existence of all household workers, not only in the Philippines but also among our global community as well."

Letter from Republic of the Philippines Senator Jinggoy E. Estrada
in support of the Visayan Forum-led National Domestic Workers Summit,
September 2005

Background

Legislative and policy advocacy on child domestic labour in the Philippines is at an advanced stage. The Visayan Forum Foundation and its partners – including other NGOs, academics, government actors, trade unions, ILO-IPEC and child domestic workers – are at the forefront of efforts to develop national level legislation and policy against the exploitation of child and adult domestic workers.

These advocacy efforts target the domestic work sector as a whole, with a focus on the protection of child domestic workers as a priority concern.

Legislative and policy advocacy at the national level began in 1999 and has focused around the development and promotion of the *Batas Kasambahay*, or the Magna Carta for Household Helpers. This draft national legislation sets out to protect domestic workers from exploitation and abuse and to improve their working conditions by taking steps to formalize the labour relationship between worker and employer. It has been developed to highlight the sector, as well as to plug gaps in existing labour code legislation on the issue.

In a recent advocacy development, Visayan Forum organized a National Domestic Workers Summit (21–23 September 2005) around the concept that "Domestic Work is Decent Work". This brought together child and adult domestic workers employed within the Philippines with those working abroad to air their views and to work alongside government, employers associations and advocates to develop a national agenda for domestic workers.

Accomplishments

➤ National-level legislative advocacy

The Magna Carta for Household Helpers, or the *Batas Kasambahay* – currently in its final stages of the legislative process in both the Philippine Senate and the House of Representatives – actually evolved from a documentary film, *Nakatagong Kasambahay* (Hidden Domestic Workers), which the Visayan Forum and Anti-Slavery International (an international NGO) produced and aired on national prime-time television in the Philippines in 1999. The debate that it caused sparked a member of the House of Representatives to begin working with Visayan Forum on drafting of protective legislation. Other partners also collaborated in the drafting process, including academics from the Ateneo University's Human Rights Centre, the Department of Labour's Bureau of Women and Young Workers and ILO-IPEC. Other relevant branches of government were consulted.

The provisions of the *Batas Kasambahay* relating to child domestic workers (paraphrased):

- No child should be employed as a domestic worker younger than the age of 15; 15- to 17-year-olds can work (in accordance with minimum employment age laws) but only under certain circumstances (see below);
- Children of domestic workers should not be considered domestic workers;
- Normal hours of work are limited to ten hours per day;
- Night work is prohibited;
- Engaging children in hazardous work and dangerous working conditions is a criminal activity, as is the trafficking of children for domestic work;
- Child domestic workers have the right to receive the wages they earn;
- Days off and vacation leave should be regularized;
- Emergency services should be more accessible to child domestic workers;
- Resources for repatriation should be improved/increased;
- Education and training opportunities should be made more accessible and affordable;
- There needs to be licensing of more institutions that can take custody of child domestic workers.

The *Batas Kasambahay* was first filed in the Congress in December 1999. A number of unrelated setbacks have caused delays to its passage, including a presidential impeachment in 2000, national elections and an attempted presidential impeachment in 2005. This has led to Visayan Forum re-filing the Bill twice in Congress. Also, various key partners have shifted their position on the Bill due to changes in personnel and priorities in their organization. In response, Visayan Forum and its legal partners have prepared detailed position papers and lobbied officials and legislators directly to address and counteract the concerns. Throughout the ups and downs, Visayan Forum has undertaken painstaking and sustained advocacy with legislators and those that hold sway over them (in particular the media and public opinion) – to ensure that the Bill and the issues it encompasses remain a high priority. For example, Visayan Forum organized a photo exhibit in the corridors of both houses of Congress to ensure that legislators and their staff were reminded of the need to focus on the situation of child domestic workers.

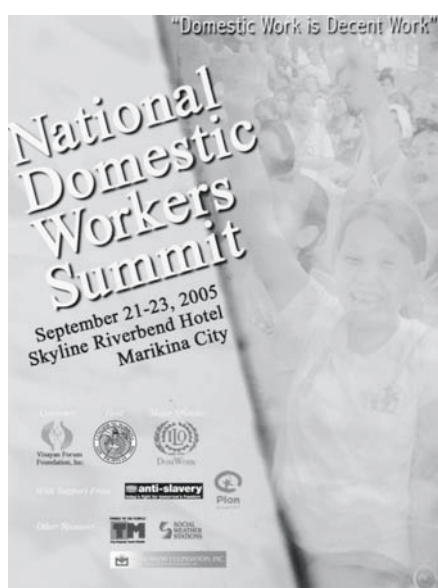
Visayan Forum has invested much time and effort building relationships with key individuals in government and in the legislature to assist its lobbying and wider advocacy efforts. Finding “guardian angels” – individuals within these institutions who are supportive to the cause – has been an instrumental strategy in overcoming many of the obstacles (such as bureaucratic hold-ups) to getting things done. Visayan Forum maintains that developing a close working relationship with legislators' staff has been of particular value to keeping the *Batas Kasambahay* a high priority.

A sustained media campaign since 1999 has put the term *kasambahay* into national public consciousness. The *Batas Kasambahay* has been quoted extensively in national media, which has ensured that despite the fact that it is still just a Bill, public awareness about it is already high. In effect, this means that just by its presence, the Bill is sparking debate and contributing to the transformation of attitudes around the treatment of domestic workers. In a recent representative national poll (released by the Social Weather Station on 16 September 2005), 49 per cent of household heads in the Philippines were aware of the Bill; 87 per cent of those polled were in favour of it, with strong support seen across all areas and socio-economic classes.¹²⁹

Visayan Forum and others have worked closely with legislators and their staff during the various readings of the Bill and continue to work alongside the Department of Labour and Employment, the Department for Social Welfare and Development, the Employers Confederation of the Philippines and others in the Technical Working Group, which was set up to iron-out inconsistencies in the draft legislation and to reach consensus on differences of opinion.

➤ National Domestic Workers' Summit

The National Domestic Workers' Summit (September 2005) involved more than 200 local domestic workers (adults and children) alongside international migrant domestic workers, in consultation with more than 100 social partners from civil society and the religious sector, government, employers' groups and recruitment agencies. It not only provided the opportunity for domestic workers, their organizations and their support networks to discuss issues but was also a venue to facilitate interaction and discussions between domestic workers and others toward the development of policy and programme recommendations for the domestic work sector.



Programme from National Domestic Workers' Summit showing range of participating organizations and sponsors

The summit was particularly significant because policies concerning the situation of local and migrant domestic workers have always been kept separate – despite similarities in their vulnerabilities and in the difficulties they face. In looking at domestic work as a sector, there were several points of convergence, especially in policies to make domestic work “decent work” and in the need for national legislation in the Philippines.

The results of a nationwide signature campaign to push for the passing of the *Batas Kasambahay* were presented to Philippine Secretary of Labour at this event. The signature campaign mobilized partners to take joint action and was designed not only to create pressure for the passage of the Bill but also to make those who have signed it aware of the situation of child and adult domestic workers. The Secretary of

Labour also read out a statement from the President of the Philippines, highlighting the importance of the issue and pledging the President to the cause. A “social compact” was signed at the meeting, led by the Philippine Secretary of Labour. This was an agreement by decision makers and others present to work together on the issue for the betterment of

¹²⁹ Social Weather Station is a leading national and independent “polling” company that collects data on attitudes to social, political and economic topics of importance to contemporary Philippine society.

domestic workers. The high-profile government representation and the handing over of signatures ensured media coverage of the event.

