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**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR
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REPORT

WORKING CHILDREN SITUATION IN EIGHT PROVINCES/CITIES OF VIETNAM

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I. INTRODUCTION{ TC "INTRODUCTION" \f A \l "1" }

1. An overview of working children situation{ TC "An overview of child labour situation" \f A \l "2" }

Around the world today, many children are working, doing labour that is damaging to their mental, physical and emotional development. According to the latest data from the International Labour Organization (ILO), there are approximately 218 million children who are working worldwide aged between 5 and 17¹, the majority of which are from developing countries. The children work in a multitude of occupations and sectors, often at the expense of regular school attendance. Around the world, working children is common in the following fields:

- Agriculture, consisting of both farming workers and hired workers in plantations and farms to earn livings;
- Small-scale private businesses, manufactories or workshops;
- Service sector, in trading areas such as shopkeepers' assistants in local markets, restaurants, bars, drinking shops and or as domestic workers.
- Other economic activities on streets such as polishing shoes, begging or picking up recycled rubbish.

Children involving in economic activities is the most common in the countryside where children work in the agricultural sector in subsistence farming, small to medium sized family farms and large scale commercial plantations. No matter the size of the farm, children working there often face many different health and safety risks due to inadequate protective gear, exposure to pesticides and heavy work performed under tough working conditions². In urban areas, children are mainly working in service, trade and home-craft sectors, performing tasks such as mining, brick and tile production, food processing, handicraft production, carpets weaving, garments and textiles and footwear production, etc... Only a small number of children are working in organized factories and workshops. However, these factories and workshops do not directly contract children as their employees but hire smaller manufactories and workshops which then use working children for their production. For on-street work, children are at risk of getting in touch with drugs, street violence, prostitution, and other forms of social evils, which seriously affect their physical and spiritual health as well as their mentality and dignity. The risks that may threaten children are various and changeable depending on the type of job and the situation. However, in general,

¹ Source: "The End of Child Labour: Within Reach" ILO, Geneva, 2006.

² USDOL Report on the Worst Forms of Child Labour 2008.

there are some common risks that threaten most working children such as bad sanitary conditions, no or low-quality private safety-working facilities, unsuitable working spaces and equipment, out-of-date or old working tools, machines, physical stresses, over-time work and low payment.

Vietnam has a young population with 33 percent aged between 0 and 17 years old³. Over the two past decades, Vietnam's economic growth has increased dramatically with a rapid development of small and medium enterprises. However, at the same time, the problem of working children gets more prevalent as one of the social problems.

Up to now, there has been no national large-scale survey on children participating in economic activities in Vietnam. However, analyses of data from the 2006 Household Living Standards Survey (VHLSS) reveals that an estimated 6.7% of children aged 6-14 years (almost 930,000 children) were economically active in 2006. Some 296,847 children aged 12 or less⁴ were involved in economic activities and 37,139 children aged less than 10 years⁵ were economically active. The analyses also estimates that 503,389 children aged 12-14 year olds were involved in non-light work and 633,405 children between 16 and 17 were working excessive hours. It should be stressed that this is a lower bound estimate, as it does not cover what ILO defines as "unconditional worst forms of child labour", which are beyond the scope of standard household surveys⁶.

The results from this survey clearly shows that children involving in economic activities is common in Vietnam.

The root cause of children involving in economic activities is poverty, which pushes the children to earn a living by doing hard work. If no protection interventions and solutions are provided, these children are at risks of becoming the most vulnerable in the society. Thus, ILO emphasizes that children involving in economic activities is closely related to poverty and can leads to the decrease in school participation, and the increase in illiteracy rate among children.

The problem of children involving in economic activities is a serious issue in Vietnam and is concerned by the Vietnamese Government. *The Decision NO 19/2004/QD-TTg on the approval of National Plan of Actions (NPA) for preventing and addressing street children, children with sexual exploitation and children working in toxic, hazardous and dangerous conditions in 2004-2010 period*, was ratified on February 12th 2004. The implementation of this Decision

³ Multiple Indication cluster survey 2006

⁴ I.e. children aged 6-12 years. VHLSS 2006 did not collect information on children below the age of six.

⁵ I.e. children aged 6-9 years.

⁶ In addition, children involved in light but hazardous economic activity are not included.

is reaching the end and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) is preparing for a National Target Program on Child Protection 2011 - 2015. To contribute to the Government's effort, the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) have had discussions with MoLISA to prepare for a supporting program on eliminating the worst forms of working children in Vietnam (TBP), contributing to the achievement of NPA. Therefore, this study will provide vital information and data on the working children situation in the surveyed eight provinces/cities in Vietnam, which will be the basic for the implementation of the above-mentioned activities.

2. Objectives of the study{ TC "Objectives of the study" \f A \l "2" }{ TC "Objectives of the study" \f A \l "2" }

The overall aim of this study is to illustrate the picture of **children involving in economic activities** in the eight provinces/cities in Vietnam and to learn about some of worst forms of work that children are involving in there as well as the causes underlying the phenomenon. To examine the impacts of work on children's growth, from which suitable recommendations on the execution of policies, programmes and activities can be made to minimize the number of children involving in economic activities in general and gradually eliminate the worst forms of work in which children involve in particular.

Specific objectives include:

- To get an overview of the situation of children involving in economic activities in eight surveyed provinces/cities of Vietnam;
- To contribute to the development of Government's National Target Programme for Child Projection for the period of 2010-2015;
- To prepare for the selection of project sites of the ILO-IPEC Programme of Support to the National Time-Bound on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Vietnam.

3. Scope of the study{ TC "Study Scope" \f A \l "2" }

Children involving in economic activities exists in different forms in different geographical areas due to the differences in natural and socio-economic conditions. According to the data of the Household Living Standards Survey by General Statistics Office (GSO) in 2006, children involving in economic activities existed in almost all cities/provinces in Vietnam, in both rural and urban areas. However, these children work more in big cities/provinces and the areas with plenty of traditional handicraft villages (receiving places). The scope of this study is limited in eight provinces/cities, representing for the North, the Central and the South of Vietnam. Information about children involving in economic activities was

collected during 2008-2009 period, focusing on following contents: working fields where children involving in economic activities is most popular, ages, sex, relations between work and school situations, working conditions and incomes. A special focus was given to highlight the worst forms of children involving in economic activities

II. METHODOLOGY

1. Definitions of terminologies{ TC "Definitions of terminologies" \f A \l "2" }

- **Children**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines “children as every human being below the age of eighteen years unless the law defines differently”⁷. In Vietnam, Article 1 in Law on Child Care, Protection and Education defines: "Children are Vietnamese citizens under 16 years old"

- **Children involving in economic activities:**

The term of children involving in economic activities (hereinafter it will be called as “working children”) in this study will be understood as follows: children at age group of 6 to less than 18 years old, who are economically active for the last 12 months. Therefore, children involved in economic activities⁸, have dropped out or at risk of dropping out of school, and have worked for (or demand of working) more than 183 days⁹ for the last 12 months

Control children group include those who age from 6 to under 18, uninvolved in any forms of labour or involved in them infrequently.

- **Worst forms of child labour**

The Convention against the Worst Forms of Child Labour (C182) is divided into two parts: unconditional and conditional worst forms of child labour. The unconditional (also called by definition) worst forms of child labour are often illegal and therefore also prohibited for adults. They have in common that no matter how much the conditions in the workplace are improved they are always forbidden for children under 18 to take part in. The unconditional worst forms of child labour are:

⁷ Article 1, UN Convention on Child Rights approved by UN General Assembly on November 20th 1989 and have taken effect since September 2nd 1990. Up to now, there have been 191 nations signatory to the Convention.

⁸ According to the Definition on labour worker population, including all those who are above 15 years old with or without jobs but have demands of jobs.

⁹ According to the Definition on regular labour worker population over the last 12 months with the total working days and demands of working more than or equal to 183 days. If the number is less than 183 days, this means the irregular labour worker population.

- All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as trafficking of children; debt bondage; forced or compulsory labour, or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), including the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, or the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- Use, procuring or offering of a child by others for illegal activities, also known as children used by adults in the commission of crime (CUBAC), including the trafficking or production of drugs.
- The work, which can badly affect children's health, safety or morality because of its nature or working environment and conditions.
- The last category (conditional worst forms of child labour) is up to every ratifying country to define, a list of what should be prohibited is required by each ratifying state to produce. The Labour Code stipulates that workers under 18 years of age are prohibited from taking part in heavy or dangerous work and work that might have adverse impacts on their personality. It also provides a list over 81 occupations that are prohibited for underage workers and 13 forbidden working conditions¹⁰.

2. Selection of the study sites

To ensure achievements of the study objectives, study sites were chosen on the basis of the following criteria:

- Representation from the three main areas of Vietnam: the North, the Central and the South.
- The study sites should well represent both rural and urban areas
- Documented existence of working children in the study sites (children working in hard, toxic, hazardous and dangerous employment).

Based on the above criteria, the research team selected the following eight cities/provinces:

Table 1. Characteristics of the selected provinces/cities

Province/City Selection Criteria	Selected provinces/cities
- There are a great number	- Lao Cai: Common that children are dropping out of

¹⁰ Vietnam Labour Code, chapter XI, article 119-122, available at <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/WEBTEXT/38229/64933/E94VNM01.htm>

of drop-out children (or at risk of being dropped out) participating in economic activities	<p>school to work in the tourism industry in Sapa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gia Rai: Common that children are dropping out of school to involve in economic activities. - An Giang: Children leaving school to earn a living (especially noted with the ethnic minority children)
- There are many forms of hard, toxic, hazardous and dangerous work in which children involve.	- Quang Nam and Ha Tinh: Coastline villages using children to go out to sea, which is a hard and dangerous job.
- There are handicraft villages using working children without payment in households	- Hanoi: Many food-processing villages using working children without payment in households (receiving places)
- There are forms of migrant children or street children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ho Chi Minh City: Children working in hard, toxic, hazardous and dangerous environment (departure places) - Quang Ninh: Children working in mining, tourist, fishing activities

3. Selection of respondents

The research team conducted focus group discussions and in-dept interviews with altogether 500 people using semi-structured questionnaires¹¹. There were 52 provincial/district/communal officers in charge of childcare and protection tasks; 128 working children; 96 non-working children; 144 children's parents/guardians; 80 employers using children to work in economic activities. During the process of selecting the respondents of in-depth interviews, the research team selected a given rate of control groups with the aim at comparing study target groups with them to find out differences and causes of children involving in economic activities. Moreover, the research team also paid attention to the balance of sex and ages of respondents participating in focus groups/in-depth interviews.

Studies on working children require multi-dimension views by both children themselves and related stakeholders. Therefore, target groups of this study include:

¹¹ See the annex of qualitative instruments

- Working children, include the children from 6 to under 18 years old, who are economically active for the last 12 months
- Control children group, include those aged from 6 to under 18, uninvolved in any forms of labour or involved in them infrequently.
- Parents/guardians of working children and non-working children
- Employers
- Representatives from agencies/organizations, including central state management agencies (Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Bureau of Protection and Care for Children, Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs in eight provinces/cities); localities (provincial/district/communal People's Committees), Departments/Offices of Education, headmasters of school, local mass organizations (Women's Unions, Youth Unions, War-Veteran Associations and the Fatherland Front).

4. Study instruments

This study used both qualitative and quantitative instruments to collect the data.

Qualitative instruments include:

- Focus group guidance for group of working children.
- Focus group guidance for group of parents, guardians;
- Focus group guidance for group of employers;
- Focus group guidance for group of related representatives from local agencies/ organizations;
- Data collection tables at communal and provincial levels.
- Guideline materials for focus groups

Quantitative instruments include:

- Questionnaires for working children;
- Statistical table of data on socio-economic targets and children at communal and ward levels;
- Study guideline materials

5. Data collection and analysis

The data used in this research was collected as follows:

a. Qualitative data

The qualitative data in this survey consists of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. These data were processed separately according to specific contents/topics.

Table 2. Number of focus groups and in-depth interviews

#	Focus group and in-depth interviews	Number/commune	Communes in total	People/commune	People in total	Focus group		In-depth Interviews	
						6-14 years old	15-18 years old	6-14 years old	15-18 years old
I	Children								
1	Working children	1	8	16	128	6	6	2	2
2	Non-working children	1	8	12	96	5	5	1	1
II	Parents								
3	Working children's parents	1	8	10	80	3	3	2	2
4	Non-working children's parents	1	8	8	64	3	3	1	1
III	Local officers	1	8	7	52	40		16	
IV	Employers	1	8	10	80	64		16	
	Total (I-IV)	6	8	72	500				

b. Quantitative data

The quantitative data was collected with the following two methods:

- Direct surveys with respondents using structured questionnaires
- Collect statistical data on working children. and related issues in study communes and provinces/cities
 - *Direct surveys with respondents:* researchers directly interviewed with selected respondents by using structured questionnaires
 - **Statistical data**, including statistical data at provincial level were collected via the statistical system of Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DoLISA); statistical data at communal level were collected via the communal statistical system.

Quantitative data collected in study sites were checked and processed by Cspiro Software and then analyzed by Stata Software.

Table 3. Distribution of children samples

#	Provinces/cities	Children in total (M)	Working children		Non- working children	
			6-14 years old (M1)	15-<18 years old (M2)	6-14 years old (M3)	15-<18 years old (M4)
1	Lao Cai	48	20	20	4	4
2	Hanoi	66	28	28	5	5
3	Quang Ninh	30	9	9	6	6
4	Ha Tinh	48	20	20	4	4
5	QuangNam	48	20	20	4	4
6	Gia Rai	30	12	12	3	3
7	HCM City	66	23	23	10	10
8	An Giang	48	18	18	6	6
	Total	384	150	150	42	42

6. Desk review of secondary data

In order to get an overview of the working children situation, find out trends and scale of working children in previous time, causes and impacts of work on children's development, the research team collected, analyzed and evaluated the already available studies on working children in Vietnam.

Results of the desk review showed that studies on working children have been conducted in Vietnam under different perspectives for various purposes many years ago. But as explained above, so far no study has comprehensively analyzed the issue of working children at a large scale in Vietnam.

There have been studies on children's rights, conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), showing that many children had to work hard in their families since they were very young. This seriously affects children's rights to education, entertainment as well as their physical and mental development. However, those studies did not focus directly on the issue of working children as a thematic topic to find out the link between working children and child protection, care and education. However, this study put children in the context of their family economies and social environment, where they are living, studying and working. In this context, children play a double role: being offsprings in families and being workers who contribute to their family economies, working for their parents' labour contracts. They have the advantages of being children at work while performing complex tasks with independent responsibilities of an adult.

Therefore, this study used systematical results with multi-dimension approaches in various studied aspects to achieve the objective of describing comprehensive structure and action rule of respondents. *(See the list of documents/materials used as secondary data source in Annex II and III of this report)*

7. Limitations of the study

Due to the sensitivity of the subject the research team faced several difficulties in the phase of data collection, which was partly overcome by commitment to anonymity and secrecy. The highly limited available data on working children further complicated the research.

Furthermore, the aim of this research is to get an overview of the situation of working children in eight provinces and to discuss the causes behind the surveyed children's work, their working conditions. To make an indication for the issue in the whole country or even make a definite estimation of working children in the eight provinces is beyond the scope of this research, due to lack of time and financing, the research team could only visit one commune in each province. Therefore, this research should rather be regarded as a case study illustration of working children in the eight provinces than a precise outline.

III. PROFILES OF WORKING CHILDREN IN EACH STUDY SITE

1. Characteristics of working children

a. Age and sex of working children

Results from the survey in eight provinces show that children are involved in economic activities in all ages (5 to under 18 years old). Performed tasks depend and differ according to children's ages. Hardly surprising, children above 10 years old are more frequently involved in hired labour or self-employment than younger children under 10 years old. Those under 10 years mainly work in household economies while some other work in services such as selling lotteries, polishing shoes or washing dishes in restaurants.

Depending on their age, children can participate in different phases of the production process. In the very young age group (6-10 years old), children only participate in light, simple and easy-doing work.

Box 1. Age of working children

.... In Nhon My commune, tile and brick manufactories are developing rapidly, and most of the household manufacturers use children as labour for their production. Children work at different processes of production. The owners of kilns employ whole households to carry brick and tile products to boats for distribution. When parents do the work, they also bring their children with them to work. There are the children aged 6-7 years old, also participating in the work together with their parents, brothers and sisters. In general, children participating in tile and brick production can be divided according to ages with following specific work:

Children 6-10 years old: Transporting raw bricks and tiles to kilns for burning and then transporting the finished products from kilns to the side banks of rivers to be shipped away.

Children 11-14 years old: squeezing, airing and arranging bricks, tiles in the kilns, transporting primary and completed bricks and tiles.

Children 15-17 years old: working the soil, arranging bricks and tiles in the kilns, transporting primary and completed bricks and tiles.

Group discussion with a kiln owner in Nhon My Commune, An Giang province

The results from the survey also show that working children aged 10-14 years old accounts for the highest rate with 72.6 percent in the total number of surveyed working children. The second highest rate belongs to the group of children aged

15-17 years old, making up 17 percent in total and the third belongs to the group of children aged 6-9 years old with 10 percent.

Among the 150 surveyed hired-labour children, up to 90 percent are above 10 years old. (See Table 4)

The rate of female working children is higher than the rate of male ones in all ages, 56.3 percent of female working children compared to 43.7 percent of male ones.