Visayan Forum committed a great deal of preparation and capacity building to ensure that the participants would come ready to engage in discussions. Visayan Forum worked particularly closely with SUMAPI and individual child domestic worker participants to ensure that they understood the process and were ready to share their views at the summit, including speaking to the press.

National Domestic Workers Summit
Summary of 10-Point Agenda

21–23 September 2005, Manila, Philippines

1. Strengthen existing and implement new laws that aim to uplift and raise standards of decent work that protect domestic workers' labour rights. For example, it is timely to immediately pass the *Batas Kasambahay*, or Domestic Workers Bill, which would require the use of standard contracts based on provisions that effectively update the Labour Code using principles of the Forced Labour Convention and ILO Convention No. 182.
2. Strengthen and clarify the appropriate mechanisms to monitor the conditions of domestic workers hidden inside the private households of their employers. Thus, clearly set up grievance mechanisms where domestic workers can report against recruiters and settle complaints with employers, such as an effective hotline centre and quick action team in different *barangays*, DOLE offices and other *kasambahay* desks by NGOs.
3. Seriously conduct continuous and comprehensive orientation on migration realities for those planning to work as domestic workers. There is a need to carefully refine advocacy about particular realities on the destination countries/cities while the worker is still in the process of application and until he/she reaches the work destination.
4. Attack the trafficking dimension of domestic work issues as a matter of urgent priority.
5. Draft a comprehensive Training, Livelihood and Reintegration Programme for domestic workers.
6. Make the right to education a national priority, especially for child domestic workers. Sustaining them in school also requires crucial support from their employers. Immediately popularize different existing schemes, such as alternative learning systems, night schools and Sunday schools.
7. Introduce and strengthen social protection schemes that can be made available for *kasambahays* working locally and overseas. The present SSS (Social Security System) and PHIC (Philippine Health Insurance Corporation) programme should be strictly monitored and made more accessible to domestic workers.
8. Generate understanding about the effects of migration on children and other family members of domestic workers working away from home.
9. Immediately declare a Domestic Workers' Day for all Filipino domestic workers to celebrate here and abroad. Genuine recognition of their domestic workers' contribution to national development can be taken a step further by ordaining mandatory registration for the domestic workers in the *barangay*, or local government level.
10. Domestic work should be recognized as decent work. This is an immediate challenge to advocate.

Good practices

Legislative advocacy has clearly been an *effective* tool for raising consciousness among decision makers and has been shown to have had an *impact* on people's awareness and beliefs about domestic work. Many of the methods that have been used to get the message across, such as the photo exhibit, are *innovative*.

Reforming laws and policies, as this advocacy is intended to do, is a highly effective way of *sustaining* change in the longer term, although it requires a sustained commitment to see the processes through.

Consensus building has been a hallmark of Visayan Forum's efforts, especially in its ability to galvanize support among a wide range of social partners for the National Domestic Workers' Summit. Its particular strength has been in developing the capacities of child domestic workers to participate and have a strong voice, through its year-round outreach and capacity-building efforts.

Lessons learned

- Advocacy with limited resources must be targeted at specific audiences with the influence to persuade others to see things differently. For Visayan Forum, this includes child domestic workers, legislators and employers.
- Relationships should be cultivated with allies in government and other institutions and bodies. This helps to keep the dialogue going and ensure that the issue remains on the agenda.
- Advocacy must be planned but should be flexible enough to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities.
- Advocacy needs to build on the fact that everyone has experience on the issue and that everyone has an interest in improving the situation.
- Child domestic workers must be involved in advocacy and equipped to speak to the media.

Necessary conditions

Legislative and policy advocacy – particularly lobbying of legislators and high-ranking government officials – is a highly labour-intensive and specialized activity for which experience is needed. Those undertaking such advocacy must be able to sustain it in the long term.

For further reading or for more information:

Visayan Forum Foundation has several documents relating to the legislative advocacy process which it has pioneered. These include examples of local and national level capacity-building workshops and seminars (see contact details below). In addition, more general information about child domestic workers and legislative/policy developments can be found at www.visayanforum.org

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Making the Invisible Visible

~ Local legislation and advocacy to protect child domestic workers ~

Quezon City (QC) Government

The Kasambahay Registration Programmes (developed as a result of local level ordinances) serve as a benchmark in their localities to benefit child domestic workers and their employers. The registration of child domestic workers in every barangay would serve as the key component for local government to make invisible child domestic workers visible.

Visayan Forum Foundation, Annual Report 2003–2004

Background

Developing national legislation, particularly in a sector such as domestic work, is a long and difficult process. Delays in the passage of the *Batas Kasambahay* (a proposed legislative bill known as the Magna Carta for Household Helpers) as well as a recent government shift to devolve government decision-making powers and resources have led to the development of a new front in legislative advocacy efforts in the Philippines – toward engaging with local government and building the capacity of local partners to advocate more effectively. In particular, the focus has been on shaping “ordinances”, which are locally developed and applicable rules focusing on issues of local concern and which are enforceable by the local government. Drafted and passed by local councils, ordinances usually involve three readings before being adopted and passed into local law upon the signature of the mayor.

Ordinances differ from location to location, reflecting local realities. As they are locally developed and enacted, ordinances have the advantage of being quicker to adopt than national laws and may be seen as more locally relevant. However, sanctions for non-compliance are weaker than for the proposed *Batas Kasambahay* – reflecting a less confrontational approach to improving the situation of domestic workers. While not setting out protective provisions, as the proposed national legislation does, examples of ordinances that have been enacted enshrine key aspects of the *Batas Kasambahay* into local law – in particular, the right to be treated as a worker.

The Visayan Forum has developed and undertaken legislative advocacy seminars in several regions of the Philippines as a way of enlisting the support of local government and other partners to the cause of developing and promulgating ordinances that reflect key aspects of the *Batas Kasambahay*. By establishing common interests between those present – including representatives of city councils, local branches of the Department of Labour and Employment, the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Department of Education, religious institutions, law enforcement officials and NGOs – the seminars essentially create an active local network on the issue. The first task typically is a time-bound agreement to draft a local ordinance to protect domestic workers.

Ordinances to make domestic workers – including child domestic workers – more visible and better protected are currently in operation in various parts of the Philippines:

- Quezon City Ordinance No.1472 (2004): “An Ordinance Enjoining all Barangay Officials of Quezon City to Conduct a Massive Registration of Kasambahay and/or Domestic Workers in their Respective Barangays.”

- Bacolod City Executive Order No.02: “Implementing Voluntary Registration of Household Helpers or Kasambahay at the Barangay Level.”
- Municipality of Liloan Ordinance No.2004-149: “An Ordinance Urging Mandatory Registration of Household Helpers, or Kasambahay, at the Barangay Level Within the Municipality of Liloan, Southern Leyte.”

Accomplishments

➤ Developing a local ordinance in Quezon City

With a population of 2.4 million people, Quezon City is the largest city in Metro Manila (which in its entirety is known as the National Capital Region, or NCR). Half of Quezon City’s inhabitants are considered “urban poor” even though it is the richest city in the Philippines.

The need to adopt an ordinance for domestic worker registration was first raised in 2004 in discussions with Visayan Forum and ILO during the formulation of an action programme proposal. Registration was seen as a strategic approach to address the invisibility of child domestic workers. When the issue was raised, local councillors and the mayor were very supportive and the ordinance was drafted, discussed and passed quickly.