According to types of employment, in hired employment, female working children are 1.5 times more prevalent than male ones are. Among self-employed and household working children, there is not much difference between female and male ones, (see table 4). Male working children in the survey are involved more in the agricultural sector while female ones work more in industry and service activities. Male working children work in the agricultural sector twice more often than female ones did. In industry and service activities, working girls are 1.6 – 1.7 times higher than working boys are.

Table 4. Division of working children by age, sex and types of labour

Age group	Hired employment			Household economy			Self-hired employment			Total
	Male	female	Total	Male	female	Total	Male	female	Total	
15 - 17	13.79	18.48	16.67	28.00	14.29	21.74	16.67	14.29	15.38	17.00
10 - 14	77.59	70.65	73.33	52.00	66.67	58.70	77.08	78.57	77.88	72.67
6 – 9	8.62	10.87	10.00	20.00	19.05	19.57	6.25	7.14	6.73	10.33
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey results of 300 working children in 08 provinces/cities

b. Schooling situation

Most of the working children in 08 study sites go to public schools at right age as stated in Vietnamese laws (6 years old). For children migrating with their parents or independently, the number is much lower¹². The reason for that is unstable

¹² According to statement of officials from Hochiminh city, where migration is most dynamic in Vietnam, there is no formal survey on school situation of migrant children from rural areas to cities, but by observation of official, school drop out of this group is quite high

accommodation, no permanent resident certificate, late registration for temporary residence, and lack of parents' care for their children's education.

Due to the fact that most of the working children are from poor families; when they are out of school, they have to participate in economic activities to generate more incomes for their families. Therefore, they do not have much time to join in other activities such as participating in tuition classes informally organized by teachers or learning subjects like music or drawing for their comprehensive development.

Some children cannot go to school at day time because they have to work; therefore, local authorities have mobilized them to pursuit school classes organized by continuing school centres or attending supplementary education in evenings or participating in illiteracy elimination classes in wards/communes. However, this form of education and classes is not attractive to children for many reasons. First of all, these children do not have enough time to attend full class. Secondly, because of bad school performance, they lost their interest in study. Among the total number of surveyed children, only a few attend non-formal education.

For the drop-out situation of working children, group discussion results illustrate that the drop-out rate among working children is very high. These children mainly belong to the group aged 10-11 years old (after completing primary education) and the group aged 14-15 years old (after completing secondary education)

A number of surveyed children have never been to school or only completed primary level, so they are now illiterate or re-illiterate.

Box 2. Working children's drop-out situation

"...As we know, in this commune or others nearby, children only complete primary education and then they leave school. They usually follow other friends to leave school in series to work. They want to help their parents with their supplementary incomes. They follow each other to sell peddled wares to customers Many children don't also want to go to school because they like to sell wares to earn moneys for their own spending and family incomes. Even some parents think that their children's early work for living is better than their study, etc. The educational qualification of children at high mountainous areas is certainly lower than that in dental areas because many children don't know how to write when completing their primary education..."

Focus group with communal officers in Lao Chai, Lao Cai Province

Among the 300 surveyed children, there are 91 drop-out cases, accounting for 30.3 percent of the total surveyed children. Three children have never been to

school and are illiterate. The rate of working children dropping out of school in ethnic minority households is significantly higher than the rate of children in Kinh households (40.3 percent compared to 28.2 percent). In the total number of working children dropping out of school, the rate of those leaving school for more than one year accounts for over 81 percent.

Table 5. School situation of working children by ethnicity and sex

School situation	Ethnic Groups			Sex		
	<i>Kinh</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Attending school	71.37	55.77	68.67	63.36	72.78	68.67
Drop out of school	28.23	40.38	30.33	35.88	26.04	30.33
Never been to school	0.40	3.85	1.00	0.76	1.18	1.00
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Survey results of 300 working children in eight provinces/cities

In the focus group discussions and the in-depth interviews with working children's parents about the reasons for working children's school leaving, many opinions were given. Below are some examples of reasons highlighted by the parents.

- The parents cannot afford children's schooling due to hard economic conditions. Many children leave school after completing their primary education because of the fact that their parents cannot afford to pay tuition fees and other school expenses such as schoolbooks, learning equipment, transportation and per diem fees, contribution fees for school, these costs increase remarkably in secondary level... Especially, the rate of drop-out working children in rural and remote areas is much higher than that in urban areas. According to this survey, the number of school drop out children in mountainous and ethnic minority areas is 1.43 times higher than that of urban areas.
- Few family members, lack of labour force, so children have to leave school to help their families and earn a living for themselves;
- Bad results in school make children feel fed up with school, resulting in their difficulties in mastering taught knowledge and finally they are unable to pursue advanced education;

- Parents' low awareness and unappreciation of their children's education. These parents often think that their children only need know how to read and write; any further knowledge is not necessary. Because of their wrong awareness of the matter, parents are not concerned about their children's study; even they do not prevent them from leaving school. This situation is quite popular in mountainous and remote areas, even there are some ethnic minorities, who only allow female children to study up to secondary level and then these children are made to leave school to work.
- Another factor, which has influenced children's school leaving, is the lack of nearby schools in their living areas, so it is costly and time consuming for children to get to school. The questionnaire from 300 working children also indicates similar causes for dropping out of school.

There are up to 38.5 percent of working children, who have to leave school to work to help their parents; 28.6 percent of working children leaving school because of their family difficult economies; 20 percent of working children leaving school because of their bad learning capacity and only 5.5 percent of working children leaving school because they dislike going to school (See in details in Table 6).

It is noted that the rate of girls forced to leave school is three times higher than the rate of boys.

Table 6. Reasons for working children's drop-out¹³ (%)

Reasons for the drop-out	Male	Female	Total
Weak learning capacity	27.66	11.36	19.78
No finance for tuition fees	23.40	34.09	28.57
Involved in economic activities to help parents	38.30	38.64	38.46
Ill or sick	2.13	4.55	3.30
Dislike going to school	6.38	4.55	5.49
Forced to leave school by families	2.13	6.82	4.40

¹³ of 80 non working children under this survey, there is no case of school drop out

Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
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Survey results of 300 working children in 08 provinces/cities

c. Working children’s participation in vocational training and career orientation

Secondary schools are responsible for children and youth’s career orientation. Children are supposed to receive career consultation in secondary school. After leaving high school, children are expected to have some elementary knowledge on job-orientation. However, this activity has not been conducted effectively, leaving children and youth without proper career guidance.

Other agencies responsible for orienting careers for teenagers are employment and vocational training agencies and centres. However, in eight study sites, these agencies/centres are very limited and allocated unreasonably, mainly concentrated in urban areas. Therefore, teenagers have few chances to access vocational training classes, especially, in rural and remote areas.

Besides the state system of career consultation and vocational training agencies/centres for teenagers, there are also services provided by private organizations, domestic and international humanitarian agencies and organizations in study sites. These organizations and agencies have been providing a number of forms of career orientation and vocational training, foreign language and skills for teenagers. They usually give priorities to the groups of children living in hard situations such as poor children, working children in hazardous and dangerous conditions. In Sapa district, Lao Cai Province, a number of foreign language classes have been held for the children, who sell peddled wares in tourist sites. The classes provide children with tourist guiding and serving skills, so they can use them to communicate with tourists in Sapa.

Other organizations have provided life skills and weaving knowledge and fabric for female children in the study sites. For examples, in traditional handicraft villages, there are activities of teaching traditional careers, saying weaving brocade, and linen, embroidered with laces, etc for the working children living in hard conditions.

Box 3. Working children’s vocational training participation

“...In 2008, my village organized a vocational training course for seven children with extreme disadvantages. Due to a hard living situation, these children have to leave school and sell peddled wares, working as mason coolies, digging holes for tree planting, etc, which used to be very hard to them. Our communal authorities realized that it was necessary to help and support these children. After the hand-

over meeting among leaders of the communes, we decided that we should send the children to a private vocational training centre to learn how to repair motorbikes. Six months later these children are more confident and admitted to work in motorbike repairing facilities in our living areas with much better wages compared to their previous work. Providing vocational training courses are mainly rooted from community charity or supporting investment...”

Mr. Dang Dinh Phong – Vice-head of Thach Trung commune, Ha Tinh City

d. Current living environment of working children

- *In family environment*

Most of the working children are living in households with difficult economic situations, poor living conditions, or conditions that are limiting children’s access to a normal development.

The focus group results show that households, with working children, parents, and adults in family have to work hard to earn living with unstable and low paid-jobs. Due to their poor family economy, many parents cannot bring up their children with minimum basic services. Children have to live in temporary houses with limited sanitary facilities, lack of or no clean water, etc. Nutrition is limited to only enough quantity of food per day and it cannot meet the minimum nutrition standards for children’s healthy development. Therefore, parents have to work hard, making it difficult for them to care and educate their children.

The results from surveys conducted for this report confirms the above discussion. Up to 53 percent of the surveyed working children are from poor households, 45.6 percent are living in medium level families and only 1.3 percent are living in well-off families.

In the non-working children group, the children usually come from well-off families. Their parents and family members have higher educational level with better jobs and more stable incomes compared to the parents, who have working children. Therefore, these children are living in better conditions with enough food and better nutrition, safeguarded living, water, sanitary conditions, parents’ care for their education. In interviews with non-working children, the results show that most of them only do housework voluntarily, have enough food and private spaces for their study. Their parents also help them with their studies.

- *In school environment*

Children who work while attending school face many disadvantages, such as:

- Unable to fully participate in classes (quitting or being late for classes, etc.), or have no time for reviewing lessons and doing homework;

- Too tired after work to acquire knowledge and fully participate in lessons;
- Lack of time for outdoor activities and private lessons,
- Feeling insecure, keeping away from successful students who do not have to work and avoiding speaking in front of the class in school

All the above-mentioned factors have badly influenced children’s study results and mental development at their schooling ages.

- *In working environment*

- Working with adults and getting used to adults’ habits and activities, which are unsuitable to children’s ages, has partly impacted working children’s physiological development. several cases of working children have showed mental and physiological deviations, or at least acting “too mature to their age”
- Children usually suffer from disadvantages such as working hard, or working for too long hours per day, and unequal treatment. In some cases, the children such as street ones, ones working for households or selling lotteries, are usually scolded, battered, etc.
- Some children are forced to work hard in hazardous and dangerous working environments with high risks of accidents and being injured at work.

- *In community environment*

- Working children do not have or have little spare time to participate in local public activities, which are organized by teenager teams or youth unions. They also spend less time playing with their friends. Those factors have formed “invisible” gaps between working children and non-working children.
- Social services for children in general and working children in particular are very deficient; lack of playing grounds for children; lack of supporting programs/activities to help and care for children, etc. Children’s issues have not been a priority in local socio-economic programs.

To sum up, working children have to live in disadvantageous environment at all aspects. The younger the children are, the greater the impact will be on their psychical and mental development.

Box 4. Working children’s living environment

“...My father goes to catch sea fish at night, from the previous evening to early morning of the next day. My mother transport coal from early morning until late

evening. In the morning, I go to the local market to sell the fish that my father caught for about 2 hours. In the afternoon, I go to school. In addition, I also cook and do housework. I have to do myself every thing from private work and study. Therefore, I seldom participate in school activities or other entertainment ones because of lack of private time. In my school, there are some friends like me. We also find that some other friends do not like us because we do not have conditions to participate in activities like them... In my resident areas, people sometimes said bad words about us, etc For example; they called me the child of the family without money but still keeping face, etc..."

Focus groups with working child – Resident Town No 7 – Cao Xanh Ward

2. Household profile of working children

a. Characteristics of household members

The results of focus groups and in-dept interviews with working children and their parents show that the households having working children share one or all of the following characteristics:

- The size of the household is greater than the average in the study sites;
- Number of old people, children and dependent people are greater than the average one in the study sites;
- Have few family members and not enough labour force (single-mother or father households)
- Have ill household members, with minimized or no working capacity.
- Have members involved in social evils (gambling, drinking or drug addiction, etc)

The survey results from the 300 working children also show that the average number of households having working children is 5.7 members, 4.7 members higher than the number of the households without working children in survey samples. Besides, 22 percent of the households surveyed are those with children in special circumstances such as having single parent, divorced or separated parents.

b. Education level of working children's parents

Results of group discussions and in-depth interviews show that education level of working children's parents is remarkably lower than that of non-working children's parents. A number of parents, who have working children, only completed primary educational level, some of them are even illiterate. These parents do not have any specific career or occupation. In the poor provinces in Northern

mountainous and central highlands areas such as Lao Cai, Gia Lai provinces, the situation is more serious when half the number of parents in the study is illiterate. No parents completed higher secondary level and had no chance to participate in vocational training.

Box 5. Low education level of working children’s parents and guardians

“...In the past, we had no school to go to. If we wanted to study, we had to go very far from home and there were no paths for us to go to school... At that time, we had to do slash-and-burn cultivations to help families, so now we do not know how to read and write. If we go to meetings or want to lend money, we have to ask someone else to write ours names on the papers and we sign the documents by our fingerprints. Now we are old and have to earn livings, so we cannot go to school now. In our village, the old are illiterate, only our children are literate...”

Sung A Gia – Ly Hamlet – Lao Chai Commune, Sapa

“...Education level of parents in my living areas is normally low. Most of them only completed primary education and then stay at home to work with family members, number of parents completing secondary education are also a few. Nearly 100 percent of parents have not been trained with specific occupations... They only work on agriculture or non-agriculture work such as small trade or working as mason coolies...”

Nguyen Ngoc Thanh –Vice-head of Thach Trung People’s Committee

The survey results indicate similar results. There are up to 83.5 percent of the parents, having working children, only completed primary education or lower, in which 18.4 percent of them are illiterate. The number of parents completing secondary education only account for 4 percent. The group of parents having high educational level is Kinh ethnic group, who are living in urban areas.

In general, the parents of working children have lower education than the parents of non-working children. 60 percent of the parents of working children only completed primary level or lower, 5.2 percent of which are illiterate. The group of parents completing higher secondary education makes up only 14.3 percent.

c. Economic characteristics of the households having working children

Households having working children share the following characteristics:

- In hard economic situation, some households are listed as poor or nearly poor households
- Many households have to do different jobs at the same time to survive;

- Households in rural areas are hired or self-hired to work in the agriculture – forestry and fishery sectors while households in urban areas are hired or self-hired to work in small businesses such as garments and textiles, food processing, small repairing work, footwear production and outwork, restaurant services or selling peddled wares, etc...
- Unstable jobs with high risks of losses, bankruptcy, work changes;
- Low and unstable incomes
- Migrant households without stable jobs and living places, working for several different employers

Survey results of 300 working children show that 59 percent of the households having working children live on agriculture, 31.3 percent live on service provision to other people and 26.7 percent live on industry and handicraft work

Table 7. Fields of economic activities of the households having working children (Unit: percent)

Fields of economic activities	Kinh ethnic group	Other ethnic groups	Total
Agriculture	55.37	74.14	59.00
Industry	29.75	12.07	26.34
Service	14.88	13.79	14.67
Total	100	100	100

Source: Survey results of working children in eight cities/provinces

d. Level of satisfaction of parents about their children's work

The discussion about the issue of children involving in economic activities with the parents of working children's focus group revealed two main points of view:

- *The first group*, most of parents in group discussions said that working children. is neither their hopes nor their wish. However, due to some reasons such as hard economic situations, lack of labour force (because of sickness old or incapable of work people, single parent, etc), households cannot have enough capacity to hire labour, so their children have to work.

In these families, children play an important role in family production and income generating. Most of the parents having children working in Hanoi, Quang Ninh and HCM City agreed on this point of view.

Box 6. Parents' perspectives on working children

"No parents want their children to start working early, only hard economic situations force them to let children work. No family forces children to work and we only encourage them to work to earn a living. We have to encourage them because their work contributes to families incomes (creating favorable conditions for children to take rest and respect their working outcomes). In reality, we feel sorry for many working children. However, children's education is still prioritized. In many cases, to support for their education, many children have to work to pay for their tuition fees.

A household representative in Quang Nam

.....I am now 35 years old, having completed grades 7. I used to work as a tailor but now because of my shortsighted eyes, I can no longer do the job. I do not know how to earn a living while I cannot learn to do another job, so I stay at home and do housework. My husband is a worker in a frozen water company, and his salary is not enough to support the family. Due to our limited financial situation, my child could not continue to high school, he had to leave school early. Now he is working for a jam company with a salary of 1 million per month to supplement to my family incomes. I am not happy with his current work because working conditions are hard with long working hours, polluted and smelled air, let alone chemical and colorful substances for making jams, which are very harmful and toxic. I know that his work is hard but there is no choice, so we accept.

Focus group with parents – Ho Chi Minh City

- *The second group* makes up a smaller proportion of participants in group discussions. The group considered children's involving in economic activities as a normal thing with reasons such as: (i) it generates incomes for children's life; (ii) it helps children love working; (iii) it prevents children from idleness and committing social problems.

The typical group of parents having this view is those having children working in tourist services in cities such as Sapa in Lao Cai, or Hoi An in Quang Nam. These children usually work as tourist guides or selling souvenirs and lotteries. Many families who lack information and are mercantile have encouraged their children to work. They even find jobs for their children rather than sending them to school.

Box 7. Children - Main workers of households

“... Our children follow other children to sell souvenirs for tourists. The smaller ones follow the older one to sell souvenirs; normally they earn 30-50 thousand VND per day, which is the main income in our families (much more than agricultural work). We tell them that they should continue selling souvenirs to help family. The work also makes them feel happy because it is not as hard as farming work. Sometimes they meet some kind-hearted foreigners who give them food and small money, etc. We are planning that our children will leave school to sell souvenirs. Learning how to read and write is enough for them...”

Sung A Binh – Hang Lao Chai Hamlet, Sapa.

“... There are three children in my family. All of them sell souvenirs for tourists and get more than 100 hundred thousand VND per day. My wife and I are ill and unhealthy, so we cannot go to work to earn living, even our farming lands are also left empty when we cannot work any more, etc. If my children do not work and bring money to home, we may all die of hunger. Currently, we are totally living on my children’s daily earnings...”

Thao A Mang - Ly Lao Chai Hamlet, Sapa

3. Issues related to working children's work

a. Economic sectors in which working children are involved

In all study sites, children usually work in in-formal economic sectors such as household economies, local small businesses, small services, agriculture and forestry.

Children often participate in common works that are prevalent in their resident areas. That work does not require children's high technical skills but their skillfulness and hard-working. Characteristics of these economic activities are often closely linked to traditional businesses or available natural resources in study sites. Working children often work in small and super-small production units, household economies. In the study sites, they mainly work on typical jobs such as processing sea food (Quang Nam province), seaming clothes and footwear (Ho Chi Minh City), selling wares, lotteries, polishing shoes; producing and exploiting constructive materials, etc.

- *Working children’s employers*

In some of visited sites, businesses and factories are located in the children’s resident areas. Employers and the children often have community relations, knowing each other or the employers have relations with the children’s parents. In many cases, the children’s parents get the work; negotiate working contracts,

wages and other conditions for them. Therefore, working children's wages are paid to their parents; the children themselves only get a small amount to cover personal expenses.

In those working conditions, most of the working children are well-treated in working places. This research did not find any cases of scolding, insulting or illegal punishment in these working conditions.

Some employers have good awareness of educating children so that they have right understanding and attitude on labour and take care of themselves to prevent them from being alluded into social evils.

For the groups of migrant children from rural areas to Ho Chi Minh city and Hanoi to work, the situation is more complicated. Employers mainly employ child migrant workers for their cheap labouring cost.

HCM City was known for having a network that provides working children from rural areas to the cities. According to this survey Ho Chi Minh city is the area where working children are most exploited and abused in various forms. Although low salaries are the main reason for hiring children to work, children also have other advantages compared to adults according to their employers.

Table 8. Comparison between a working children and adult labour as evaluated by labour employers

working children	Adult labour
<i>Brisk</i>	<i>Sluggish</i>
Healthy, quick-sighted, rarely ill and able to work for long hours	Weaker, easily sick and absent for private work, families, back-pained due to long working time, weak eyes
Clever (small flexible hands for quicker working speed)	Clumsy and do work slowly
Easily controlled, obeyed	Uneasily controlled, conservative, usually work with their private ways

Often, employers paid wages based on number of products, non-discriminating the products made by children or adults; however, they still like to hire children to work because children work more effectively and quicker.

Box 8. Working children usually work more efficiently and enthusiastically
When children work in groups, they are much more eager to work. Therefore,

their productivity is better. My factories produce fruit juice, so we import fresh fruit everyday. If we do not peel and squeeze it in day, they will be rotten or less good. Children work very quickly and soon complete the raw material processing for the next steps. Therefore, we like to hire children more than adults do although the wages of 2 thousand VND per 1 kilogram fruit are the same for all

Interview with the owner of the fruit-processing factory – HCM City

- *Labour contracts*

As mentioned above, working children are divided into three groups: household working children, hired working children and self-hired working children. Among three groups, only hired working children group have labour relations with employers via labour contracts. They also are divided into two types: (1) directly work for employers and (2) indirectly work for employers via their families or groups of business¹⁴. In this study, the second form is more common.

Most of the hired working children do not sign labour contracts because they live in the same communes with employers, so hiring working children is very simple. Employers can directly negotiate with children or their families to do the job. The work agreements between employees and employers are mainly done by verbal communication without documents. Due to their close relations in villages or communes, employers usually respect verbal agreements. According to the findings of this research, disputes or conflicts between two parties are rare.

Children working with their parents (6-14 years old) usually do not sign separate labour contracts or have verbal agreements with employers. The employers only make agreements with children's parents.

Independent hired-working children (15-17 years old) usually use verbal agreements with employers on wages, working duration, other benefits like lunch and overtime payment.

b. Working hours per day and effects on children's study

Results of group discussions with working children show that they are working 4-5 hours/day in average. However, the length of a workday also depends on work types, work seasons and the age of the child. For the group of children going to school, their longest working hours per day are in the summers when they do not have to go to school.

The older the children are, the more they work per day, month and year. The children aged over 14 years old usually work about 6 hours per day.

¹² Households or groups of households get a volume of work and then let their children work with them

The length of the work also depends on the economic sectors and the specific tasks in which children are involved. The group of self-employed and hired working children have longer average working hours per day, days per months and months per years than the group of children working in households. Children in the sectors such as garment and textile, leather and footwear, or food processing have to work up to 8-9 hours per day. Especially in production seasons, in order to complete the contracts or produce enough goods to meet public demands, during Tet and other holidays children are working up to 12 hours per day. The children, who work in these sectors and go to school, spend 4-5 hours for working.

Box 9. Garment work with longer working hours

I am from Huong Son commune. I completed grade four and then stayed at home to look after my sisters and brother as my mother had went to the city to look for work. When my mother is not working , she comes back home. I have been working here for more than a year. I went here with a villager but she works in another place. Working here is very hard. Every day, I have to wake up at 6:30 am and work from 7:30 am until noon. We take one-hour rest for lunch and then work until 6 pm or even eight or 9 pm in some days. We are tired and usually feel sleepy. My female boss is very strict and she warns us daily, so we cannot ignore the work for some while. Sunday afternoon is my only time off work. I am very tired and homesick but I do not know what to do. In this city, I do not know anyone; do not know how to go on the streets. At least I have a place for resting and living. Each month I save money and send to my mother 300 thousand VND, which is quite a lot of money to me. In the past when I was at home, I had never had 100 thousand VND.

In-depth interview with a girl, 13 years old, working in a tailors' workshop

Self-employed working children selling newspapers and lotteries, polishing shoes or selling noodle with sautéed beef, or collecting empty bottles and waste materials have much more working hours than those working in garment and textile, leather and footwear sectors. Normally, these children work all day and do not have any weekly day-off.

The survey results of 300 working children in the eight study sites show that children in average are working 5.6 hours per day. Children aged from 15-17 years old have 6.5 working hours, significantly higher than the others do. At the same time, hired-working children have the longest working hours with 6.2 ones compared to the rest ones. The second longest working hours belong to the self-working group, the children with the shortest working days are those working in households. (See Table 9 and 10)

Table 9. Working children's average working hours per day divided by age group, sex and economic sectors (*Unit: hours*)

Age group	Agriculture-forestry-fishery			Industry, small handicraft industry			Trade and Service			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15 - 17	6.08	4.33	5.75	8.8	6.25	6.86	6.4	7.0	6.79	6.49
10 - 14	5.34	4.93	5.21	6.28	6.21	6.24	6.2	4.38	5.04	5.58
6 - 9	3.5	2.38	3.1	3.5	3.57	3.54	5.0	6.0	5.63	3.94
Total	5.39	4.3	5.03	6.19	5.99	6.06	6.13	4.85	5.31	5.56

Source: working children survey results in 08 provinces/cities

Table 10. Average working hours per day divided by age, sex forms of work (*Unit: hours*)

	Hired-work			Household economies			Self-work			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	8.38	6.71	7.24	5.71	3.67	5.1	6	6.38	6.19	6.49
10-14	6.69	6.06	6.32	3.38	4.29	3.85	6	4.43	5.15	5.58
6-9	3.6	3.5	3.53	2.8	2.75	2.78	6	6.5	6.29	3.94
Total	6.66	5.9	6.19	3.92	3.9	3.91	6	4.86	5.38	5.56

Source: working children survey results in eight provinces/cities

Similar to the average working hours in month and year, children's working hours per day also depend on factors such as economic sectors, types of work; children's age and schooling situations. Children's average monthly working days are 21.76 days and their average yearly working months are 8.06 ones

If considering working hours compared to economic activity, children working in agriculture have average working days per month and average working months

per year of 22.2 days and 8.35 months respectively; in the industrial sector, 23.3 days per month and 8.3 months per year; and in the service sector for the children aged 15-17 years old, 19.7 days per month and 7.81 months per years

If considering types of employment, hired-working children have the highest average working days per month and average working months per year in comparison with the other groups. The average working days per month of this group are 23.2 days and the average working months per year are 8.35 months per year; self-hired working children, 20.4 average working days per month and 8.6 average working months per year; household working children, 19.2 average working days per month and 7.3 average working months per year -

If considering working hours based on age groups, the children aged 15 – 17 years old have 4-5 working days per month and a working month per year longer than the other groups.

c. Working conditions of working children

Working children mainly work in the informal economic sector for instance small businesses, factories, services, households, and self-doing activities in community and on the streets. Therefore, standards for working environments, labour safety and sanitation are difficult to control and safeguard.

In term of working environment, the children in this survey working in agricultural and forestry sectors, have better working environment in comparison to those working in industry, small handicraft and service industries. While working children in agriculture often suffers from unsafe conditions related to humidity and high temperatures because of outdoor work, children working in industry have to suffer from polluted air (toxic gases and chemical substances), unsuitable machines and equipment for their physical bodies. Children working in the service sector have to suffer from unsafe conditions related to temperature, dust and noises.

In terms of labour safety, most working children are not equipped with safety working instrument. A great number of working children do not have knowledge of labour safety.

In terms of labour physiology, in general, working children in households do not have to suffer from physiological stress during the work process compared to those working in agriculture and service sectors. A number of children working in agriculture have to suffer from the adults' vituperation in families. Indeed, the children working in industry and services are under pressure by their bosses and others in the working process.

Moreover, though working children's working conditions are guaranteed at what level, they still depend on children's specific types of work. The survey results in

08 provinces/cities show that in all three economic sectors (agriculture, forestry and aquaculture), there are the jobs that children do unsafely, even very dangerous. In fishery, working children going out to sea to catch fish are not protected against heat, high winds, big waves, storms and rain. The fishing equipment is too heavy and the working hours are too long. In industry and small handicraft businesses, children have to work in narrow spaces with lack of light, much noises, polluted air, toxic chemical substances, which badly affect children's health. In addition, they have to suffer from the stresses of time duration, late or no payment. In the service sector, children are faced with noises, dust, hazards, accidents that can happen any time (traffic accidents, street violence, etc)

According to the survey results, nearly 45 percent of the children said that their working places were not ensured in terms of temperature, light, humidity, which have badly affected their health. Nearly 40 percent of the children said that their working environment had high concentration of dust, badly affecting children's health. More than 27 percent of the children said that their working environment is unsafe because they are impacted by toxic chemical substances, polluted air, and gases (See Table 14). In general, working children in service sector have the worst working environment, and then the group of children working in industry and finally the children working in the agriculture sector.

Table 11. Working children's evaluations on the impact factors in their working environments (*Unit: percent*)

Working environment	Agriculture			Industry			Service			Total		
	<i>Very bad</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Very bad</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Very bad</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Very bad</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Medium</i>
Temperature, light and humidity	1.45	36.23	62.32	7.94	28.57	63.49	3.81	54.29	41.90	5.00	39.33	55.67
Dust	1.45	2.90	95.65	10.32	27.78	61.90	5.71	57.14	37.14	6.67	32.33	61.00
Noise	1.45	2.90	95.65	2.38	30.16	67.46	4.76	55.24	40.00	3.00	32.67	64.33
hazardous	0.00	10.1	89.86	8.73	39.6	51.59	0.95	12.	86.67	4.0	23.	72.67

chemical substances and gases		4			8			38		0	33	
Unsuitable equipment and machines effecting children's physical bodies	0.00	10.14	89.86	0.00	32.54	67.46	0.00	6.67	93.33	0.00	18.33	81.67
Easily be burnt and exploited	0.00	4.35	95.65	2.38	23.81	73.81	0.00	4.76	95.24	1.00	12.67	86.33
Easily fall, damage	0.00	5.80	94.20	11.90	19.05	69.05	8.57	13.33	78.10	8.00	14.00	78.00

Source: Survey results of 300 working children in 08 provinces/cities

4. Working children's incomes and expenses

a. Salaries/wages and incomes

Working children's incomes depend on their types of work, specific tasks and working duration. However, we can conclude that working children's incomes are low at the rate of 600,000-800,000 VND per month.

For the children who work for household production units, they often have to work with very low wages/salaries, and those who work for their own families, they do not receive payment. Parents and children themselves estimate that they should be paid 300 – 500 thousand VND per month in equal to the salary of hired labour.

For the hired-working children, usually their wages are fixed with their products. Thus, at different ages, children can earn different amounts of money. The very young age group (6-10 years old), due to their limited capacity, their wages make up a small proportion compared to adults' ones. The group aged 11-14, their incomes make up half of adults' ones. The group aged 15-17 years old, if working as regularly as adults do, they can get an equal payment. For example, processing amberjacks can bring 3,000 VND per kilogram for workers. Children working 8-9 hours on average per day can earn 20,000-30,000 VND; sewing shoes will be paid based on types of shoes, so children can earn from 2,100

VND to 3,500 VND per pair. A child can sew 4-8 pairs and can get 8,500 to 17,000 VND on average per day.

For the self-hired working children, who sell peddled wares, lotteries; collect empty bottles, etc, their incomes are 20-30 thousand VND per day in average and 700- 800 thousand VND per month.

Box 10. Working children’s wages, incomes and expenses

“...Everyday, I sell souvenirs and peddled wares and earn about 15-20 thousand VND (excluding daily meals). Normally, I give all that money to my parents. In some days, I can earn more, so I will keep 5- 10 thousand for my private spending on cakes, toys, pens and books, etc... I also have some friends who can earn more than me because they can speak English better; however, they only give their parents a small amount of their money. The rest one they keep to buy expensive clothes, shoes or to drink and eat etc....”

Lu An Tra, 15 years old, Ly Lao Chai Hamlet, Sapa

“...Everyday, I sell souvenirs and peddled wares and earn about 15-20 thousand VND Normally I give all that money to my parents. In some days, I can earn more, so I will keep 5- 10 thousand for my private spending on cakes, beer or playing computer games, etc. Sometimes, I tell my parents that I cannot sell any things in day, but they do not complain about that. Many of my friends doing the same thing like me also tell lies to their parents... I found it more interesting when selling wares to earn some money than staying at home...”

Nguyen Van Linh, 15 years old, Hong Ha Hamlet, Thach Trung, Ha Tinh City

The survey results show that working children’s average incomes are 509,900 VND per month. In general, boys have higher incomes than girls do. The older the children are, the higher incomes they can have.

Comparing economic sectors, children working in industrial sector have higher incomes than those working in agricultural and service ones. In terms of types of work, hired-working children have the highest incomes; then household-working children and finally self-working ones.

Table 12. Working children’s monthly average incomes

Age group	Hired-work			Household work			Self-work			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
15-17	197.	88.4	132.	300	0	150	22.7	35.9	31.6	890	707	762.

	5	3	8									4
10-14	683. 9	564. 1	614. 7	650	216. 7	390	267. 7	204. 1	226. 8	539.6	405. 8	458. 7
6-9	407. 5	400. 0	404. 3				800	510	568	486	462. 86	472. 5
Total	690. 0	583. 3	626. 7	725.0	325. 0	525. 0	508. 3	308. 3	319. 6	582.2	465. 3	510. 0

Source: Survey results of 300 working children in 08 provinces/cities

b. Children's expenses

In general, working children limit their expenses. Their incomes are mainly saved to give to their parents for savings or their tuition fees as necessary. However, children also keep a small amount of money for their personal spending such as noshing, drinking, purchasing books and pens for school. However, some children spend money on unsuitable demands such as drinking, playing computer games, or gambling.

The survey results show that more than 65 percent of children's incomes are sent to their families and relatives; about 7.6 percent are used for children's private savings. Children's social communication expenses account for one-third of their total incomes.

Table 13. Working children's spending structure (**Unit: percent**)

Description	Mechanism		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Expenses for eating and drinking	25.37	13.89	18.90
2. Expenses for clothes	6.14	5.34	5.69
3..Sending to families/relatives	57.67	71.15	65.28
4. Savings	8.47	6.85	7.56
5. Social communication	1.27	1.38	1.33

6. Others	1.09	1.40	1.24
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Survey results of 300 working children in 08 provinces/cities

5. Children's working days and their perspectives on work in the future

In the group discussions with parents having working children in the study sites, raised questions included (1) whether children's current work can last for a long time or not?, (2) whether the children in communes/hamlets/villages will not have to involve in current jobs or not?

The answers were that the work which children were doing are available in localities. They are traditional, so they will exist and develop in the future. Moreover, the work can make use of many leisure workers. Children can participate in many phases of the production process.

For self-employed work such as selling wares, souvenirs, lotteries, etc, children can do forever when living in urban areas and cities, even their working areas will be expanded owing to the process of socio-economic development and urbanization.

For the working children in households, their work will exist sustainably because most of the families in rural areas participate in household economic activities. Thus, children can work regularly.

To sum up, children's current work is quite stable when much of them are available work in localities, so children can work with payment and no investment

Results of group discussions with the working children shows that most of them work in their local community. In their minds, these jobs can help them earn money for further studies and to help their families. Therefore, besides children's expectations for working to earn a living, children have started to form their awareness of ***"the importance of labour"***.

In group discussions with different respondents, including local officers, parents, employers and children, it was realized that although nobody wanted children to work for many different reasons, the incidence will continue to exist and forms of labour are similar to current ones. The focus group discussions also indicate that it is possible that working children can participate in other new types of work when the economic structure changes.