Early indications are that one of the major achievements of the *Kasambahay* Registration Programme established by the Quezon City ordinance is in requiring *barangays* (lowest level of government) to register the domestic workers living in the community. Because most domestic workers are not registered as workers – meaning that they cannot access basic state services or their rights as workers – registration is key to making them visible. Making them visible enables them to be reached and to access government and other locally available services, such as those provided by the QC government and its partners. Through the registration process, child domestic workers are identified and special services provided to them according to their ages and needs. These include access to the QC government’s education support programme, skills and livelihood training, vocational training, art and recreational activities, access to the Social Security System (SSS) and Phil-Health (public health care) membership, counselling and assistance to organize as a Quezon City *Kasambahay* Association.¹³⁰

The *Kasambahay* Registration Programme established by the ordinance in QC aims to:

- Help break the invisibility and dispersion of domestic workers in QC, especially child domestic workers;
- Establish relevant and accessible education programmes and recreational activities and training at the community level;
- Identify exploited domestic workers and remove them from conditions of abuse and exploitation;
- Monitor working conditions – help domestic workers and encourage them and their employers to embark on mutually beneficial partnerships;
- Increase awareness of the rights of domestic workers in terms of fair and regular remuneration, access to social protection and support systems; and
- Organize associations of domestic workers in local areas.

More than 5,000 of the estimated 30,000 domestic workers in the city have registered themselves or been registered by their employers between April 2005 (when the ordinance came into force in Quezon City) and September 2005. This is even more remarkable given

¹³⁰ *Kasambahay* Associations are cooperatives of domestic workers and are recognized by the Quezon City government. By organizing as a *Kasambahay* Association, domestic workers are entitled to apply for local government loans to develop a business.

that, when the ordinance was passed, there was no budget attached to it for its implementation.

The benefits to domestic workers of registering are immediate and long lasting. By gaining a work permit and identity card, they become “visible” and are entitled to register for state health care and social security entitlements. Also by becoming visible their situation can be monitored more easily, and local non-government service providers can reach and contact them more simply.

Employers of domestic workers initially expressed apprehension about the ordinance in their locality. They worried that its development would precipitate groups of domestic workers getting together to demand higher wages and better working conditions. Employers were also concerned about the financial burden to them of paying employer contributions for their domestic worker to the SSS and Phil-Health system.¹³¹ This reticence was overcome through training of local councillors and *barangay* heads (known as *barangay* captains), who were helped to understand the advantages of domestic worker registration for the whole community. By involving *barangay* captains, the job of convincing employers was made considerably easier.

For employers, a central concern previously was that there was no way of tracing domestic workers who steal from them. Registration of domestic workers deals with that concern because, once the domestic worker is provided with a work permit and ID card, it becomes easier to monitor their whereabouts. Also, because registered domestic workers can access basic health and social security services, the onus on employers to provide them with cash advances when in need of medical care is reduced.

Registration is promoted through the *barangays*. Announcements are made on street *tannoy* (public speaker) systems, notices are placed in public settings and advertisements are broadcast by local radio stations. House-to-house campaigns have proven to be the most effective means of registering domestic workers. SUMAPI, through its outreach programme in parks, shopping malls and other places where domestic workers (particularly young domestic workers) congregate and through events such as *Araw ng Kasambahay* (Domestic Workers’ Day) has played a crucial role in encouraging child domestic workers to register (see *Finding a Voice*).

In cases where individual *barangays* have been slow to act, the city council calls the *barangay* captains to encourage them to undertake and update the registration process. *Barangays* that do not comply are noted and are not offered help by the city council in cases where disputes and other problems arise as a result of non-registration of domestic workers.

Under the provisions of the ordinance, a member of each *barangay* is appointed and mandated to be the focal point on domestic worker issues. This person is both a liaison for domestic workers and can act as a mediator in case of disputes between domestic workers and their employers. The focal point is also able to assist domestic workers in difficulty. In Quezon City, there has been capacity-building training for *barangay* desk officers on the registration process. A coordinating *kasambahay* desk officer post has been created in the city hall to monitor the efforts of *barangay* desk officers.

The registration process has identified that low educational attainment is endemic among many older teenage domestic workers. Using the state-recognized “Alternative Learning System” and studying on Sundays, domestic workers can avail of a government-recognized ten-month education course. Culminating with a diploma, the course is not only a source of pride to these graduates but because of the recognized qualification it gives, it also allows them to pursue further education opportunities if they wish. The Quezon City Council also has plans to assist groups of domestic workers to set up *Kasambahay* Associations, or

¹³¹ The minimum monthly employer contribution to SSS is approximately 90 pesos per month (less than US\$2). Domestic workers (depending on what they are paid) pay a minimum of around 50 pesos per month (US\$1).

cooperatives. In a cooperative, groups of domestic workers can avail of loans from city micro-finance funds.

Republic of the Philippines
City Council, Quezon City

Ordinance No. 1472: An Ordinance Enjoining all *Barangay* Officials of Quezon City to Conduct a Massive Registration of *Kasambahay* and/or Domestic Workers in Their Respective *Barangays*.

Excerpts from the ordinance:

“WHEREAS, the Kasambahay Registration will be the benchmark for the ‘Kasambahay Programme’ to benefit the Domestic Workers and their employers citywide;

“WHEREAS, the conduct of Kasambahay Registration or Databasing of Domestic Workers in every barangay will be the key component of the City government’s initiative to empower the Domestic Workers Sector, who are the invisible engine of Filipino life;

“WHEREAS, the Regular Kasambahay Registration will help the invisibility and scatteredness of child domestic workers;

“WHEREAS, ILO Convention No. 182 declares that child domestic work is one of the worst forms of child labour in the Philippines and Quezon City was among the identified key cities in Metro Manila with high incidences of worst forms of child labour;

“WHEREAS, the City government intervention to develop a range of concerted actions to the Kasambahay Sector will complement at the forefront of lobbying for the adoption of the Magna Carta for Household Helpers, also known as ‘Batas Kasambahay’;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF QUEZON CITY IN SESSION ASSEMBLED:

“SECTION 1. All barangay officials of Quezon City are hereby enjoined to conduct a massive registration of Kasambahay and Domestic Workers in their respective barangays(...)”

Good practice

Developing ordinances has proven to be an *efficient* and *effective* way of reaching domestic workers, including child domestic workers, and enabling them to access local services for their protection and health.

While it is difficult to see the full *impact* of these efforts, the fact that more than 5,000 domestic workers have become visible and gained access to services in one city in a six-month period as a result of the registration campaign (which was required by an ordinance) is a very encouraging indication that domestic workers want to be registered and that using an ordinance to bring about such an achievement is clever and prudent.

Because it is possible to develop local legislation such as ordinances in many other countries, it would seem to be a *replicable* strategy. Visayan Forum is working with local governments and other partners (e.g. NGOs, religious institutions, etc.) to pass local ordinances in several parts of the Philippines and to undertake domestic worker registration campaigns (e.g. in Camarines Norte and Bulacan). The ILO is assisting with developing model ordinances.