The survey results of 300 working children shows that up to 205 children (68.3 percent) said that they would continue doing their current work; 68 children (22.7 percent) said that they did not know if they would continue doing their current

work or give up it to find new better one. Only 27 children (9%) answered that they would give up their current work.

Table 14. Working children's future plans (*Unit: percent*)

Plans	Number	Proportion
Continue doing current work	205	68.3
Give up working	27	9.0
Don't know	68	22.7
Total	300	100.0

Source: Survey results of 300 working children in 08 provinces/cities

IV. SOME SPECIAL FORMS OF WORKING CHILDREN IN STUDY SITES

In the study sites, the study could identify several particular forms of working children, which have hard, toxic, hazardous and dangerous factors. These can badly affect children's health and development. Selected particular forms of work share the same characteristics:

- Hard, hazardous and dangerous factors because of working conditions and environments
- Risks of exploitation, abused (low payment or no payment)
- Risks of sexual abuses
- Risks of being trafficked

Findings of this study will be suggestions for deeper further studies, which can provide prevention measures to minimize these forms of work in which children involve.

Table 15. Special forms of working children in study sites

#	Study sites	Forms of working children with hard, hazardous and dangerous factors
1	Lao Cai	Selling souvenirs to tourists
2	Quang Ninh	Sea fishing

3	Hanoi	Food processing: process noodles and dry one in trade villages
4	Nghe Tinh	Stone mining
5	Gia Rai	Taking sap from rubber trees
6	Quang Nam	Food processing: Process amberjacks
7	Ho Chi Minh	Seaming and footwear production
8	An Giang	Constructive material production: Produce bricks and tiles

1. Collecting sap from rubber trees

- *Job descriptions*

Taking sap from rubber trees is a primary phase in the process of rubber plastic product. This job must be done early in the morning, normally at 3-6 am. The workers taking sap from rubber trees have to graze slots in trees, put bows under the slots to take sap. They wait for the full bows of sap and then pour into buckets and transport them back to the factories.

- *Hard and hazardous factors*

- Unhealthy working environments: The workers who do the job for a long time often have yellow, sallow and thin skin because of lack of light, oppressive atmosphere, uncomfortable and toxic smell of rubber sap. Because workers have to work in early mornings with plenty of dew, over-limit humidity rate, lack of light and poisonous gases discarded from rubber trees as well as unhealthy smell of rubber sap. In addition, harmful insects usually appear and can bite them any time.
- Hard work: Long working hours, repetitive working processes, unsuitable and inflexible working positions.
- Dangers: Working lonely in desolated woods before dawn, so the workers face risks of sexually abuse, kidnapping or human trafficking.

Box 11. Children extract rubber sap in Gia Rai

There are 5 brothers and sister in my family. My two elder brothers got married and I am the third child. My family gets a fixed work volume from the Rubber Company, so we have to work hard to complete the contract or we will be fined. My brothers have their own families, so I have to help my parents to work. Now I

have another younger brother going to work with me. He is now at grade 4 and the youngest one has not gone to school.

My daily work is getting up at 2 am and going to rubber wood, taking rubber sap from 3-6 am. The wood is very large, dark and desolated, so I am very fearful. Up to now, I have not been used to the wood and still feel fearful though nothing has happened to me. However, in other groups, there have been some cases abused by wrongdoers .

Of course, I go to the work with my mother and brother and sometimes my father; however, when working we have to separate each other to work in different places because taking rubber sap requires long time. After that, my mother comes back home and I stay in the wood with my brother until 8 am and take the sap until 11 am.

I do not know if the work is toxic or not but I usually feel headache and stomachache. I also go to the local clinic to examine my symptoms but they only give me some medicines. Maybe I have to get up early, so I am tired; however, I also find the atmosphere in the wood is oppressive and uncomfortable.

I left school unwillingly. If I go to school, I have no time to help my parents; Moreover, the tuition fee is higher and higher over years, so we cannot afford. However, I still want to go to school but no way now.

Yes, I will still do this work because I have no other choice. However, this is also a job and I can do. I am not clear about the payment for my work because the Rubber Company get rubber sap daily and pay for my parents. I do not go to woods to get left rubber drops like other children because I feel too tired with my current work.

Every day, after taking sap and weigh it, I go back home to do housework. If I have headaches, I will rest. I only sleep in the evenings. Because I have to get up early, so sleeping is very necessary. Actually, I do not know what recommendations I should make, but I only say that taking rubber sap is very hard and we, the children, have no time for playing. My top wish is coming back school for further study.

(A story of Rlan HDoan (female), 15 years old, JRari ethnic Group, left school for two years (grade 6), LaKla Commune, Duc Co District, Gia Rai)

2. Sea fishing

- *Job descriptions*

Fishermen use small boats or ships with at least three people onboard to catch fish. First, the fishermen have to take the boats/ships to the fishing area. After

that, the fishermen will lay the fishing-nets or other equipment to catch fish. After laying fishing-nets, the fishermen have to make noise to push fish to run into the nets. Then, a fisherman will use a string to stir the water around and near their ships/boats. Finally, the nets will be taken with fish. The end of the work is coming back the shore. The time duration is about 10-12 hours per day with the working time of 10-11 hours at night and in the early morning

- *Hard and hazardous factors*
 - Hard factor: Long working hours, heavy fishing-nets, unsuitable and inflexible working positions
 - Dangers: outdoor work, potential risks such as huge waves, big winds, rough sea, which can overthrow boats/ships or waterway accidents. Heavy fishing-nets are the causes for cutting children's fingers and twisted spinal columns.

Box 12. Children go out to sea in Quang Ninh

I am 15 years old now and left school when I completed secondary level. I am now going out to sea to catch fish with my uncle. He has a fishing boat without enough workers, so he admitted me to work for him. He pays me 500 thousand VND per month and directly gives it to my mother, not me. Sometimes my uncle also gives me some small money for my private spending (5-10 thousands VND per day in average)

My uncle's fishing-boat consists of 03 workers, including my uncle, his soon (16 years old) and me. Every 10 pm it takes us about 2 hours to sail the boat out to sea to find the places for laying fishing-nets (now we have to go far to seek fish). When we have found a suitable place, my cousin and I lay the nets and use a string to stir water to attract fish to be caught into nets. Finally, we pull the nets. The nets are very heavy, so if we are careless, our fingers are easily cut. About at noon in the next day, we arrive at the seashore and we go to sleep until late afternoon. I have dinner, watch TV, go somewhere until 10 pm and I continue my work in the next day. I am only off when the sea is too rough or my uncle is busy with his family's big events .

...I left school and no longer want to study more. I do not know what to do except for sea fishing work. My cousin is also in the same situation with me. He left school long time ago. My expectation is able to buy my own fishing boat ..

Nguyen Van Tuan, No 7 Hamlet in Cao Xanh Ward, Quang Ninh

3. Processing noodle and dry noodle

- *Job descriptions*

After the raw materials have been treated (dripped in water, chemical substances, etc), they are grinded into flavour. The flavour is put into machines to form structures and then the product will be aired and packed. Working duration is from mornings until late afternoons (including the time of waiting for the products to dry)

- *Hard, hazardous factor*
 - Hazardous working environment: narrow and oppressive atmosphere, the smell of chemical substances, the bad smell from the product
 - Hard factors: Long working hours, heavy carry-out, inflexible working positions
 - Dangers: accidents at work by machines and the tools for laminating the flavour

Box 13. Children participate in processing fresh and dry noodles in Hanoi

There are 03 brothers, aged 17, 15 and 9 respectively in my family. My mother was sick and died of disease when I was 12 months years old. Six months later, my father felt tired and drunk much until he died. My brother and I are lonely and live with my grandmother though she is old. After my father's death, my brother had to work and study together. He only goes to school and do not have time for study at his age. My elder brother was ill and stayed at home. I also left school and try to work for my youngest brother's study.

Every day, I usually work from 10 to 12 hours. The working place is located in my commune and I get the salary based on the products I do. Therefore, if I want high wages, I have to work hard. My work consists of many phases but transporting noodles to air them is the most hardest. I have to try my best to carry the noodle wattles to farming fields or riverbanks. The wattle, which is full of new wet noodles with a length of 3 meters, is carried on my back heavily. This work is normally adults' work but I have to try. In average, I earn 30 thousand VND per day and give them to my grandmother for daily expenses. Sometimes, I am scolded or bullied because they think that I am a children and I do not know any thing. When I am too tired and take rest for a while but they also scold me that I am lazy, adore playing or they will not let me work there if I still rest in working hours.

I wish that if my family situation were not too difficult, I would continue my study to get a stable job. Now, I do not know what I will do in the future...

V, female, 15 years old, Minh Khai, Tu Liem, Hanoi

4. Selling peddled wares or souvenirs to tourists

- *Job description*

In order to sell souvenirs, children usually have to accompany with tourists all day. In Lao Cai, it is popular when children sell peddled wares and souvenirs in Sapa Town, a famous tourist area. Most of them are ethnic minority children from mountainous villages. Because Sapa is far from their hometown, so they rent boarding houses in the town to stay about one or two weeks or even some months until the end of tourist season

- *Hard, hazardous factors*

- Hard factors: Long working hours, have to walk all day, 15 kilometers on average per day, regardless of sunny or rainy days.
- Dangers: Children are at risks of easily committing social evils such as drinking, smoking, gambling, etc when they live far from home without getting their parent's care and education. Moreover, children have to communicate with various kinds of people with bad habits in society, so they have to face with potential risks. There is a case that a tourist sexually abused a child. Thus, children are easily vulnerable, get wrong personality and morality development and their changeable ways of living. At the same time, children's labour mentality is threatened when tourists do not pay money for their souvenirs or cheat them. Rascals can smuggle their money or bad people can abuse them, even the police can catch them, etc.

Box 14. Children sell souvenirs in Sapa tourist sites

"..., as the second children in my family, I had to leave school for 2 years to help my parents with slash-and-burn cultivation, taking firewood to home, cutting jutes, harvesting grain, cardamoms and doing housework, etc. Beside helping my parents do my family work, I also join the group of children to sell souvenirs to foreign tourists. At this time, I and some other friends rent a flat to stay in the town to be convenient to my work because my home is far from Sapa. We do everything by ourselves from cooking to purchasing souvenirs for selling. Selling souvenirs is also very hard. We have to get up early to go to hotels to wait for tourists. In many days, nobody buys our souvenirs, we have to follow them to sightseeing places to entreat them to buy some or see if they need our instructions. We follow them to wait for some tips from them. Sometimes, they invite me to drink beer, smoke foreign cigarettes. Some foreigners also hire us to collect balls, play BI A, open beer bottles, serve alcohol and sing Karaoke until mid-night, etc. When finishing, they pay us from 30-50 thousand. This work is not popular but better than selling souvenirs.

Selling souvenirs to tourists is very hard. Many of them do not buy our souvenirs and if we invite them too much, they will annoy with us. I have also met some Vietnamese tourists who were angry and insulted me or threatened to beat me if I still followed them.

When selling souvenirs, I also meet the older children coming from other villages doing the same work with me. Besides, I also met other people such as rascals, addicts, drunk people, etc... who beat me, smuggle or cheat me to take my goods and forbid me not to go to their places, where they are in charge of.

We also afraid of being caught by the policemen guardians because they do not allow us to sell souvenirs, which will spoil the good reputations about Vietnam tourism.

At the end of summer, when tourists are less, we cannot sell souvenirs, we work for the people in the town such as cleaning their house, transporting firewood, bricks and stones or assisting builders for the families who are building their houses. We also carry goods for private stores, or do any thing that we find we can do. Many people do not pay me immediately or they ask me to come back in another day. If I ask for my money for times, they will threaten to beat or scold me. There are some employers, who have not paid to me since last year. I don't know who I should ask helps to take my wages from them"

Ma A Sung, 15 years old, Lao Chai Commune, Lao Cai

5. Stone mining

- *Job descriptions*

In order to exploit rock, workers have to climb up the mountains to drill and explore stones. Depending on their health, ages, children involve in some phases in the process of rock exploration.

- *Hard and hazardous factors*

- Hazardous working environments: regularly contact with dust and smoke, which easily cause chronic respiratory and eye diseases.
- Hardness: Children often have to bring, carry stones on their shoulders or backs; They also have to climb up high and dangerous mountains, and then use heavy hammer to destroy stones
- Dangers: Children are at risks of falling from the mountains or stone falling threatens children's lives; being hurt by stone and working tools.

Box 15. Children participate in stone mining in Ha Tinh

"... I am Nguyen Thanh Trung, 16 years old. I left school three years ago. My

family is in Huong Son. Many members in my family do not have jobs, so my brother and I must follow my father to work in stone mining factory (Thach Khe). Our work is destroying stone mountains and transporting stones to machines to grin them into small one and cook for all groups of workers here. Stone workers stay in the tents of the stone ...

Every day, I have to get up early to cook breakfast for 12 people. After breakfast, we go to the stone mining areas to work with other workers until 10:30 am. After that we rest and cook lunch for other people. We start work again at 1: 30 pm to 5:00 pm...then we have to cook for people. The work repeats every day. I have been working here for nearly a years and I am used to it ...

Working here is hard. Though I have no chance to talk with my mother and brothers and sisters at home, I stay with my father, so I am not discriminated by the employers or bullied by others like other children, who are told to do small work for adults more than I do. Here we also have to work 8-9 hours per day for all week without day-off. We get money based on working days with an amount of 60 thousand, excluding meals. If I am too tired, I will rest and sleep all day and night. Normally my father, my brother and I rest 1 day every 4 working days to ensure our health. As the first working days here, after the work, I felt tightness across my chest and pains in all biceps and calf of legs. Now I am used to it

When working, I also wear gloves and safety clothes. However, there is no size for adults, so I cannot fit in them. This work is very hard when I have to suffer from too much noise, dust, heat. It is also very dangerous when many workers have to climb up high tops of the mountains to drill stones. It is normal when stones hurt workers' hands and legs but sometime our lives are also threatened by this job,

However, this job is much better than splitting stone pieces. Last year, my father, my brother and I worked for nearby stone factories. They exploit heavy piece of stones, which require skifullness and health. I lost one of my fingers when working for them

There are many stone mining factories around here. Many children are also working here. Most of them live around here and they mainly work in summer holidays. They go home to have lunch and come back to work in the afternoon. They usually accompany with their family members, so they do not have to be asked to do outwork

We have seen any investigators coming here to examine the production safety. Sometimes, there are only some communal officers coming here to ask our boss something, after that my boss have to give them some envelops with money..

6. Processing amberjacks in Quang Nam

- *Job descriptions*

Amberjacks are caught and transported to the factories to ice melt and clean. After that, the fish are dissected to grin. They are gripped into thin pieces and aired

- *Hard, and hazardous factors*

- Hazardous working environment: children usually contact with water and fish meat; the atmosphere in the factories is polluted by the smell of fish, chemical substances. Working positions are inflexible with bended backs when sitting to work
- Hardness: Long working hours, inflexible working positions, oppressive working space
- Dangers: Children's hands are thrown by fish bones or ulcerated by water and chemicals.

Box 16. Children process amberjacks in processing factories in Quang Nam

My family has three sisters and I am the second one. My mother is sick when my father works as a mason coolie. My family is very poor, so my sister and I have to search to help my family and pay tuition fees.

Now is the summer, so I can work more. I seam shoes for the employers with four pairs in average per day. Each pair brings me 2.100 thousand. When the work is less, I move to work for processing amberjacks. I have to start work early and complete work late (4 am to 4 pm) with the incomes of 10-12 thousand.

During my schooling time, I can work less because I have both to work and study. In addition, I have to cook for my family, feed and take care of my younger brothers (6 years old). I spend 2 hours in the evening to do homework .

I do not feel hard because I feel pity to my mother when she is sick and stays in bed. I try to work though I am tired..

My wages are all kept by my parents. I also do not spend much, only ask money for my schooling. There are many things that we need to contribute to my school, etc

Story of Vo Hoan Y, 9 years old, Duy Nghia Commune, Duy Xuyen, Quang Nam

7. Brick and tile production in brick-kilns

- *Job descriptions*

In the brick-production villages in Nhon My communes, An Giang provinces, it is common that children work in brick-kilns. Producing hand-made bricks and tiles is very hard, toxic and hazardous. The workers, even adults, who work on this sector, have to suffer from health destructions and working ability degradation.

Depending on their health and ages, children participate in different production phases or the whole process of brick and tile production such as:

- Working the soil, squeezing and airing bricks and tiles
- Transporting, carrying, and arranging bricks and tiles to the kilns and boats.
- *Hard and hazardous factors*
 - Hazardous environment: regularly contact with poisonous smoke, dust, so easily get chronic respiratory and eye diseases.
 - Hardness and dangers: Children have to carry bricks and tiles on their shoulders or backs (40-60 bricks) in dangerous areas such as the high top of the kilns, small and unsafe ladders, dipped paths from the kilns to river ports. The risks of falling from 1-2 meters, brick falling into heads, bodies; bended spinal columns, etc.

Box 17. Children work in brick and tile factories in An Giang

... Children participate in uploading the brick-kilns after burned. They have to carry bricks and tiles from the top of the kiln to the ground (4-5 meters). The work requires health, experience, skillfulness, so sometimes children do not know how to avoid risks and they still fall...What a pity when small children have to carry bricks, tiles on their backs to boats.

...Labour accidents usually happen with the hands cut by machines. 70 cases, both adults and children had accidents last years. Children are easily broken their legs and arms when they move in planks.