Lessons learned

- It is necessary for sustainability that the provision of services and organizing of domestic workers goes hand in hand with developing and passing local ordinances. Without a service infrastructure in place, expectations may be created that cannot be met.
- Crucial to an effective registration process and the provision of local services is the need to empower local government (in this case, *barangays*). Orientation and capacity building of key local government structures and officials are crucial to ensuring that the effort is sustainable.
- Advocacy targeted at different interest groups (such as employers) will not be effective unless accompanied by wider public awareness raising. Individuals must be made aware of the part they play in the issue (that they are involved) and that it is in their interests to deal with it.

Necessary conditions

Political will on the part of local government is critical for the effective development of ordinances, which should also include provisions to encourage adherence by necessary parties; in this case, the *barangays*, which were asked to conduct registration campaigns. Lack of participation resulted in lack of support from the city government in dispute cases. Sensitizing of local officials by NGOs helps cultivate political will.

For more information:

The Institute for Labour Studies has published “A Model Ordinance for Domestic Workers” (2005) containing the proceedings of an advocacy workshop for government officials toward developing and adopting local legislation for domestic workers. It is available from the Philippine DOLE and ILO DomWork¹³² in Manila.

Visayan Forum Foundation has several documents relating to the legislative advocacy process, which it has pioneered. These include examples of local and national level capacity-building workshops and seminars (see contact details below). In addition, more general information about child domestic workers and legislative/policy developments can be found at www.visayanforum.org

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¹³² An ILO project focusing on the protection of domestic workers from forced labour and trafficking in south-east Asia. ILO DomWork was a major sponsor of the National Domestic Workers Summit, September 2005.

Finding a Voice

~ Reaching and organizing child domestic workers ~

Samahan at Ugnayan ng mga Manggagawang Pantahanan sa Pilipinas (SUMAPI)

How do SUMAPI members help other child domestic workers?

"We talk to each other on the telephone." "Visit each other at our place of work." "Help during outreach or sometimes with school work." "Friends help each other to find new jobs."

"Since I've been involved with SUMAPI, I have reported a case of rape to the police and another case where a domestic worker was thrown out of her employers' house in the middle of the night."

Extract from a focus group discussion with SUMAPI members

Background

Samahan at Ugnayan ng mga Manggagawang Pantahanan sa Pilipinas (SUMAPI, or Association and Linkage of Domestic Workers in the Philippines), emerged in 1995 out of Visayan Forum Foundation's early efforts to reach and organize child domestic workers in Luneta Park, Metro Manila. A small "survivors" group of young domestic workers was formed to give each other support. They then began to reach out to other exploited and abused child domestic workers, in collaboration with Visayan Forum organizers.

Since then the movement has grown considerably, with continued nurturing from the Visayan Forum. While essentially still a self-help group, SUMAPI is now an 8,000-strong national movement of current and former domestic workers, the majority of whom are teenagers. In addition to mobilizing its members and supporters for advocacy purposes, the movement has become a provider of services to child domestic workers across the Philippines.

SUMAPI pioneered the organizing of child domestic workers and training strategies tailored to their needs. SUMAPI organizers meet and talk to child domestic workers in parks, schools, churches and ports, providing them with information to assist them. They conduct recreation activities such as "sportsfests", discos, outings, talent shows, parties, as well as service-oriented events such as SSS registration and *Araw ng Kasambahay* (Domestic Workers Day). "Processing seminars" and awareness-raising sessions are integral to the activities they provide – and are designed to help child domestic workers build resiliency and instil pride in themselves.

SUMAPI's actions have shown that organizing child domestic workers to help themselves is an important strategy for reducing their isolation and, therefore, their vulnerability. Acting collectively is also central to their ability to advocate effectively – increasing their voice.

SUMAPI

Vision

A society where domestic workers enjoy respect, freedom, justice and equitably partake in the fruits of development and where domestic workers are given the opportunity to realize their potentials, with love for God and fellow citizens.

Mission

SUMAPI links domestic workers to:

- Advance and protect the rights and welfare of domestic workers, especially child domestic workers, who suffer from abuse and exploitation;
- Expand and strengthen SUMAPI core groups in all areas to respond to the need to protect domestic workers from all forms of abuse and assist them in improving their livelihood;
- Assist in the efforts of the Visayan Forum Foundation and other institutions to provide services that would promote the welfare of domestic workers;
- Actively participate in the programmes and activities of government and other institutions that would advance and protect the rights of domestic workers;
- Establish partnerships with other groups to strengthen the campaign for the passage of a Magna Carta for Domestic Workers and for the movement against child labour; and
- Bring about and enhance sustainable relationships between the employers and domestic workers, or *kasambahays*, for the development of the family and the nation.

Goals

To lead the movement for the protection of the rights and for improvements in the conditions of work and life of domestic workers, especially child domestic workers through:

- Participation in the provision of medical, dental, legal and educational assistance from Visayan Forum Foundation and other institutions;
- Organizing and strengthening the capacity of SUMAPI and its members;
- Strengthening links among institutions and organizations that promote and protect the rights and welfare of domestic workers; and
- Establishing, expanding and strengthening socio-economic programmes for domestic workers.

Accomplishments

➤ Reaching out

The first step in the process of reaching out to child domestic workers is to identify places and times where they, or older domestic workers, can be found. In the Philippines, the SUMAPI focus has been in parks on Sundays where domestic workers congregate for their few hours off, away from their employers' households. However, they are also reached in churches, while taking their employers' children to school, in shopping areas during their free time and at night school. More recently, staging events such as discos in the park (which are publicized well in advance) have been successful in attracting young domestic workers (*see box*).

Thinking creatively to reach out to child domestic workers

The Quezon Memorial Circle has long been a haven and a resting place for child domestic workers. But is very difficult to approach them, much less get information from them and recruit them into joining special education programmes. Of course, they would rather dance in the Circle's disco area than talk about education, their rights and other related matters. To reach them, the Quezon City Parks Development Foundation (PDF), Visayan Forum and SUMAPI hit on a novel idea – all child domestic workers would be allowed to enter the disco for free, provided that they register with the Visayan Forum booth placed near the entrance. The ushers, security guards and even top PDF officials helped in identifying child domestic workers entering the disco premises. In two nights, the approach attracted more than 50 child domestic workers.

Source: *Reaching out beyond closed doors: A primer on child domestic labour in the Philippines*, Visayan Forum Foundation, 2004)

SUMAPI members also visit *barangays* (lowest level of government). They talk to *barangay* captains (community leaders) and, if they are receptive, solicit help in identifying child domestic workers in their communities.

It takes different approaches to reach child domestic workers, depending on the particular demography and their working patterns in different localities, as well as on who the supportive individuals are and the skills of the advocates. In Davao, (the capital city of Mindanao in southern Philippines), for example, reaching out to child domestic workers has been most effective in local authority-sponsored night and Sunday schools, as many child domestic workers combine work with part-time schooling. In one public high school in Quezon City (Metro Manila), SUMAPI has convinced the principal to allow them to work with school guidance counsellors to identify and talk to child domestic workers enrolled in the school.

SUMAPI leaders systematically comb the park or other areas where child domestic workers concentrate each week, making contact with, on average, 10–15 child domestic workers a week in Davao alone, talking to them about SUMAPI and distributing flyers outlining Visayan Forum's services for domestic workers and how to get in touch. Using the right messenger to reach out to child domestic workers makes the difference between gaining the child's trust and putting her off in the few minutes available for the initial contact. The SUMAPI leaders, all of whom have been young domestic workers themselves, relate much more effectively to other domestic workers than those who have not had this experience. In a place such as Metro Manila, where the majority of domestic workers are from the Visayas region and Mindanao, the SUMAPI leaders can spot possible child domestic workers more easily and talk to them in their language. SUMAPI leaders memorize the details they pick up from a chat with a child domestic worker to follow up with her in the following days. This was found to work better than filling out "intake" sheets on the spot – thus making it feel like a casual conversation and putting the child more at ease.