...The dust in brick-kilns is very terrible and harmful. When doctors examine children, it is found that many of them get respiratory disease. Even the workers and non-workers get the illnesses.

... I have carried out bricks since I did not go to school. My parents, brothers and sisters go to work, so I follow them and I gradually got used to the work. When I was about 5 or 6 years old, my mother taught me how to carry bricks. At first, I only carried some, but when I was used to it, the number was greater and greater. I used to fall and be twisted with my hand bones, so I have to rest at home. When I studied the first grade, I did not get much care from my parents, so I studied badly at school. Working helps me to earn money and sometimes my

mother gives me some small money (5 thousand) to buy drink or books, etc. I work much, so I feel tired and have no time for rest. Sometimes I fall asleep in class because I am too tired

(Story by T, female, 13 years old, Nhon My, An Giang

Group discussion with communal officers and children's parents in Nhon My Commune, An Giang

8. Working in private garment factories

- *Hard and hazardous factors*
 - Hazardous environment: cramped and oppressive working environment with lack of breathing-air, high temperature (33-35 degree Celsius)
 - Hardness: long working hours, inflexible working positions
 - Dangers: stressful, easily thrown by needles and lack of family care.

Box 18. Children work in small garment factories

I am from Huong Son, I left school after completing the fourth grade to take care of my brothers and sisters. My mother goes to work in city. When she does not have work, she comes back hometown. I have worked here for more than a year. Working here is very hard when we have to wake up at 6:30 and start work at 7:30 until noon. We take one hour to rest and work again until 6 pm, even 8-9 pm. We are very tired and feel sleepy. My boss is very strict and warns us every day to work hard. I only take a Sunday afternoon off. I am homesick and tired but do not know how to do. In this city, I do not know anyone else. Every month, I can send 300 thousand to my parents, which is quite big with them and me because I have never earned up to 100 thousand before.

In-depth interview with a girl, 13 years old, working in tailor hand-made factory

9. Work in footwear production factories

- *Hard and hazardous factors:*
 - Hazardous environment: oppressive working environment with lack of breathing-air, high temperature (32-34 degree Celsius). Contacting with poisonous chemical substances such as glues and rubbers used for shoe heels, ...
 - Hardness: long working hours, inflexible working position
 - Dangers: Lack of family care and education; depression

Box 19. Children participate in hand-made footwear production

I am from Cai Lay, I have been working here for two working seasons. Last year I worked from September until the Tet Holiday. My employers said that if I work hard from September until the Tet, my wage would be 5-6 million. He kept my money and would give me before going home to enjoy the Tet with my family. Every week, I received 20-30 thousand for my breakfast and personal expenses. I worked very hard all day, from early morning until 12 pm. When the Tet nearly came, my boss said that his products were unsold, so he asked me to let him pay me the next year. He only gave me 1.5 million to me to go home. I want to find another working place but still have to work here to get my previous unpaid salaries.

V. COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND ATTITUDE TO WORKING CHILDREN

1. Community awareness and attitude to working children and the existence of working children

People in the local community have different points of view about working children and the issue of working children.

Housework and household economic activities at reasonable level such as only helping parents with some small and suitable work, which do not affect children's study, entertainment, normal development, most of the respondents support for this kind of work. They said that owing to those activities, children have opportunities to participate in and share work with their families. In addition, families have opportunities to teach and educate their children via labour.

Box 20. Children's involvement in labour is good

" ... Children's involvement in family work is a good thing, so their can educate and take care of them, even when they are busy. If children do not do anything, they will be easily lazy and follow their bad friends. Asking children to participate in household economic activities doesn't mean to force them work and I believe my children understand this point because they said that they feel sorry for us when working hard, etc ..."

Vo Thi Hanh, 39 years old, Lien Phu Hamlet, Thach Trung Commune, Ha Tinh

For the group of children working in businesses and factories in the study sites, some employers and community decision makers said that it was vital to attract drop-out children and the children having no more conditions to further study, aged 13-17 years old to work. Children should work with some small incomes, which would help them avoid social traps and evils. The matter here is that employers had to pay enough wages with good working conditions, no exploitation and abuses to working children.

Box 21. Labour is vital to drop-out children

Forbidding children to involve in working is not a feasible solution. The matter needs concerning here that the level of working suitable to children's ages and abilities. In current economic conditions, children working to contribute to their family incomes without influencing their study is a good thing. For drop-out children without abilities of returning school, they need to work to earn living. Therefore, these are precious opportunities for them to generating their income to ensure their lives. The matter concerned here is what labour is suitable for children, whether the working conditions are able to secure children's developments or not? Up to now, there is no clear regulation on the level of work and working conditions that children can involve in. Because there is no regulations, employers have to "avoid laws" in different forms. Typical forms of receiving children to work in manufactories are adopting them as their nieces and nephews or the children are secured by their parent's agreements on their apprentice in manufactories...

In-depth interview with the owner of a footwear factory, Ward 14, District 4, Ho Chi Minh City

For group of children leaving school early to work or working children in hard, toxic, hazardous and dangerous conditions, most of the respondents in group discussions realized that there were disadvantages for working children in such conditions. They clearly expressed the importance to immediately stop the worst forms of working children, which influence children's mental and physical development.

Most of the respondents were aware that work would have a negative impact on children's education, however the level of awareness differ.

One of the main reasons that almost all the respondents mentioned in the interviews is that children's working will influence their studying, playing and relaxing time. Because of their tiredness when they work, children's study quality also reduces.

For the group of parents having working children, with different evidences, they said that they knew working impacts on their children, so they only let them to do suitable work with suitable time to limit or not to cause influences on their children's study at school; Among the cases of children working very hard and sometimes even dropping out of school to work, the parents lifted out their very difficult economic situation as the reason behind their children's work.

Box 22. Children should not do hard, toxic, hazardous and dangerous work

...Involve in making bricks is clearly unsuitable to children and badly impacts children's development, etc

...Many people are also aware of this matter, however, due to their interests and hard living conditions, they still let children participate in these worst forms of working children,

Group discussion with parents with or without working children in Nhon My Commune, An Giang province

Among the group of parents, with higher educational level and better economic conditions in the community, they all were against the issue of children involving in economic activities. If children have to work, the volume of work should be reasonable with educational meaning to help children realize the value of labour.

Box 23. Should not let children involve in labour

My family economy is also hard but better than other households in the commune. We have been aware of that we used to not have conditions to go to school, so now we have tried our best to create favourable conditions for my children's study. My children do not have to work like others, but still help us with housework. Currently, there are many families in the commune, who only ask their children to do housework but not other work, so their children have time to study. It is true that parents have been aware of the importance of study, so they do not make their children to work and they will try their best to bring up them well.

A household representative without working children, Duy Nghia, Quang Nam
In my opinion, children's involvement in working is not good; however, working also helps to educate children with labour awareness. Thus, we need to create suitable conditions for children's reasonable working volume and ages.

A household representative without working children, Gia Rai

Most of the other respondents in community said that children only help their families with housework and small others suitable to their ages, health and

working duration. Children's involvement in working not only benefits their families in generating incomes but also help children with physical development and personality formation. Labour also helps children understand their parents' hardness in bringing up, creating conditions for their study and hoping that they will be better in their study and lives. This point of view was very common in the focus group discussions in the community.

Some others argued that children need to work to earn a living and to contribute to the family's incomes; Moreover, a number of parents said that their children had more advantageous conditions in earning money from selling lotteries, polishing shoes and selling souvenirs than adults. The group of the people having this point of view are from poor households with low education in community. However, it does not exclude cases of high educational people with good economic conditions in society, who still consider children as a cheap labour force.

2. Community awareness of children's rights and related laws/regulations on working children

The parents in the focus group discussions had very limited knowledge about children's rights according to Vietnamese legislation. Their perception about children's rights mostly concerned a child's right to both parent's, that parents should create conditions for children's education, families with a better economic situation can provide for their children better, normally if the child is from a poor family he/she has to earn a living, scolding or beating a child is normal if he/she has done something bad.

In terms of working children, the parents knew that children should not be allowed to work too hard. Children should perform jobs that are suitable with their ages and abilities, which will be better for the children and their families. Most of the parent's was not aware of that early working children violates children's rights and that employing children for hard work is violating Vietnamese law.

Among the group of officers, the knowledge of child rights and legislation concerning child labor is much better than in the parent's focus group. However, the only officers with a completely satisfying understanding of the legislation on child rights are those directly working with children such as population, health, labour, social affairs, education. Community officers working on other issues understanding of children's rights was limited to; children have to go to school, be fully brought up, should not be beaten by adults, not have to work in hard, toxic, hazardous and dangerous conditions. The focus group discussions show that community awareness of child rights and specifically on working children is still limited. Level of awareness is better among officers, officials and people with

higher education. Those with the lowest awareness are people from poor families with low education, remote and mountainous areas.

Among the group of working children employers, the awareness was also low. They usually eluded to answer questions. When they could not avoid, they explained that they did not hire children to work but children voluntarily asked them to work and they agreed with a good mind of helping them.

Box 24. It is not seeking to hire working children but helping them to work

My manufactory does not seek to hire children to work. You may see some children working here but that's because they ask me for jobs. They are over 16 years old and only work in summer time. Their productivity is low because they both work and relax. We acknowledge that laws do not allow employers using working children in production, so we never hire them. These children here are too poor and they need to work to pay for their study. We sympathize with them and admit them to work here.

The owner of Phuc Tien amberjack processing factory, Duy Nghia commune,
Quang Nam

VI. WORKING CHILDREN'S HOPES AND RESPONSIVE ABILITIES OF SUPPORTING SERVICE SYSTEM

1. Education

In the focus group discussion with working children, most of the children expressed their wishes to study and fulfill their higher education. Some others, mostly children that left school very early or did not go to school at all, said that they do not want to go back to school. Working children mainly come from poor households and tuition fees are normally too high for the children's families to pay. Thus, working children all expected that their tuition fees and other school expenses would be reduced or partly deduced.

2. Career orientation, vocational training and skill training

Results from group discussions with children show that hope to attend vocational training, especially those completing secondary education in spite of their difficult economic situation. Because the children live far from high schools and their families are poor; many of them drop out of school to work in the family farm or in other available traditional occupations. Among the group of working children; most of them expect to have a career with stable work in their hometown or other provinces/cities. The below table illustrates children's expectations about the future in the eight surveyed provinces.

Table 16. Working children's expectations (Unit: percent)

Group of expectations	Male	Female	Total
Suitable jobs	28.24	20.12	23.67
Education/vocational training	32.82	39.64	36.67
Spiritual and material supports for study/vocational training	38.93	40.24	39.67

Source: Survey results of 300 working children in 08 study sites

3. Health care and examination

In the group of working children; most of them are born and raised in families with a difficult economic situation and their parent's normally have a low education. . Growing up, these children are not provided with adequate health care. Children have to cure any diseases they might have by themselves, sometimes their parents will go to local clinics or private chemists to buy some medicine. Going to doctors or bigger hospitals (at district or provincial levels) rarely happens, except for serious diseases.

The parents in group discussions also said that when their children were too sick, they could only give them some medicine sold by drugstores or local clinics. Parents only take their children to doctors if the child has a very serious disease, and the reason for this is that the cost for proper health care is too high. Working children hope that they can get free good health care, better nutrition and rest when they are sick or tired.

4. Employment consultancy

When asking most of the working children why they chose their current work but not others, they said that because that work was available while they did not have information about the other and where they should find. Thus, if other work is better or more suitable to them, they will move to work on that. Working children do hope that they are consulted and oriented about their careers by adults, mass organizations, and local authorities. Those people can tell them what jobs, where and for whom they should do; what preparations and training courses they should participate in to do jobs.

5. Employment and working conditions

Most working children expected that they would have stable part-time jobs with regular incomes in the future. They all wanted to work in their hometown or nearby because they do not want to live far from their families and friends.

In terms of working conditions, they do hope a friendly working environment with the same aged colleagues; no scolding; no abuse and exploitation.

6. Family supports for working children

Working children wished they could be equally treated, encouraged, cared, and recognized with their work and contributions to their families by their parents. They wished that they would not be forced to do any work they do not like or want; would not be scolded or insulted when they make mistakes in work.

7. Other needs

Most of the working children wish to continue their education. They wish to fully enjoy their rights like others and not are forced to work to earn money.

For the group of children working in factories and businesses they have to leave school to work for many reasons. However, the main reason is that they have to earn money to support for their family life . They wish to have their private playgrounds for them and those like them such as participating in social meetings, various forms of entertainments and more free time for hobbies and activities.

Box 25. Working children's needs for entertainments

Though we have to work now and do not have time for our study, we are very sad when we only work without other activities. Forms of entertainment are very poor; we do not know what to entertain in our free time, except for watching TV. We would like to have clubs, social meetings for the friends like me. We can have a common place to exchange ideas, play games together and learn from each other about life skills and other things, etc....

Interview with a working child in HCM City

VII. OVERALL DISCUSSION ON WORKING CHILDREN

1. Tendency of working children in economic sectors

At all study sites, working children is the most common in the informal sector, small household businesses, small scale production, service establishments, or working as hired labour in agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors.

In the agriculture sector: children often participate in farming work on fields and raising animals especially during summer holidays.

In industry, commercial and service sectors: there are still situations that children are working in production unit, business, services, shops and restaurants. In this area, many children have to work hard for long hours per day, this phenomenon is most common in urban areas.

Results from focus group with parents of working children and the officials in charge of child protection indicates that children from poor households are more likely to work than those from families with a better and more stable income. The forms and patterns of working children are likely to be more diversified in the future due to urbanization and bigger differences between rich and poor.

The problem that children work hard in hazardous work shall also get serious in near future if there are no interventions undertaken from local authority and administration agencies.

2. Risks faced by children at work

a. Effects on children's physical development and health

All working children are prone to risks whatever forms of work they are in and how heavy the work is. For children working in the agricultural sector, they might face dangers to their safety and physical development. For example, children working in rubber farms and harvesting rubber latex, the working condition are very poor, and children have suffered from bad smell and use of chemicals during latex processing that can affect to children health and cause serious respiratory diseases.

For the group of children working on fishing boats or in seafood processing, they may face risks such as drowning or they might come in contact with hazardous chemical substances used for fish and/or seafood processing. The smell from seafood processing may cause respiratory diseases for children. Other accidents that often happen are injuries caused by the use of processing tools.

For self - employed children such as street children involved in selling lottery, shoes shining, collecting waste or scavenging they are often badly treated risk of being beaten, robbed or sexually abused. For children working as waste scrap collectors, there is high risks of injuries caused by explosive mine.

The children working in production, such as producing shoes, garments or making balls, bad working conditions in the workshops may causes diseases such as hunchback, crick in the neck or spinal column, short-sighted. In many cases, children have to work for long time a day up to 10 hours in a stiff position that cause children tiredness and affect to the bone system development.

For those who work in hard and hazardous conditions, such as in the village of brick and tile production, workers are negatively affected by the production process with severe impact both to their health and their labour capacity.

Moreover, since children, with their not fully developed cognitive and behavioural capabilities, have different characteristics to adults', they cannot deal with all the hazards arising at work and are more likely to incur injuries and accidents.

Box 26. An example of dangers for working children in village of brick and tile production in An Giang

Children mostly engaged in handling and carry the products. A child have to carry on his hand or back with 40-60 bricks from the brick kiln to the transport means (often boat, ship). The dangers in performing this work include:

- Falling from high scaffolding (1-2 m), danger for injuries
- Brick fall to the body, may cause injuries
- Accidents from the brick cutting machine
- Carry heavily may badly effect to the development of spinal column, especially in the period of fast development (7-16 years old),
- Working in polluted environment by smoke, dust, chemical substance

b. Effects on working children's education

As discussed with working children and non – working children, those who sometime work as hired workers during the peak time of business or harvest seasons, or children who work for their household production or business during the free time and summer holiday time, there are no tangible impacts to their education. They can be able to maintain their education at school.

For the group of children engaged in permanent work after-school hours, the work clearly has consequences for their school performance. Because they spend most of their spare time working, they have limited time and energy to study and do their homework. As a result, their performance in school was affected. In addition, when children are engaged in working and earning money, sometimes this becomes more important to them than their education. These children will rapidly get tired of studying and then drop out of school usually at lower secondary level.

Box 27. Reasons for children's drop-out that is related to work

At beginning, when children get started to work, they do not think that they will

drop school, they all think that they will work during free time only and in non-class time and will keep class as normal. However, in fact, when they started working, for many reasons such as they get tired after working hard, or have no time for studying; they lose knowledge very fast, and then finally cannot be able to control the class and performance. Some of them even cannot pass the exams. In addition, when they can earn money, they get more eager to work for money. In fact, working take serious effects to education of children

Interview with education officials in An Giang province

c. Working and its impacts on social and cognitive development of children

For children who drop out of school, the isolation from the learning environment and a lack of education can constitute a risk of bad behavior.

School drop-out and working children have no further opportunities to access formal education. Meanwhile, at the work place, children have to get accustomed to adult behavior and possibly be familiar with drinking alcohol, gambling, other social evils forcing children act “older” than their age.

Working children also get isolated from friends and classmates. There is a difference between the group of working children and non-working children in terms of social knowledge, the focus group discussions with working and non-working children indicates that working children are not self-confident as other children.

Box 28. Working children seem to be “older” than age, danger of naughty

..... Since he stopped class, he changed a lot, he goes for drinking with others, even play game, gambling. He has never liked that before

... Working children have to contact with many types of people, easy to get naughty

..... We (parents) are very worried for my son at work, he is too young to be aware and identify the good and bad things

... Working children are not polite likes other, it may because the lack of family care and early working

.. I am a worker now, I feel shy to talk with my old friend, I have nothing to talk and I am worried that they will laugh at me that I know nothing..