To methodically follow up the contacts made, SUMAPI leaders work alongside Visayan Forum staff to build a relationship with the child and her employer. With the details that they have been given, they seek more information and monitor her situation. Depending on the child's circumstances and the information they have been given, follow up is by telephone, letter or a visit to the house where the child is employed. Friendly letters are also sent to the employer explaining about Visayan Forum and SUMAPI and the advantages to the child in becoming involved in Visayan Forum's *kasambahay*, or domestic worker, programme. SUMAPI leaders have met more than 1,000 employers this way in order to reinforce the importance of improving treatment of the child domestic workers in their care.

➤ SUMAPI's services

Upon making contact with child domestic workers, SUMAPI begins to increase their often very limited awareness and understanding of their basic rights. In the park and in other places, small flip-charts are used to provide “orientations” for child domestic workers; flyers give them all the information they need to contact SUMAPI again.



A SUMAPI leader makes contact with a child domestic worker at Visayan Forum Foundation

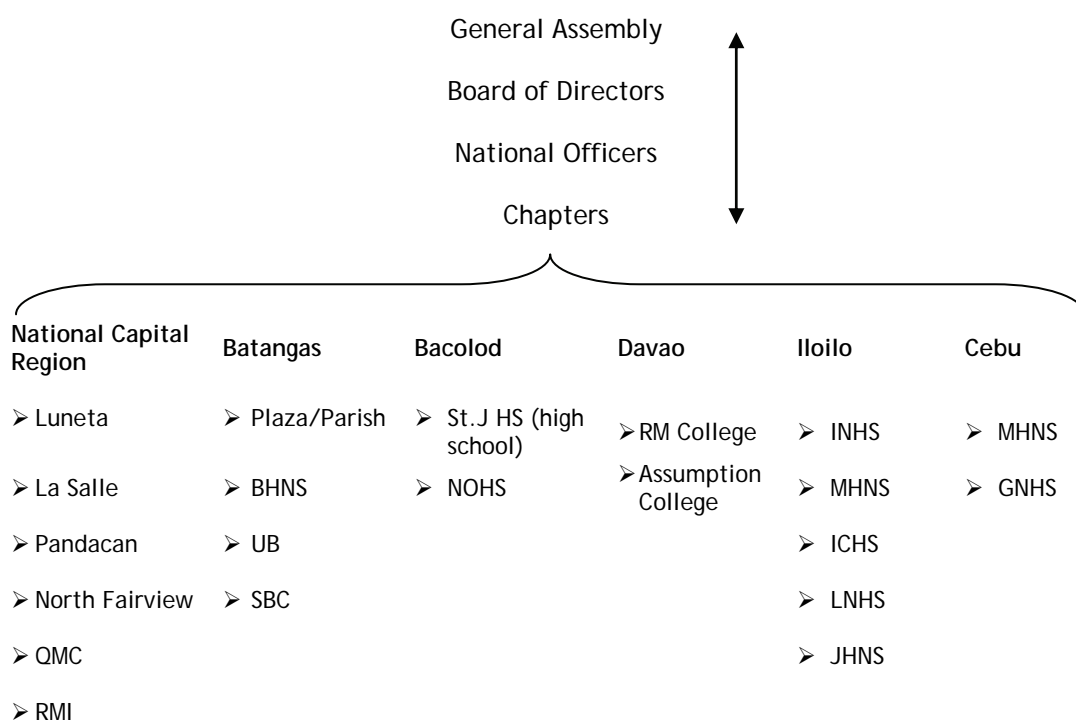
SUMAPI members provide peer support to child domestic workers and through monitoring and follow-up, work to protect individuals from abuse and/or greater exploitation.

Working alongside Visayan Forum staff, SUMAPI members collect basic data and profile information, which is key to providing child domestic workers with the right services for them, as well as in monitoring their whereabouts. Getting older child domestic workers registered as legal workers brings immediate benefits in terms of their visibility and in their ability to access services, such as basic state health care and the Social Security System (see *Making the Invisible Visible*).

In terms of advocacy, SUMAPI has organized mass rallies and members have collected a million signatures from across the Philippines to draw attention to the need for the *Batas Kasambahay* – proposed national legislation to protect domestic workers from exploitation and abuse. These signatures were recently presented to the Philippine Secretary of Labour at the National Domestic Workers Summit (see *Sowing the Seeds of Attitude Change*). In Davao, SUMAPI receives weekly radio time to raise awareness. SUMAPI has plans to develop a brochure of its own, as well as a national newsletter. SUMAPI members used their park outreach activities to prepare child domestic worker delegates to the National Domestic Workers' Summit (September 2005).

While a more loose-knit structure worked well in the early days, SUMAPI currently is embarking on a process of consolidating and formalizing its structure and membership, which currently consists of 8,000 young domestic workers in 21 “core groups” (or branches) in six parts of the Philippines.

SUMAPI STRUCTURE



The core group structure has been found to work well as it fosters supportive relationships and addresses localized needs of individual members. Core groups have been set up in parks, *barangays* and, more commonly, around night schools in particular areas. As part of the process of formalizing, SUMAPI is levying a small fee for membership, which, in addition to creating a feeling of ownership, also serves as an emergency fund for educational support to child domestic workers.

SUMAPI has gained recognition as a registered organization with the Philippine Department of Labour and Employment and is seeking affiliate status to the Federation of Free Workers, a Philippine trade union federation.

The following box highlights the importance and success of SUMAPI in organizing individual child domestic workers.

SUMAPI's impact on child domestic workers

Visayan Forum conducted a focus group discussion (January 2002) in Metro Manila's Quezon City Memorial Circle (park) with 15 randomly selected child domestic workers involved in SUMAPI. The children (all girls) ranged in age from 12 to 18, although the majority were 16- and 17-year-olds.

The SUMAPI members were asked: 1) what they liked about SUMAPI and how they supported each other; 2) the changes they had seen in themselves since becoming involved with SUMAPI; and 3) whether they had noticed any change in other people's attitudes toward them.

The SUMAPI members said that they liked SUMAPI because: *"We build friendships with others." "If we have problems we counsel one another." "We do many activities, such as go on outings, do trainings, play sports and eat snacks together!" "They are like my family in the park." "We learn about our rights and talk about boyfriends!"*

They also said that they supported other child domestic workers in a variety of ways: *"We talk to each other on the telephone." "Visit each other at our place of work." "Help during outreach or sometimes with school work." "Friends help each other to find new jobs."*

In reference to the question "What changes have you seen in yourselves since your involvement with SUMAPI?", responses varied: *"I have more dignity and self-esteem"* was echoed by many. *"I have gained self-confidence; I feel more valued – I am no longer a 'katulong' [a term for a domestic worker with derogatory connotations – literally a domestic servant] but a 'kasambahay'" [the term preferred by domestic workers – meaning 'household partner'].* *"I can associate myself now with other workers and can relate to their situation."*

One girl's response, *"Through the training my relationship with my employer has improved – we understand each other better"*, was also echoed by others [training refers to the resiliency training]. Another girl added: *"I've learned many new things outside my employer's home, and I've realized that there are many more things to learn!"*

In response to the question related to the ability of SUMAPI members to reach out and help other domestic workers, one girl gave a significant response: *"Since I've been involved with SUMAPI, I have reported a case of rape to the police and another case where a domestic worker was thrown out of her employers' house in the middle of the night."*

Regarding the question about others' attitudes toward them, one girl explained: *"Before, my employer didn't let me speak to others, but after I joined SUMAPI she introduced me to her rich neighbour as a child advocate. It made me proud."* Another girl noted: *"On soap operas and TV shows, we are no longer called katulong but kasambahay. Soap operas are now portraying domestic workers as part of the family, not as lowly servants."* And a third added: *"One employer contacted me and asked for SUMAPI's address. She wanted to send her kasambahay to SUMAPI."*

"Employers hear about SUMAPI and that we have rights and some of them change – they feel positive about it. But other employers feel threatened," added another girl.