Discussion with groups of children, parents of working and non working children
in Ha Tinh, Quang Nam, HCM City, An Giang)

d. Children dropping out of school for work is certainly different from those who are at school

For the group of rural children migrating to cities to work, they may face risks of being abused and falling victims of “job brokers” and the system of illegal child employing. For those who work in production units, they live inside the household of the production owner and spend most of their time working. They may face risks of labour accidents or salary cut downs. For the group of street children, they are facing high risks of abuse. They live far from home, lack information on their working and new living environment and they are also prone to be involved in law breaking activities, social evils for instance drugs and prostitution.

3. Capacity of agencies, organizations that are involved in children education, care and protection and settlement of children related affairs

According to the statement of the provincial official in charge of child protection, the protection and care for children has improved the last years especially in the areas of education and health care for children¹⁵. Most provinces and cities have mobilized increasing resources and efforts for improvement of education and health services delivered to children. Since 2008, the overall tasks of child protection and care, settlement of children related affairs have been assigned to the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs as the key agency that take oversight responsibility. Due to the changes of tasks, organizational setup, there have been some delays in collecting information on working children and performance of some provinces and cities. In most of study provinces/ cities, there is a lack of previous studies on the issue.

The structure for child protection is as follows: At provincial level, the section of childcare and protection under the Department of labour, invalids and social affairs consists of 4 to 5 officials. At district level, there is a two person’s team in charge of children’s affairs. At commune level, the officials in charge of children affairs, in many cases, often perform many tasks concurrently at the same time, not only children affairs, so they could not dedicate full time and efforts for this responsibility.¹⁶

According to the comments given by officials of Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs in the eight visited provinces, the staff responsible for child protection is still short regarding both capacity and personnel. The activities of provincial child protection has focused on the following areas, but due to lack of capacity shortage of resources there is still a lot of work to be done.

¹⁵ National report on progress of implementation of Decision 19

¹⁶ Interview commune staff in charge of children protection

- Awareness raising, communication on the various dimensions of children care and protection;
- Coordination with charity fund, children protection funds to organize the supportive activities for children with disadvantages
- Guiding for provision of health treatment cards for children under 6 years old
- Proceeding program on provision of scholarship for poor children, delivery of vocational training for a number of targeted children
- Oversight and management of children who are subject of special education (children who committed law breaking)
- Organization of special events on the occasion of festivals for children, the “month for children”
- A number of provinces have developed good work plan for implementation of the program on prevention and address of street children, children working hard in hazardous and dangerous condition (Ho Chi Minh City for instance), other provinces have been still in starting point for implementation (An Giang)

At community level, childcare and protection have been promoted in all localities with active involvement of social organizations, community and local authority in the last years. In most communes, there is a team working on the issue. Activities of the team focus on:

- Organizing festival events, game show, providing gifts and rewards for children on the occasion of children day (June 1st), lunar festival, new year Tet festival
- Carrying out the whip-round to collect money to support children with disadvantages such as the poor, children with sickness, or abandoned ones, children suffering from Agent Orange.
- Cooperating with school and teachers to give advice and encourage the parents and children who are vulnerable to drop out of school and support poor households so that their children stay in school.
- Cooperating with households and the community to prevent and educate children to stay away from social evils.

In the implementation phase, mass organizations that are most actively involved in childcare and protection are the Women’s union, youth unions, and the fatherland front. These organizations are represented nationwide in Vietnam.

In addition, many provinces have setup a network of child consultants at commune level, hot line to support children and preventing them from injuries or abuse. A number of provinces have developed an “open house”, a type of supportive and care giving center for children with disadvantages.

In most provinces, local authorities and administration agencies have not paid enough attention to pro-active and preventive activities. Hochiminh city has 1.8 million children, of which 30 percent are migrants (with registration). According to the estimate of Department of labour, invalids and social affairs, up to 90 percent of street children, children that work as domestic workers, children working as hired labour in production business are internal migrants, mostly from the central and South West regions. Most of these children have dropped out of school, according to the official statistical data of many provinces, there are few children dropping out of school to work. The obvious conclusion to draw from this is that many provinces are unaware about the situation and number of children who leave home to go to work in urban areas. To change this, the communication between the source and destination provinces has to be strengthened. There is still no effective mechanism to collect information to early detect and prevent children from dropping out of school to start working. Availability and capacity of social organization, services delivery to address the demands of working children and households with working children.

4. Performance of monitoring and inspection of working children problems

Every year, Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of all provinces/cities carry out working children monitoring and inspection. Provincial DoLISA requires an agency at district level to report periodically on the situation of child related affairs such as the situation of working children and children with disadvantages. However, as mentioned above, all provinces face difficulties in collecting information, data analysis and management, collect working children statistics. All interviewed provincial officials stated that the actual situation of working children is much higher in reality than what is reported. The focus group discussions with child protection officials in various study provinces indicates the following reasons for the discrepancy between the reported and actual figures.

- There has not existed a widely accepted definition of working children and common agreement on what is and what is not to be considered as working children among the authorities at different levels. So child protection officials have difficulties in collecting survey information and evaluating the scale of working children
- Province and local authorities often focus on the intervention of getting working children back to the home provinces, keeping them managed and giving them educational support when dealing with solutions to

minimize the issue of working children (such as children working as street vendors in urban or tourist attraction areas). However, there is still the absence of a comprehensive solution for addressing the root causes of working children.

Box 29. How to precede the indicator of working children?

... Due to the lack of standardized concept of working children or working children and other relating definitions, we could not do the survey and make statistical data. My officers and I myself know that the number of working children in fact is much higher than it is reported. I have raised this question to the Ministry and asked for detailed guidance on how to categorize this, but so far there has been no response yet...

Interview with officials in charge of childcare and protection, Ha Tinh

Performing the assigned tasks under the Decision No.19 on Prevention and address of working children engaged in hard, hazardous and dangerous work, provincial agencies have conducted joint(multi-sectoral) inspection and monitoring missions to work with production units, services and business to check the situation of working children. This survey from eight provinces indicates that the Decision 19 has been implemented with success. However, there are still many challenges to overcome for an effective working children monitoring and inspection system, the situation in Ho Chi Minh city is an example.

Constraints and challenges in investigating, monitoring and processing the investigating results include:

Constraints on management:

Firstly, most children working in production, business units, working in hazardous conditions do not work permanently in one establishments, they are often migrants from rural areas. The monitoring and follow up on this group of children faces many difficulties. For example in Hochiminh city, according to the regulation of city on temporary residence registration, only people that are minimum 15 years old have to register for residence, and therefore, labour administration agencies face difficulties in monitoring the group of children under 15 years old. For production units using children for work, the employers often say that the children are their relatives from the countryside tat are there as a short-time apprentice and usually they have a letter of commitment from parents of these children.

Secondly, as the production and business where children work mainly are small scale, home based and private owned units with high level of seasonality, the

work of children is also seasonal. Most of these establishments have no labour registration at the labour administration agencies. In many units, children live and work at the same household of the owner, and the authorities therefore have difficulties to access and control the production units. Many working children employers rent houses in the city for production (used as garment workshops, producing footwear and candy when being detected and controlled, they move their business to other place to avoid the supervision.

Thirdly, there is a lack of data to support the monitoring and inspection process.

Fourthly, there is poor coordination between the authorities of urban and rural, source and destination, areas. The consequence of this is a poor feedback mechanism and a non- effective information sharing system leading to a situation where children “disappearing” when migrating from one province to another.

With regard to working children

It can be difficult to persuade working children from rural areas to return home, since they migrate to the city to work to help their parents who influence and decide if the children should continue to work. Therefore, they often register with false names and home address, making it more difficult for the authorities in managing and returning them home.

There are also constraints in providing vocational training, especially employment placement after training course. Working children in most of case have very low education attainment, and limited in health status. To be able to learn vocational skills of the trades and works that can obtain good jobs often requires high level of schooling (secondary school level). However, very few of working children or migrant children have secondary attainment to be able to follow these training courses.

Some problems relating to effectiveness of provisions of vocational skills for street children is found in Hochiminh as follow: Hochiminh city have solutions to provide vocational training for street children, self-employed children then returning them to their hometown. However, in Ho chi minh city, the training vocational skills are available for the trades and jobs that are relevant to urban labour market (for example, electricians, repairing refrigerators, industrial garment, beauty care, cooking..). These are not appropriate for children at their hometown, so after returning home, they cannot find job and come back to city again.

Ho Chi Minh City has organized an intensive campaign on awareness raising, capacity building for local authorities, trainings for employers and the community concerning prevention and tackling of working children. There are still many cases of children working clearly visible in public areas without any action being

taken by local authorities. Local authorities have not paid enough attention on monitoring working children. An example, in 2009, of total 319 communes and wards of Hochiminh city, there was only 30 cases of working children reported for administrative sanction. Even when there is a serious problem of abuse and exploitation of working children, only administrative sanction can be applicable, as there is no legal regulation of criminal prosecution for working children abuse.

Low awareness and responsibility of parents is another problem. In Ho Chi Minh City, there are many cases of parents that would rather send their children to work than themselves working to earn money (as discussed in focus group with working children's parent).

5. The extend to which concerns of working children and address of working children are incorporated in local socio- economic development policies

In all visited provinces, local leaders have highlighted childcare and protection as a priority. Provinces have also developed their own solutions and plan to make districts and communes to address the problem of working children. Special efforts have been focused on implementation of *Decision No.19 of Prime minister on prevention of street children, sexual child abuse, children working in hard, hazardous and dangerous conditions*. In addition, the issue of childcare and protection has also been incorporated into the provincial socio – economic development plan of all provinces. The provinces have also developed policies on supporting children from poor households in education, health care, development of social protection center, implementing program on poverty reduction to support poor households. All these actions taken are meant to help children to stay in school, which indirectly helps to reduce working children

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusion

a. The state of Working children

- Working children is common in all eight visited provinces. In rural areas, working children are mainly engaged in agriculture and small-scale household businesses, children work as hired labour in the agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors. A smaller number of children in rural areas work as self employed for instance selling lottery or shining shoes In urban areas, working working children is mainly prevalent in the service sector and craft industries.

- Working children are often from disadvantaged households, such as: (i) poor households, (ii) household with absence of father or mother as the result of divorce, separation, death; (iii) households with member committed in social problems such as drug addiction, or person with HIV/AIDS)
- Parents/guardians of most of working children have low education level, unstable job situation and low income.
- The work that children perform depends on the age of the child. Children younger than ten years old are least common and those in that age group that are working are mainly doing so in the household sector. Hired or self-employed labour is most prevalent among children above 10 years of age.
- In all age groups, girls are working more than boys are. Girls are also to a higher extent working as hired labour than boys.
- More than 90% of the working children in the eight surveyed provinces in the informal sector. The highest percentage of working children is observed in the agriculture sector, secondly is commercial services, and then in craft industries.
- The tasks performed by children are manual and simple work without requirement of high skills or technical qualification.
- Children in average work 4-5 hours per day, but sometimes even up to 6 hours per day and longer. In some special cases, in production establishments such as garments, food processing, during high season, children work up to 8-9 hours, even 10-12 hours per day.
- About 50% of the surveyed working children in this study are working in a bad and hazardous environment that might have serious consequences to children's both psychical and psychological development. These factors include humidity, light, dust, hazardous substance, noise, narrow working space and children are suffering from psychological pressure such as low pay, delay of payment, or insults of employer, forced to live far from their family, exposure to adult behavior.
- Average income of working children is low and unstable, ranging from VND 500,000 VND to 800,000 VND per month. Children working as hired labour have the highest income and children working in household earn the least. Most of the income is sent back to their family; children keep only a small part of income for personal needs.
- Working children's hopes and wishes for the future can be summarized as follows: support for education, vocational training and enough attention from their family and the community.

b. Special forms of working children

At each of study site, the problem of working children working in hard, hazardous and dangerous is not prevalent; however, this has existed in many forms but cannot be controlled. Being not prevalent means not high number of children working in hazardous, and not in many places. We mentioned in the report about the typical cases only.

Working children in these forms has severe impacts to the children's education, physical and psychological development. A number of serious forms of working children have been discussed at eight study sites include: fishing on the sea (in Quang Ninh), rock exploitation field (case of Ha Ting), children working in fish processing establishment in Quang Nam, working in rubber farm in Gia Rai, working in brick and tile production units in An Giang, working in garment workshops Hochiminh city and children working in food processing units in Hanoi

c. Causes of working children

There are many causes for working children, but the key ones include:

- Poverty is the main reason for working children. In poor households, parents are unable to safeguard the minimum subsistence for their children, income from parents' and other adult family members are not enough to cover the needs. Therefore, children in one or other way have to work to contribute to the survival of the family and for themselves.
- A segment of children have to migrate together with their family to big cities for work, this is a part of the urbanization process, or a consequence of reclaimed/confiscated land.
- A number of employers wants to cut their production costs and therefore employs children to work for a low wage.
- Tourism development might also increase working children, more children becomes engaged in self-employed work such as street sellers for tourists.
- Apart from the poverty reason itself, bad awareness and knowledge of parents on possible hazards of working children, parents thinking that "it is easy to earn money in the city", and are willing to let children stop education and go to city for work.

d. Effects of working children on education performance and development of children

- Working children has negative consequences on children's education; due to shortage of time to study and less energy to do homework working children often drop out of school at an early age. Other effects are poor

physical development; working children often become short and [disproportionate](#) adults. The mental and psychological development of working children can also be damaged due to their premature observation of the dark sides of society.

e. Awareness and knowledge of community on working children

- Community and people have limited awareness on working children issues. Not a small segment of population consider that working children is normal practice, many of them have not concerned on the problem working children in their locality.
- There are differences in thinking of staff and official, especially at commune/ ward level. On the one hand, they consider working children as the problem that need to mitigate and address, on the other hand, they are more optimistic when discussing on the management of working children status in the locations where they manage, their assessment of situation often undermines the real state of working children.
- Local people's understanding and awareness of legislation on working children is very limited. A large part of interviewed people does not know that employment of children to work, especially small children is against Vietnamese law.
- Official staff, especially those directly working with child protection and care, have better understanding and knowledge on the legislation... However, their awareness and understanding still needs to be heavily improved.

f. Challenges and constraints for addressing of working children

- One of the core obstacles to truly monitor and outline the situation of working children is the absence of a large-scale national survey to get a comprehensive understanding of the issue. All visited provinces lacked reliable data and information on working children to serve for development the relevant solutions and interventions.
- Concepts, definitions and the general understanding of various dimensions of working children is not sufficiently developed and defined, and there are still no clear indicators to build a sound statistical system on.
- The capacity of the National child protection system is still weak; there is serious absence of basic services for child protection, for instance centers for legal consultation or career consultation and a lack of qualified staff to deal with children in need of protection.

- Not clearly defined areas of responsibility between the sectors involved in child protection.
- The coordination between sectors and organizations in management and addressing of problems relating to working children is poor and not consistent, resulting in poor effectiveness.
- Budget allocated for activities of working children prevention is very small and not enough to cover the necessary activities.
- Participation of the community and local people in working children prevention is not good.

2. Recommendations

a. Recommendations for central level (MoLISA and other related ministries) concerning about working children

- 1) Continue to strengthen the legal framework for monitoring and addressing the problem of working children,
- 2) Develop detailed and consistent statistical data for monitoring and follow up indicator system to update data and information on children and working children.
- 3) Standardization of concepts on child, working children that exist in different laws and legal documents (for example in the law on youth, law on children care and protection, children are those aged less than 16, but according to the labour code, people that aged 15 is eligible to work); carry out research for more detailed definition what is working children underlies, other regulations relating to working children, what are the hard, hazardous and dangerous working conditions for working children.
- 4) Early completing the organizational structure and system of professional staff from central level to local lower level. It is the need for clarification of role, tasks, and functions and responsibilities of each stakeholders in addressing the problems of working children, power of leading agencies and cooperating agencies; priority should be given to development of network of staff and voluntaries; completing the training curricular for staff who works in the areas of children protection
- 5) Development of community based child protection system with clear roles of responsibilities. Promote awareness raising campaigns and communication on legislation of child protection and working children, attracting mass media in awareness campaigns.