Good practices

SUMAPI has found *creative* and *innovative* ways to reach child domestic workers – in parks, shopping malls and through attractive events.

SUMAPI's approaches have had a major *impact* on its child domestic workers members and on those they have reached. In addition to reducing the workers' isolation in general by providing a place they can drop in and find camaraderie, SUMAPI members have provided child domestic workers with information and assistance that has protected them from abuse and offered opportunities for education, training and counselling.

The practice has proved itself to be highly *replicable* in other contexts, both within the Philippines and in other countries. SUMAPI has *sustained* and strengthened its activities with support from the Visayan Forum but without any significant funding for the past ten years. All SUMAPI officers are volunteers, sustaining themselves either by working and/or through small scholarships provided by Visayan Forum.

Lessons learned

- It is essential to empower child domestic workers to help themselves. Indeed, not doing so can limit the sustainability of other strategies designed to help them, such as crisis intervention, education, advocacy and networking. Crucial to the success of this process is in being able to reach “invisible” child domestic workers.
- Adult domestic workers are a key part of the process for gaining access to child domestic workers, as a result of their extensive neighbourhood knowledge, their ability to establish rapport with other workers and because employers trust them to take care of their charges.
- Establishing a conspicuous, consistent and welcoming presence is important to attracting child domestic workers with little time off.
- Using the right messenger is crucial to gaining the child's trust in the few minutes available for the initial contact. Other young child domestic workers are best in terms of establishing rapport, and can, for example, address migrant child domestic workers in their own language.
- Recording each child's details must be done during the initial contact. There is no guarantee that her employer will let her out again.
- Initial orientations should be given in the place where the child has been contacted. In SUMAPI's case, this is usually the park but can be in schools, churches or shopping areas.
- Methodical follow-up is very important and care should be taken to get someone with the right skills to handle the child's “case”. Follow-up also represents an opportunity to make contact with employers.
- Building a self-help organization with many members can be an important tool for advocacy; but in SUMAPI's experience they found that keeping individual cells or “core groups” within that organization small better addressed the localized needs of individual members.

Necessary condition

Motivated and energized child domestic workers are needed to create self-help peer groups and this requires reaching out to them in informative and innovative ways. Having an established and financially sound support organization, such as the Visayan Forum Foundation, is equally needed for self-help groups to flourish and sustain.

For further information:

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Action Begins at Home

~ Exploring the prevalence of child domestic workers among trade union members ~

Federation for Free Workers (FFW)

Background

From November 2003 to January 2004, the [Federation of Free Workers](#), one of the Philippines' largest trade union confederations, conducted a survey on the employment of child domestic workers among individual trade union members in the National Capital Region (Metro Manila).

There were several objectives to this survey: First and foremost, it was an attempt to measure the extent of child domestic worker employment by trade union members in Metro Manila. By doing so, FFW hoped to make the child domestic workers situation more visible and to understand better the attitudes about child domestic work among the children and their employers who are trade union members. The survey also was used to determine the factors provoking the child's employment – in order to consider how under-aged CDW employment by trade unionists could be prevented and how child domestic workers older than the minimum working age could best be assisted.

Accomplishments

So often, actions to address the situation of child domestic workers identify "others" as the problem. The significance of this action is in its attempt to scrutinize the situation within the trade union movement. By raising awareness of child domestic worker issues among trade unionists and taking action to address arising issues, FFW is making a stand in ensuring that individual and collective responsibility is taken.

To collect the data, a survey was conducted among 34 of FFW's member trade unions in Metro Manila. This represents 41 per cent of all FFW affiliates in the National Capital Region. More than 1,800 individual trade unionists responded to the survey by completing the questionnaire they had been given; of them, 50 individuals reported that they employed child domestic workers between the ages of 15 and 17. However, a number of them had begun working as child domestic workers, on average, two years previously. At least one had begun child domestic working at the age of 10. A further 325 individuals reported that they employed adult domestic workers.

Conclusions of the FFW trade union members survey

1. All 50 child domestic workers that were profiled were female;
2. Child domestic workers ranged in age from 15 to 17, and on average had worked for two years as a *kasambahay*;
3. Most child domestic workers came from the poor farming communities of the Visayas region (Leyte and Antique);
4. Most of the child domestic workers had left high school and those who managed to continue their education mainly obtained support from their employers;
5. Child domestic workers were informally recruited by the employers or their relatives;
6. Child domestic workers had their parents' consent to work to help augment the family income;
7. Child domestic workers' monthly salary ranged from 1,500 to 2,000 *pesos* (approx. US\$30–\$40 per month);
8. There were child domestic workers who had days off but they often preferred to stay at their employers' home on those days because of their unfamiliarity with Manila;
9. Most of the child domestic workers had no close relative in Manila whom they could contact in times of need; and
10. Educational assistance and other support were extended to the child domestic workers by FFW trade unionist employers.

Focus group discussions were then arranged among the trade union employers to elicit their perceptions of child domestic worker employment. Their attitudes reflect the attitudes of many CDW employers in other spheres, namely that by employing the child they are helping a poor family. Employers also reported that they preferred child domestic workers to adults because they were easier to manage and have fewer needs. In most cases, the profiled child domestic workers were relatives of their employers and recruitment was therefore of an informal nature, with the employers or other family members approaching the child's parents.

Although attempts to reach the child domestic workers were hampered by several factors, some child domestic workers were reached, profiled and assisted.

Considerable awareness of concerns surrounding the situation of child domestic workers has been created as a result of this study, and it has provided a launch pad for further actions to address the issue. A two-day FFW National Conference on Child Domestic Work within the Trade Union Social Movement was organized (in Manila, April 2004) in which participants decided that several actions in relation to the child domestic labour issue would be pursued, including an FFW Code of Ethics policy regarding the employment of child domestic workers for trade union members. This Code of Ethics policy was submitted to the FFW Governing Board for consideration.

Recommendations to FFW on the basis of the research

1. A massive awareness-raising programme on the contributions of child domestic workers to the households of FFW trade unionist employers must be done so as to exact fair treatment of child domestic workers by their trade unionist employers.
2. A skills-training, equivalency testing and certification programme for FFW trade unionist-hired child domestic workers must be pursued to encourage union members to help provide quality service and expenses in terms of education provision.
3. Develop a policy to organize and integrate the FFW trade unionist-hired child domestic workers (and the 325 adult domestic workers employed by FFW trade unionists) into the fold of the trade union social movement.
4. Pursue the approval and subsequently the observance of the Code of Ethics of FFW trade unionists with child domestic workers.
5. Explore the possibility of FFW working together with other service providers, both in the government and private sector, on the issue of child domestic workers as part of its transformation into a trade union social movement able to enjoin all sectors of the society in its pursuit of core labour standards.

While the extent to which these recommendations have been implemented by FFW remains unclear, a major campaign is planned to raise awareness of child domestic worker issues among all of its members, the purpose of which is to improve working conditions for those older than the minimum working age. FFW's youth wing known as "YO Child" (Youth Organization Against Child labour) has been mobilized to prepare and distribute flyers and posters to assist in this.¹³³ Reportedly, efforts are underway to ensure trade union coverage for all the domestic workers of working age identified in the survey and to provide a skills training and certification programme for them and future domestic workers. Relationships have been developed with government and non-government service providers to assist in referring child domestic workers in need of support.

Difficulties were reported in reaching the child domestic workers identified through the questionnaire. There were a number of reasons for this: i) There was a considerable time lag between when individuals completed the survey and when they were followed up (at least three months). ii) Trade union employers in several cases reported that they no longer employed child domestic workers or that their child domestic workers were not interested in meeting with researchers. iii) Of other employers, only three gave permission for their child domestic workers to be interviewed. Reaching child domestic workers through their employers is difficult at the best of times, but is particularly difficult in situations where employers have not been oriented enough on the researchers' motivation.

In an effort to combat the difficulties in reaching the child domestic workers identified in the survey, a *Kasampasko Celebration* was conducted in December 2003. The *Kasampasko* is a Christmas gathering for child domestic workers and their trade union employers and was intended to bring together the two parties in an informal atmosphere to encourage a dialogue and assist the researchers in collecting more information. Unfortunately, only two child domestic workers actually attended the *Kasampasko*, with several trade union members who had confirmed their attendance (and that of their child domestic workers) deciding not to come.

¹³³ A pamphlet written in Tagalog and designed to raise the awareness of FFW members on the issue of child domestic labour was published containing basic concepts of child labour in general and child domestic work in particular - and containing the results of the research.

Good practices

The survey of members is the building block from which efforts such as the code of conduct can help to *sustain* that awareness and action on the issue.

The practice has had an *impact* by creating considerable awareness and discussion among trade unionists on the issue, first due to the survey and then subsequent workshops.

Lessons learned

The original questionnaire developed for the survey explicitly asked whether trade union members employed *child domestic workers*. There were very few responses to this question so a new approach asked about the employment of *domestic workers*, a much less sensitive entry point, though it did require respondents to give the age of the worker. This less direct approach elicited many more responses.

Necessary conditions

Collecting information about child domestic workers from their employers is a sensitive issue. Employers, whoever they are, are unlikely to openly acknowledge the presence of child domestic workers in their households because of the private nature of this relationship and due to the fear of possible reprisal. Greater effort is required to raise understanding of the issues surrounding child domestic workers and the motivations of the researchers before attempting to collect information from individuals. This is likely to result in more accurate reporting of CDW incidence (significant under-reporting in this survey was likely) and a more motivated response from the trade unionists concerned.

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Back to School

~ Education strategies to prevent child domestic labour and protect child domestic workers ~

Visayan Forum Foundation

"For me, there have been many benefits. The scholarship helps me to study by providing for my school needs and projects. It also helps us in case of emergency. If my mother is sick, we seek help from this centre [set up by Visayan Forum in the community]."

Myra, 12 years old

Background

Understanding the education strategies adopted by [Visayan Forum Foundation](#) and others is to understand the context of child domestic labour in the Philippines. The vast majority of child domestic workers come from poor rural and urban communities, where the only choice available to them is not whether to work but what kind of work to do. In rural poor communities, where options are few, the choice for girls is between ending their schooling to work full time with their families as tenant farmers or in fishing, or to take up domestic work in a nearby town, which carries with it the possibility of being able to continue with their education.

Visayan Forum's overall approach to providing educational opportunities for child domestic workers is essentially pragmatic. Recognizing the lack of alternatives for child domestic workers, Visayan Forum advocates combining work and study for older child domestic workers (those aged 15–17). But it also recognizes that in the absence of sustainable alternatives, it might also be in the best interest of a domestic worker younger than 15 to continue to work while also getting an opportunity to go to school. A central principle of Visayan Forum's programme on child domestic workers – improving the relationship between a child domestic worker and the employer – is crucial to the success of the work/study strategy. Because of the nature of the work and where it is carried out – in the employer's household, agreement from the employer is essential for child domestic workers to be able to study.

It is clear that this strategy is an imperfect solution. Child domestic workers who work and study carry a double burden that can leave them tired and unable to concentrate. Many of them find it hard to pay tuition fees, and absenteeism is a problem. Also, employers tend to expect the child domestic worker to perform the same workload by adjusting the way she works. However, despite these and other problems, many child domestic workers find schooling is desirable and work is a necessity – and it is clear that many would prefer to carry this double burden rather than let the opportunity to study disappear.

The main objectives of Visayan Forum's educational assistance to young domestic workers are essentially preventative: in the short term, the aim is to prevent the slide into worse conditions of work; the longer-term aim is to improve their employment opportunities.

Accomplishments

➤ Night high school programme at Negros Occidental High School, Bacolod

The public Negros Occidental High School in Bacolod has provided a night curriculum that caters primarily to the needs of working children. The school has been running since 1977 and currently has around 800 students in 19 classes, with 26 regular part-time teachers. The same official curriculum used in the day class is used in the night school, with one alteration: Because classes are shorter at night than in the day, the time taken to complete the curriculum has been extended from four to five years.

Visayan Forum began working with the school authorities in 1997 to develop specialist services for the more than 500 child domestic workers attending the night school. The school has established a *Kasambahay Centre* to serve as an activity centre for CDW students. The school authorities assist SUMAPI and the Visayan Forum in their organizing and rights-orientation activities and are themselves active counsellors, helping child domestic workers to build their resiliency to enable them to balance work and studies. Each class of child domestic workers is organized as a subgroup of SUMAPI to create a peer support system to sustain individual children's determination to study. The subgroup system also helps to coordinate training and field trips and monitor the performance of individual children through feedback from SUMAPI leaders.

At one point the school principal observed that children in the night school were much more shy and reticent than their day school counterparts. However, as a result of the services provided, child domestic workers are interacting much more with their peers. There is no longer any difference academically between the night school and day school pupils.

Key to the successful development of Visayan Forum's *kasambahay* programme in the night school has been the three-way partnership between it, school officials and the local government. Visayan Forum is currently working with private schools, such as St. Bridget's College in Batangas, to begin subsidized night class programmes there.

➤ Visayan Forum's other education strategies with child domestic workers

Visayan Forum provides emergency educational support to prevent child domestic workers from dropping out of school because they are unable to pay for their tuition. Sometimes the Visayan Forum may pay the school directly upon the recommendation of the teacher, the principal and the local branch officer of SUMAPI. They also work with school administrations to make the curriculum more relevant to child domestic workers. This has included allotting an hour a week to the teaching of domestic workers rights and life skills. Teacher training is also conducted on the situation of domestic workers, their role as caregivers and how to refer suspected cases of abuse.

Visayan Forum engages with employers of child domestic workers to improve the relationship between them and head off interruptions to a child's schooling.