- 6) Development of a child protection service system including support for children such as legal consultation, career consultation for children and social protection centers for children.
- 7) Increasing budget for activities on prevention of and addressing of working children, especially children working in hard, hazardous and dangerous conditions.
- 8) Developing policies on specific support for working children in education, career consultation and vocational training, health and medical treatment.
- 9) Developing a policy on employment support for households in nearby - urban areas whose land is reclaimed for other purpose's use with the aim to minimize the migration to big city for jobs, and hence minimize children migrants.

b. Recommendations for local authorities (peoples committees at all levels, labour and social affair administration agencies and mass organizations) on addressing working children issues

- 10) Promoting awareness raising campaigns and communication on prevention of working children abuse in the community, enterprise / cooperate' associations, organizations and in society, encourage the mass media to participate in this process. Strictly implementing the Master plan on prevention and address of working children in hard, hazardous and dangerous working condition for period 2005-2010. Priority should be given to:
 - *Carry out survey on size and status of working children on locality, development of management profiles and classification of working children, including children working in hard, hazardous and dangerous working condition;*
 - *Develop and improve the quality of child protection service system through the application of intervention models at locality and setup of community based supporting network; providing medical treatment for working children who suffer from occupational diseases and labour accidents, withdrawing these children from work and propose employer to take responsibilities for treatment, compensation for children with occupational diseases and accidents.*
 - *Study and propose the procedure for inter-sectoral check and inspection on working children; enhancement of inspection of working children in locality*

- 11) Integrating child protection and prevention of working children into local socio- economic development plans.
- 12) Proposing communes and wards to have strong commitment in prevention of working children. The indicator of number of working children cases and status of working children should be not included in the indicator for overall assessment of performance of local authority. The support and address of working children cases should be the good indicator for evaluation of commune/ ward authority's performance
- 13) Allocating more budgets for locality, mobilizing financial fund from community for activities on prevention of working children at the local level.
- 14) Development of incentive scheme for encouragement of organizations, individuals in detecting and reporting the functional agencies about the case of working children.
- 15) Applying more strict and hard sanctions to employers who use children to work in working children in hard, hazardous and dangerous working condition, even to criminal case as the solution for prevention of violation.

c. Recommendation for ILO on supporting to address working children in Vietnam

- 16) Support for research and adaptation of international concepts, technical norms used for preventing worst forms of working children to legal system of Vietnam
- 17) Providing technical and financial support for a large-scale survey on status of working children in Vietnam in a number of cities and provinces.
- 18) Support for development of program on prevention of working children in accordance with the socio – economic development level of Vietnam

APPENDIX

I. FRAMEWORK AND ADJUSTED POLICIES ON WORKING CHILDREN

1. Children's rights

a. Children's rights, obligations and illegal work

Every in-born child has not only his/her rights but also obligations. Laws clearly states those rights and obligations towards the target "All children have rights to life, grow-up, healthy development and happiness in the love of their parents, families and community"

b. Children's rights

- Children have civil rights such as right to register their birth and nationality; right to be cared, brought up, and live with their parents; right to be respected, protected against dignity, life and honour violation; right to health care.
- Socio-economic rights: right to have conditions for talent development; right to education; right to information access; right to opinion expression and social activity participation; rights against battering, abuses, exploitation or ill-treatment; right to be cared and protected against social evils
- Cultural and entertainment rights: Right to entertainment, cultural activity participation, physical exercises; sports and tourism

c. Children's obligations

- Respect the old people and make concessions to the younger people; devote to their grandparents, parents and helping the poorer people in their own capacities;
- Study hard and do physical improvement;
- Love labour and help their families with suitable work in their capacities;
- Modestly live with people with morality and trustfulness;
- Respect laws;
- Respect school regulations;
- Love their people, country and home town;
- Have responsibilities and awareness of building and protecting their country.

d. *The things that children are not allowed doing*

- Leaving school with their own decision, leaving home for street life
- injuring or violating other people's lives, bodies, dignity, assets;
- Disturbing the public order; Gambling, drinking alcohol, smoking, using harmful drugs;
- Exchanging and using the cultural products with violence stimulations and debauchery;
- Using or playing harmful toys leading to unhealthy development.

e. *Responsibilities of the Government, families, schools and society*

Ensuring and protecting all rights for children are the responsibilities of families, schools, the governments, society and citizens. Every activity of agencies, organizations, families or individuals related to children has to put children's benefits in priority.

- The Government and state agencies are responsible for promulgating national laws, policies and management policies on education, economy, and society to create enabling conditions on for protecting and ensuring children's rights and interests.
- Parents or legal guardians have responsibilities and duties for caring, bringing up and creating best conditions for children to develop as stated in laws/policies.
- Schools and educational institutions have responsibilities for implementing comprehensive education on morality, knowledge, aesthetics, physical, vocational training for children; actively cooperating with families and society in protecting, caring and educating children. .
- Society, organizations, individuals have responsibilities and duties for fully completing their functions, missions to ensure children's rights.

2. *Child protection policy*

To ensure child rights as stated in laws, the Government, state, families, schools, and society have to be responsible for preventing and protecting children from the bad impacts on child rights. Based on that, the Government regulated and approved a number of sound national policies, programs for children.

a. *Policy regulations and activities for child protection*

- Children are protected their physical and mental health, morality, knowledge, education and development

- Children are prevented and protected against street life with living-earn activities
- Children are prevented and protected against sexual abuses.
- Children are prevented and protected against the worst forms of working children in hard, hazardous and dangerous working conditions. .

b. Obligations of the Government, functional agencies, families, schools and society

- The Government, functional agencies build, approve and implement the programs to prevent and push back the risks of child abuses; setting up a healthy and safe environment for children to make use of chances to get their benefits and interests
- Families, functional agencies and the whole society cooperate with each other to care, protect legitimate rights and interests for children; actively preventing, timely discovering and punishing law-violated behaviours and child abuses.
- Functional agencies and the whole society are responsible for communicating, disseminating and improving awarenesses and actions of the whole society in protecting children's rights.

3. Child care policy

a. Regulations and activities for child care

- Every child has rights to be cared about their health, nutrition, clean water, environmental sanitation; education; culture and entertainment¹⁷
- Health and nutrition: provided with health care services, nutrition, vaccination, free-of-charged examination and treatment for under-six-year-old and poor children.
- Clean water and environmental sanitation: rights to be cared created every condition for using clean water, clean sanitation and green environment.
- Education: Universal primary education for children; free or reduced tuition fees for children with extremely difficult family backgrounds; educational development supports for children in ethnic minorities, especially female children; vocational training and guidance for disable children and street ones who drop out of school.

¹⁷ National Plan of Action for Children 2001-2010 period

- Cultural, entertainment activities: Improve and enhance the quality of media means; pay attention to building and providing entertainment grounds and services for children; improve the quality of books, newspapers, stories and toys for children,...

b. Obligations of the Government, functional agencies, family and schools

- The Government promulgates the policies, legal documents with the stipulations of the standards and quality related to children's health, sanitation, education and culture in manufactories, service providing companies and businesses; invest in and encourage services expansion for child health care, education, culture and entertainments.
- Parents or guardians play their important roles in caring children with their nutrition, health, education, culture as well as ensuring the best sanitary conditions for children.
- Families and educational service agencies improve their teaching staff, quality of teaching equipment to provide the best learning conditions for children.

4. Some specific regulations for working children

- For the children above 15 years old, due to their demand of working, laws/policies are stipulated to protect children's legitimate benefits and interests when they work because their physical strength and mental power have not fully developed
- Working children are those under 15 years old, participating in economic activities under any forms of self-hired or hired ones by employers.
- Adolescent workers are those from 15 to 18 years old (except for some careers and jobs of the group of children under 15 years old, regulated by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs); strictly forbid the use of the forms of working children abuses.
- Work performed by children must be suitable to children's physical and spiritual health, strictly prohibit illegal actions for forcing children to work.
- Working duration for children must not be longer than 7 hours/day and 42 hours/week, Labour Code particularly stipulates the use of working children at night. It is necessary to ensure the learning and entertainment time for children.

- Working environment must be ensured to not badly influence children's health and fully development. Working children are protected against hard, toxic, hazardous and dangerous working environments.
- Salaries, wages are paid for children reasonably without discriminations to ensure children's needs.

Related legal documents

International Convention on the rights of the child (CRC) signed by the Vietnamese Government on February 20th 1990.

Convention No. 182 of International Labour Organization (ILO) on rigidly prohibiting and urgently taking actions to eliminate the worst forms of working children, approved by the Vietnamese Government in 2000.

Labour Code of the Social Republic of Vietnam

Law on Child Care, Protection and Education ratified by National Assembly on June 15th 2004

Decision N^o 23/2001/QĐ/TTg of the Prime Minister on the approval of the Nation Plan of Actions for Children 2001-2010 period

Decision N^o 19/2004/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister on the approval of the Program on preventing and solving street children situation, sexual-abused children and hard working children in toxic, hazardous and dangerous conditions, 2005 – 2010 period

II. PREVIOUS STUDIES ON WORKING CHILDREN

According to ILO definition, working children refers to the kind of work that is harmful to physical and mental development and that deprives children from their childhood, the potential and dignity. Thus, that children help their parents with housework is not necessarily working children. The ILO's Convention No. 138 also stipulates that the minimum age for work should not be below 15 years.

Working children is a social phenomenon in the world especially in developing countries like Vietnam. There have been many studies on child matters such as street children, children in extremely difficult family backgrounds; orphan children or early working children, etc, by individuals/organizations. These studies have positively contributed to the formulation and amendment of childcare and protection of the Government.

A number of the studies on working children have been conducted in Vietnam under various aspects; however, there has not had any study, which analyze the overall picture of working children, especially the working children in urban areas with service labour forms, or those in rural areas with mainly forms like leaving home to earn living on streets (selling lotteries, polishing shoes, etc) or working children in trade villages and private businesses. There have not had many studies on working children in ethnic minorities, mountainous areas and the worst forms of working children.

Although working children has been a serious and complicated issue, there has not been appropriate statistics about this phenomenon. Studies and statistical surveys have been limited in small scopes as sample surveys. Over the past decades, with the support from ILO and some other countries, including Vietnamese Government, several surveys on this matter have been conducted in a number of provinces.

ILO recent statistics show that in developing countries, there are at least 120 million children aged from 5 to 14 years old participate in economic activities. Moreover, there are 130 million children working as their second important activity after their schooling; 150 million children daily getting water for families. In total, there are 400 million children involve in labour. The rate of children under 16 years old is 43 percent in Vietnam. According to the general statistical data by GSO in 1992-1993, there were 4 million children working early.

The price paid for the issue of working children is too expensive. It causes long-term consequences for children's mental, physical and characteristic development, influencing the common atmosphere of social mentality. Stopping working children has been a global effort for many decades. In 1959, United

Nation General Assembly approved *The Declaration on Child Rights*. After that in 1989, *The Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC)* was approved officially and took effect in September 2nd 1990. State parties, international organizations such as *UNICEF, ILO, WHO* and the public have actively supported for this convention. Recent international conferences have been organized such as the conference *against child sexual exploitation* in Stockholm, Sweden; the conference on working children in October 1997 in Oslo, Norway; etc. All the above actions have been taken with respect to individual dignity and human rights in general and child rights in particular.

According to a recent survey by MoLISA, there are 15 percent of the children are working hard in toxic, hazardous and dangerous environments. The highest proportion of children participating in labour belongs to the group aged 15-17 years old with 44.7 percent; 11-14 years old, 16.4 percent and 6-10 years old, 1.2 percent. The surveys have also shown that girls aged above 11 years old work more than boys. Rural and mountainous children work more than those in urban ones, etc.

In that context, in order to solve working children problem in society, it is needed to have a comprehensive study viewed under different aspects such as child rights, labour and economic science, social science and humanity, etc to contribute to solve the problem in society and hand over children their traditional role that a modern society can create for them. When looking at such a complex problem like working children, it is needed to have full, deep and objective knowledge of its roots, characters, forms, existing and developing mechanism, causes, consequences, level of manifestation, trend, etc to comprehensively solve it.

In this study, it is needed to review the previous studies to provide an overall view on working children situation regarding to the characters of geography, ethnic group, age group and forms of labour in Vietnam. Process of reviewing related documents can provide a description about working children situation in different economic development phases in society. From that, the study will provide a comprehensive content of the issue. Analyzing second data will support this study with a systematical evaluation.

In Vietnam, the studies on working children mainly focus on statistics. They have been conducted by the agencies of social labour with international organizations. Besides, there have been other studies under the view of sociology. Below are some studies among many previous ones by domestic and international organizations/agencies:

* Theme “***Working children situation in Vietnam***” was conducted by UNICEF. This study partly reckoned up working children situation in Vietnam during 1997-

1998 period. However, this research mainly mentioned about working children in delta and urban areas but not working children in mountainous and remote areas

* Project “**Strengthening evaluation capacity of and policy influence on working children in Vietnam**” was conducted by the Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs with General Wollongong University of Australia. The project evaluated working children context and initially provided a scientific basic for the development of a project on working children prevention and repairing in Vietnam.

* Study on “**Working children in Vietnam, 1992-1998 period**” was conducted by the Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs with General Wollongong University of Australia. This study was quite general and comprehensive. The results were collected from data analyses of the sociological survey on working children situation and the results from the survey on household living standards in 1992-1993 and in 1997 – 1998 periods. From that, a more comprehensive overview of working children in 1992-1998 was published. Researchers mapped out working children situation in Vietnam with regard to its characters, forms and trend, and then gave some solutions for the matter.

* Study “**Child Labor in Transition in Viet Nam**” was conducted by Eric Edmonds, Faculty of Economics, Dartmouth University and Carie Turk, World Bank Officer in Vietnam. This research was conducted in details about the size fluctuation of children’s involvement in job forms, the variations of labour forms and children’s living standards in 1992 – 1998 period.

* Study on “**Street and working children’s integrating ability with their families**” was conducted by Radda Barnen and the Research Institute of Youth. This study took place in 1995 - 1996 period with the purpose of learning about children and their family standards, concepts, and attitudes to family life, factors influencing working children’s home living and integration.

* Study on “**Working children in handicraft households**” was conducted by Doan Kim Thang in 2004. This research was aimed at learning about the production situations of handicraft households using working children to weave sedge mats and carpets. The study mentioned about general information about children’s working conditions such as working environment, labour allocation in households. The research also learned about boys and girls’ daily activities in their families such as their study, free time spending, economic activities in and outside their families as well as learned about the attitudes of people and social organizations in locality towards working children issue.

* Study “**Some gender aspects of the children working for families in Hanoi**” was conducted by Ms. Nguyen Thi Van Anh in 2004. This study mentioned about

the “**gender**” aspects in working children, especially forms of housework in families, which means the differences and labour allocations between boys and girls in families and their expectations of them in terms of gender roles.

* Book “ **Working children Issue**” was written by Mr. Vu Ngoc Binh in 1997. This book was about the complex issue of working children in Vietnam and the world. The book provided a rich overview of working children under various aspects, experience and practical solutions.

* Topic “ **Working children**” by Legal and Scientific Information, Institute of Legal Science, Ministry of Justice, 1998. This material provided an overview of working children concepts, reality of working children situation, forms of labour/economic fields of working children, Vietnamese legal documents in protecting adolescent workers and related issues in the world.

In addition, there are some studies, materials by related departments and agencies such as *Realization of working children exploitation in Quang Ninh and Hai Phong* cities by the Centre of Sociology, Academy of Ho Chi Minh National Politics, 1998; Summary Record of Southeast Asian conference on “*Improving the quality of action orientation studies on the worst forms of working childrens*” by RWG-CL; or “*Learning about the Convention on prohibiting and immediately taking actions to eliminate the worst from of working children*” by MoLISA, 2000; *Working children Situation in Vietnam*, Department of Policy and Employment, June, 2001.

In conclusion, study topics on working children have been researched for the past years at different views. However, due to various reasons, there has been no study on comprehensively analyzing working children in large scale. As we know, due to the differences of socio-economic conditions and geography in different areas, working children issues in those areas are also different. In general, working children consequences badly affect children’s physical and mental development, limiting child rights, especially the children in mountainous and remote areas. Some common researches by UNICEF show that children have to work hard in families since they are young. That greatly affects children’s rights, entertainments and physical development. However, those studies have not directly deepened working children issues as the ones to show how to combine working children with childcare, education and protection. From that, individuals, families and the whole society do not abuse working children, cause vulnerability to children’s morality, personality, physical development and violate child rights as stated in laws. This research contributes to identifying the worst forms of working children in Vietnam and solutions to the problem.

The previous studies on working children and working children market were put on the context of socio-economy of the society and families, where they live and

work. That context has put children into roles of both parents' children and labourer; both playing roles as contributors of their family economy and hired employees for their parents' labour contract; having both advantages of being children in labour and roles as the independent adults with the task assigned, etc.... Therefore, this study will use the systematic results, multi-dimension approaches for the research aspects to describe structural context and action rules of study target group.

III. REFERENCES

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IV. QUALITATIVE DATA ON WORKING CHILDREN IN THE STUDY

1. General information about working and non-working children

Table 1: Surveyed children divided by sex

Sex	Quantity	Rate
Male	171	44.6
Female	213	55.4
Total	384	100.0

Table 2: schooling situation

	Quantity	Rate
At school	284	74.1
Out of school	95	24.9
Never been to school	4	1.1
Total	384	100.0

Table 3: Out-of-school duration

	Quantity	Rate
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Less than 6 months	10	2.7
From 6 to 12 months	7	1.9
More than a year	78	20.3
Total	95	24.9

Table 4: Reasons for school drop-out

	Quantity	Rate
Weak learning capacity	22	23.9
No money for study	26	28.3
Involve in labour to help parents	35	38.0
Illness or sickness	3	3.3
Dislike school	5	5.4
Forced to leave school by family	4	4.3
Other	0	0.0
Total	95	103.3

Table 5: Reasons for having never been to school

	Quantity	Rate
Illness and sickness	2	50.0
Too far school	0	
Parents don't allow going to school	2	50.0
Other	0	
Total	4	100.0

Table 6: Division of children's households

	Quantity	Rate
Poor	186	48.4
Medium	186	48.4
Above medium and well-off	12	3.2
Total	384	100.0

Table 7: Children's family background

	Quantity	Rate
With parents	306	79.7
Without parents	12	3.2
Without mother or father	54	14.1
Divorced or separated parents	11	3.0
Other	0	0.0
Total	384	100.0

Table 8: Whom do children live with?