The role of religious institutions in providing education for child domestic workers

The Religious of Mary Immaculate (RMI) has been implementing a pioneering non-formal education programme for domestic workers. Beneficiaries of their scholarship programme are trained to become NFE trainers and to help fellow child domestic workers pass accreditation examinations. The RMI also conducts vocational training for domestic workers and assists them in developing skills for alternative sources of income.

The parish priest of Batangas City, Visayan Forum, SUMAPI and the school authorities from the University of Batangas and the Batangas National High School conduct regular campaigns to encourage enrolment in the night schools. They engage employers in a regular dialogue while social workers, educators and nuns closely monitor the performance of the child domestic workers.

Source: *Reaching out beyond closed doors: A primer on child domestic labour in the Philippines*, Visayan Forum Foundation, 2004

Good practices

Visayan Forum has been *effective* in working with schools to redefine their vision, mission, goals and strategies to help, not hinder, child domestic workers. The education strategies employed by Visayan Forum and its partners also have been effective in giving children the opportunity to go to school and assisting them to stay there.

By bringing child domestic workers back to school, Visayan Forum and its partners are diminishing the invisibility of the children, thereby mitigating their vulnerability and exposure to hazards and giving them opportunities to avail of services, such as counselling and skills training that are *consistent with their needs*.

The work in schools has become *sustainable* as the schools have taken on the running of the *kasambahay* programmes.

Lessons learned

- Scholarships are needed to help the child and her family in times of stress, when the risk of the child dropping out of school is greatest. Because the scholarships are not regular payments, they are not an alternative form of income for the family and do not create any false reliance by the family.
- Having a dialogue between employers and teachers of child domestic workers and with their parents if they are close by makes the difference for success. The aim of this dialogue is to ensure the least disruption possible to the child domestic worker's education and to smooth out obstacles and problems to achieving this.

Necessary conditions

Key to the successful development of Visayan Forum's *kasambahay* programme in the night school has been the three-way partnership between Visayan Forum, school officials and local government.

Willingness among school authorities to commit space and support to alternative school programmes is the necessary first ingredient for getting child domestic workers back into an education programme; sustainable financial support in the form of a subsidy or small scholarship is the second ingredient; and provisions to help children learn to balance work and study is the third ingredient and crucial for their continued participation.

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Framework for Follow-Up Action to Combat Child Domestic Labour in the Asia-Pacific Region

The tripartite participants to the ILO/Japan/Korea Asia Meeting on Action to Combat Child Domestic Labour expressed their concern about child domestic labour in the Asia-Pacific region. They recognized that it needs to be expressed as a priority. The participants also maintained the view that extreme poverty plays a crucial role in perpetuating child labour and that child domestic labour cannot be effectively addressed overnight and in an isolated manner. The participants agreed with the World Bank assessment that “extreme forms of poverty play a crucial role in the context of child labour as children’s work and earning becomes an integral part of the overall survival strategy of poor families.” The recognized that this issue has to be dealt with an integrated approach through a set of necessary legal, policy and programme interventions, including social protection aimed at human development. The participants further recognized the cultural, economic and legal differences across the countries and usefulness in studying varying degrees of experiences in addressing child labour in general and child domestic labour in particular. Thus the participants agreed that the respective countries need to take flexible approaches in accordance with their own context within a basic framework of actions formulated by this tripartite meeting. They further recognized that the issue needs to be addressed in developing countries with the assistance of the ILO and multilateral donor agencies. In this context, the participants expect ILO-IPEC to enhance its technical and financial assistance in addressing the issue.

The specific recommendations that emerged from the tripartite consultations are as follows:

1. Elements of hazards and exploitations in child domestic labour to be addressed as a priority

CDL is an infringement of child rights:

- (I) Children are deprived of their childhood;
- (II) Children’s best interest is ignored;
- (III) Children are discriminated and isolated;
- (IV) Children are denied to see or communicate with their parents;
- (V) Children work under conditions not suitable to their level of development and maturity;
- (VI) Children are sometimes subjected to physical, emotional, sexual and mental abuses; and
- (VII) Pay special attention to the situation of girls.

Children and their parents and social partners concerned, and society in general are mostly unaware of child domestic workers’ rights, which make the situation of child domestic workers even more vulnerable.

Two issues were discussed in relation to hazards and exploitation of child domestic labour: (I) age and (II) working conditions.

(I) Age

- In principle, a general minimum age for employment should be set at 15 and no child younger than 15 should be employed in domestic work. However, some countries’ national laws might apply a lower age, such as 12, 13 or 14.
- Children aged 15–17 employed under hazardous conditions are considered to be in child labour.

- Domestic work (involving young people up to age 17) falling under the specific conditions described in ILO Convention No.182 is considered within the worst forms of child labour.

(II) Working conditions

- Strenuous, long hours, unpaid/underpaid, no days-off (weekly, holiday), heavy load, unsafe working conditions, exposure to risk, inadequate food, deprived of family contact;
- Limited or no access to education, medical care, recreation and adequate lodging;
- Inhumane or unsanitary conditions in the employers' houses (at the discretion of employers), confinement;
- No defined terms of employment;
- Debt bondage; and
- Child abuse – physical, emotional, sexual and mental.

2. Proposed practical strategies and interventions

- Free compulsory basic education;
- Social responsibility of the employers to ensure children's access to education;
- Provision of free non-formal education, vocational training, evening and weekend schools;
- Provision of income generation and micro-credit facilities for parents;
- Job promotion for parents;
- Promote family planning and welfare;
- Registration with local authority without compromising the privacy of the home;
- Survey and research to be done by involving all stakeholders;
- Establishment of rescue, crisis and care centres;
- Sensitising employers, parents and the public;
- Local "Community-Watch" as a mechanism to monitor child domestic workers;
- Time-bound strategy to reach compliance with the minimum age standard;
- Establish guidelines for employment of child domestic workers; and
- Recognize the right to be paid appropriate wages.

3. Specific roles and contributions of governments, employers and workers

Governments

- Confirm political commitment;
- Enforce compulsory education;
- Allocate financial resources in relevant budgets;
- Enforce applicable laws on child domestic labour;
- Publicise existing or proposed legislation; and
- Monitor violations by local authority.

Social Partners:

Employers/Employers Organizations

- Develop guidelines for drawing up informal code of conduct by mutual understanding;
- Provide support for upgrading skills, vocational education and training; and
- Monitor violations.

Workers/Workers' Organizations

- Raise awareness among members on child domestic labour;
- Monitor violations; and
- Tap strategic partners in advancing the issue (media, community leaders, etc)

4. Areas of collaboration with other stakeholders

- Social dialogue on policy and programmes;
- Joint collaboration and sharing of good practices among countries and organizations on implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- International collaboration for funding and technical assistance; and
- Cooperation with other like-minded NGOs, media, donors and legal associations.

Other recommendations

1. Adopt integrated and focused national strategies for economic, social and human development;
2. Increase government budget allocation and collaboration with donor agencies and private sector in the Asia-Pacific region;
3. ILO should implement memorandum of understanding with the Asian Development Bank to support some pilot projects;
4. Recognize that micro-finance coupled with vocational training should be a key component of national strategies;
5. Allow developing countries resources to adopt and implement national strategy with the assistance of the ILO and multilateral donor agencies; and
6. In view of child domestic labour being a highly decentralized issue, it needs follow-up workshops at the subregional and national levels.

Adopted by the participants of the ILO/Japan/Korea Asia Meeting on Action to Combat Child Domestic Labour, 4 October 2002, Chiang Mai, Thailand.

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