	Quantity	Rate
Family	369	96.2
Relatives	14	3.6
Acquaintances, friends	1	0.3
Other	0	0.0

Total	384	100.0
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Table 9: Surveyed children's labour situation

	Quantity	Rate
Yes	300	81.1
No	84	18.9
Total	384	100.0

Table 10: Number of family members

	Average number of family member
Working children	5.47
Non-working children	4.67

2. Information about working children

a. General information

Table 11. Working children's schooling situation divided by sex and ethnic group

Schooling situation	Ethnic group			Sex		
	Kinh	Other	Total	Male	Female	Total
At school	177	29	206	83	123	206
Out of school	70	21	91	47	44	91
Never been to school	1	2	3	1	2	3
	248	52	300	131	169	300

Table 12. Working children leaving school early divided by economic situation and family background

	Poor	Medium	Above medium and well-off	Total
With parents	47	18	1	66
Without parents	6	0	0	6

Without mother or father	6	3	0	9
Divorced or separated parents	6	1	0	7
Other	2	1	0	3
Total	67	23	1	91

Table 13. Reasons for children's school drop-out divided by sex and ethnic group

	Kinh			Other			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Weak learning capacity	11	4	15	2	1	3	18
No money for study	7	10	17	4	5	9	26
Involve in labour to help parents	14	15	29	4	2	6	35
Illness and sickness	1	2	3			0	3
Dislike school	3	2	5			0	5

Family force to leave school	1	0	1	0	3	3	4
Total	37	33	70	10	11	21	91

Table 14. Reasons for school drop-out divided by sex and ethnic group

	Total		
	Male	Female	Total
Weak learning capacity	13	5	18
No money for study	11	15	26
Involve in labour to help parents	18	17	35
Illness and sickness	1	2	3
Dislike school	3	2	5
Family force to leave school	1	3	4
Total	47	44	91

Table 15. Working children divided by economic situation and family background

	Poor	Medium	Above medium and well-off	Total
With parents	113	117	4	234
Without parents	10	1	0	11
Without mother or father	26	16	0	42
Divorced or separated parents	10	3	0	13
Total	159	137	4	300

Table 16. Working children divided by family background, sex and ethnic group

	Kinh			Other			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
With parents	79	112	191	23	20	43	234

Without parents	7	1	8	2	1	3	11
Without mother or father	10	26	36	4	2	6	42
Divorced or separated parents	6	7	13	0	0	0	13
Total	102	146	248	29	23	52	300

Table 17. Educational levels of working children's parents by ethnic group

Educational level	Kinh				Other				Total
	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	
Illiterate	8	8	2	18	16	6	0	22	40
Uncompleted primary level	26	10	4	40	14	5	0	19	59
Complete primary level	91	22	0	113	4	1	0	5	118
Complete lower	21	8	1	30	2	1	0	3	33

secondary level									
Complete higher secondary level	7	2	0	9	0	0	1	1	10
Total	153	50	7	210	36	13	1	50	260

Table 18. Marital status of working children's parents divided by ethnic group

Marital status	Kinh				Other				Total
	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	
Both husband and wife	171	19	3	193	37	9	1	47	240
Separation	2	1	0	3					3
Divorce	3	9	0	12	2	2		4	16
Widow	6	24	4	34	1	4	2	7	41
Total	182	53	7	242	40	15	3	58	300

Table 19. Employment situation of working children's parents divided by ethnic group

Employment situation	Kinh				Other				Total
	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	
Employed	166	48	5	219	37	13	1	51	270
Unemployed	14	3	1	18	3	0	0	3	21
economically inactive	2	2	1	5	0	2	2	4	9
Total	182	53	7	242	40	15	3	58	300

Table 20. Working fields of working children's parents divided by ethnic group

Working fields	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	Total
Agriculture	95	35	4	134	35	7	1	43	177
Industry	57	12	3	72	3	2	2	8	80

Service	30	6	0	36	2	6	0	8	44
Total	182	53	7	242	40	15	3	58	300

b. Information about employment and other issues

Table 21. Working children divided by age, sex, and complicated level of employment

	Simple employment			Technical employment			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	21	26	47	2	2	4	51
10--14	93	119	212	2	4	6	218
6--9	13	18	31			0	31
Total	127	163	290	4	6	10	300

Table 22. Working children divided by age, sex, and fields of economic activities

	Agriculture, forestry, fishery			Industry and handicraft			Trade and service			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	13	3	16	5	16	21	5	9	14	51
10--14	29	14	43	36	56	92	30	53	83	218
6--9	4	6	10	6	7	13	3	5	8	31
Total	46	23	69	47	79	126	38	67	105	300

Table 23. Working children divided by age, sex and forms of employment

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	8	17	25	7	3	10	8	8	16	51
10--14	45	65	110	13	14	27	37	44	81	218
6--9	5	10	15	5	4	9	3	4	7	31

Total	58	92	150	25	21	46	48	56	104	300
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Table 24. Working children divided by age, sex and working fields

	State			Private			Household economy			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	1	4	5	12	10	22	13	11	24	51
10--14			0	53	59	112	47	59	106	218
6--9			0	9	8	17	7	7	14	31
Total	1	4	5	74	77	151	67	77	144	300

Table 25. Working hours of working children's current employment (main employment) divided by age and working sector

	Agriculture, forestry, fishery	Industry and handicraft	Trade and service	Total
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	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	13	3	16	5	16	21	5	9	14	51
10--14	29	14	43	36	56	92	30	53	83	218
6--9	4	6	10	6	7	13	3	5	8	31
Total	46	23	69	47	79	126	38	67	105	300

Table 26. Reasons for working children's work divided by form of employment

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total
	Male	Female	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	<i>Total</i>	Male	Female	<i>Total</i>	
Parents force to work	7	4	11	0	1	1	4	4	8	20
Want to share hard work with parents	21	29	50	20	13	33	21	19	40	123
Want to earn money to help family	25	58	83	5	7	12	23	32	55	150
Avoid going to school	0	1	1							1

Alluded by friends										0
Want to have own freedom	5	0	5				0	1	1	6
Total	58	92	150	25	21	46	48	56	104	300

Table 27. Working conditions of working children divided by economic sectors

Working conditions	Agriculture			Industry			Service		
	Very bad	Bad	Medium	Very bad	Bad	Medium	Very bad	Bad	Medium
Because of climate (temperature, humidity)	1	25	43	10	36	80	4	57	44
Dust	1	2	66	13	35	78	6	60	39
Noise	1	2	66	3	38	85	5	58	42
Toxic chemical substances and gases		7	62	11	50	65	1	13	91

Unsuitable equipment, machines for children's physical capacity		7	62		41	85		7	98
Easily burnt and explored		3	66	3	30	93		5	100
Easily broken/ fell		4	65	15	24	87	9	14	82
Total	3	50	430	55	254	573	25	214	496

Table 28. Labour sanitary safety of working children divided by economic sector

Safety - Working Sanitation	Agriculture			Industry			Service		
	Yes	No	No application	Yes	No	No application	Yes	No	No application
Equipped with Safety working clothing	17	22	30	7	108	11	2	32	71
Trained about Safety working sanitation		35	34	3	112	11		34	71

Total	17	57	64	10	220	22	2	66	142
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Table 29. Working children's labour psychology divided by sectors (number of opinions)

In term of labour physiology and psychology	Agriculture			Industry			Service		
	Very bad	Bad	Normal	Very bad	Bad	Normal	Very bad	Bad	Normal
Battered	1	1	67		10	116			105
Threatened	1	68	0		8	118	1	5	99
Humiliated	1	1	67		7	119		1	104
Scolded, insulted	1	7	61	3	10	113	3	11	91
Unpaid	1	1	67		8	118	0	7	98
Total	5	78	262	3	43	584	4	24	497

Table 30. Average working hours (hour/day) of working children by age, sex, economic sector

	Agriculture, forestry, fishery			Industry and handicraft			Trade and service			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	6.08	4.33	5.75	8.8	6.25	6.86	6.4	7	6.79	6.49
10--14	5.34	4.93	5.21	6.28	6.21	6.24	6.2	4.38	5.04	5.58
6--9	3.5	2.38	3.1	3.5	3.57	3.54	5	6	5.63	3.94
Total	5.39	4.3	5.03	6.19	5.99	6.06	6.13	4.85	5.31	5.56

Table 31. Average working hours (day/month) of working children divided by age, sex, economic sectors

	Agriculture, forestry, fishery			Industry and handicraft			Trade and service			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	24.69	21.67	24.13	28.6	24.56	25.52	27	25.11	25.79	25.16
10--14	23.52	20.71	22.6	22.36	23.91	23.3	20.63	16.89	18.24	21.24

6--9	17	17.67	17.4	19.33	19.57	19.46	23.33	23.8	23.63	19.9
Total	23.28	20.04	22.2	22.64	23.66	23.28	21.68	18.51	19.66	21.76

Table 32. Average working hours (month/year) of Working children divided by age, sex, economic sector

	Agriculture, forestry, fishery			Industry and handicraft			Trade and service			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	8.92	7.67	8.69	12	7.81	8.81	10.4	10.22	10.29	9.18
10--14	8.34	7.93	8.21	8.42	7.67	7.97	7.8	7.11	7.36	7.78
6--9	9	8	8.4	8.33	7.71	8	9.67	7.2	8.13	8.16
Total	8.57	7.91	8.35	8.79	7.71	8.11	8.29	7.54	7.81	8.06

Table 33. Average working day off (day/year) of working children by age, sex, economic sector

	Agriculture, forestry, fishery	Industry and handicraft	Trade and service	Total
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	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	0	0	0	0	0.63	0.48	0	0	0	0.2
10--14	0.69	0.43	0.6	1.94	2.89	2.52	1.53	0.19	0.67	1.44
6--9	0	0	0	3.33	2.86	3.08	0	0	0	1.29
Total	0.43	0.26	0.38	1.91	2.43	2.24	1.21	0.15	0.53	1.21

Table 34. Average working hours (hour/day) of working children divided by age, sex, and form of work

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	8.38	6.71	7.24	5.71	3.67	5.1	6	6.38	6.19	6.49
10--14	6.69	6.06	6.32	3.38	4.29	3.85	6	4.43	5.15	5.58
6--9	3.6	3.5	3.53	2.8	2.75	2.78	6	6.5	6.29	3.94
Total	6.66	5.9	6.19	3.92	3.9	3.91	6	4.86	5.38	5.56

Table 35. Average working hours (day/month) of working children divided by age, sex, and forms of work

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	28.88	25.59	26.64	21.57	15.67	19.8	27.13	25.25	26.19	25.16
10--14	22.53	23.72	23.24	20.31	19.21	19.74	22.38	16.2	19.02	21.24
6--9	18.2	20.1	19.47	18.6	15.5	17.22	23.33	24.75	24.14	19.87
Total	23.03	23.67	23.43	20.32	18	19.26	2.23	18.11	20.47	21.76

Table 36. Average working hours (month/year) of working children divided by age, sex, and form of work

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	11.75	8.06	9.24	8.57	6.33	7.1	9.25	10.5	9.88	9.18

10--14	8.47	8.57	8.2	6.38	6.71	6.56	11.75	6.89	7.63	7.78
6--9	7.6	8.1	7.93	8.8	7	8	11	7.25	8.86	8.16
Total	8.84	8.03	8.35	7.48	6.71	7.13	8.79	7.43	8.06	8.06

Table 37. Average working day off (day/year) of working children divided by age, and forms of work

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	0	0.59	0.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
10--14	2.44	2.49	2.47	0	0.71	0.37	0.7	0.14	0.4	1.44
6--9	4	2	2.67	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.29
Total	2.24	2.09	2.15	0	0.41	0.22	0	0.11	0.31	1.21

Table 38. Labour contracts divided by age, sex and working sector

	Agriculture, forestry, fishery			Industry and handicraft			Trade and service			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
15-17	0	0	0	1	12	13	2	1	3	16
10--14	0	0	0	22	32	54	9	6	15	69
6--9	0	0	0	2	3	5	0	1	1	6
Total	0	0	0	25	47	72	11	8	19	91

Table 39. Labour contract execution by sex and age

	6- 9 yrs			10- 14 yrs			15- 17 yrs			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Strictly comply with contracts	2	1	3	24	31	55	3	10	13	71
Partly comply with contracts	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	2

Not comply with contracts	0	0	0	8	8	16	1	1	2	18
Total	2	1	3	33	39	72	4	12	16	91

Table 40. Working children's average incomes divided by sex, age and working sector (1.000 VND)

	Agriculture, forestry, fishery			Industry and handicraft			Trade and service			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
15-17	700		700	950	614.29	688.89	925	851.11	873.85	890	706.96	762.42
10--14	420	200	383.33	556.79	578.42	569.89	543.75	285.47	362.21	539.59	405.77	458.78
6--9				407.5	400	405	800	488	540	486	462.86	472.5
Total	500	200	462.5	583.89	580.88	582.02	597.73	361.35	442.6	582.17	465.34	509.96

Table 41. Working children's average income per month divided by age, sex and form of work

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
15-17	197.5	88.43	132.8	300	0	150	22.71	35.92	31.58	890	706.96	762.42
10--14	683.95	564.08	614.69	650	216.67	390	267.86	204.08	226.78	539.59	405.77	458.78
6--9	407.5	400	404.29				800	510	568	486	462.86	472.5
Total	690	583.31	626.71	725	325	525	508.27	308.27	319.59	582.17	465.34	509.96

Table 42. Working children's expenses divided by age, sex, and form of work (1.000 VND)

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Only providing children with food	197.5	88.43	132.8	300	0	150	22.71	35.92	31.58
Only providing children with clothes	46.67	33.14	38.64	0	3.75	1088	19.83	14.69	16.38

Send children's families /relative with money.	376.88	422.31	403.83	387.5	237.5	312.5	244.79	208.37	220.34
Saving	51.67	18.86	32.2	12.5	83.75	48.13	50.79	46.22	47.73
Social Communication	10.83	9.14	9.83	0	0	0	1.67	3.06	2.6
Other	6.46	11.43	9.41	25	0	12.5	2.92	0	0.96
Total									

Table 43. Work impacts on children’s health divided by age, sex

	6--9			10—14			15-17			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Very bad			0	2	0	2			0	2		2
Bad	5	4	9	45	53	98	4	8	12	54	65	119

No impact	8	14	22	48	70	118	19	20	39	75	104	179
Total	13	18	31	95	123	218	23	28	51	131	169	300

Table 44. Work impacts on children’s physical bodies divided by age and sex

	6--9			10—14			15-17			Total		
	Male	Femal e	Total	Male	Femal e	Total	Male	Female	Total	Mal e	Femal e	Tota l
Very bad			0	3		3			0	3		3
Bad	4	4	8	39	52	91	3	8	11	46	64	110
No impact	9	14	23	53	71	124	20	20	40	82	105	187
Total	13	18	31	95	123	218	23	28	51	131	169	300

Table 45. Work impacts on children’s physiology and psychology divided by sex and age

	6-9			10-14			15-17			Total		
	Nam	Femal e	Total	Nam	Femal e	Total	Nam	Female	Total	Nam	Femal e	Tota l
Very bad												
Bad	1	3	4	37	45	82	3	8	11	41	56	97
No impact	12	15	27	58	78	136	20	20	40	90	113	203
Total	13	18	31	95	123	218	23	28	51	131	169	300

Table 46. Work impacts on children's morality, life style divided by sex and age

	6--9			10—14			15-17			Total		
	Male	Femal e	Total	Male	Femal e	Total	Mal e	Femal e	Total	Mal e	Femal e	Total
Very bad												
Bad	1	3	4	20	22	42	3	4	7	24	29	53
No impact	12	15	27	75	101	176	20	24	44	107	140	247

Total	13	18	31	95	123	218	23	28	51	131	169	300
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c. Children's future plans

Table 47. Working children's plans for work divided by sex and age

	6-9			10-14			15-17			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Continue doing current work	11	13	24	65	74	139	14	21	35	90	108	198
Will no longer work	1	4	5	4	15	19		3	3	5	22	27
Don'ts know	1	1	2	26	34	60	9	4	13	36	39	75
Total	13	18	31	95	123	218	23	28	51	131	169	300

Table 48. Working children's plans for work divided by sex and form of work

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Continue doing current work	2	14	16	1	1	2	1	1	2	4	16	20
Will no longer work	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Don'ts know	0	3	3	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	4	5
Total	2	20	22	1	1	2	2	2	4	5	23	28

Table 49. Working children's difficulties divided by age, sex

	6--9			10—14			15-17			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Difficulties related to children's study	11	15	26	82	115	197	10	16	26	103	146	249
Difficulties related to children's health	2	3	5	8	6	14	3	5	8	13	14	27

Difficulties related to children's jobs	0	0	0	5	2	7	10	7	17	15	9	24
Total	13	18	31	95	123	218	23	28	51	131	169	300

Table 50. Working children's difficulties divided by sex and form of work

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Difficulties related to children's study	47	58	105	18	13	31	28	32	60	93	103	196
Difficulties related to children's health	5	6	11	2	4	6	5	9	14	12	19	31
Difficulties related to children's jobs	6	28	34	5	4	9	15	15	30	26	47	73
Total	58	92	150	25	21	46	48	56	104	131	169	300

Table 51. Working children's difficulties divided by sex and age

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Difficulties related to children's study	47	58	105	18	13	31	28	32	60	93	103	196
Difficulties related to children's health	5	6	11	2	4	6	5	9	14	12	19	31
Difficulties related to children's jobs	6	28	34	5	4	9	15	15	30	26	47	73
Total	58	92	150	25	21	46	48	56	104	131	169	300

Table 52. Working children's expectations divided by sex and form of work

	Employed			Household employed			Self-employed			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total

Expectations related to children's suitable work	18	25	43	7	5	12	25	33	58	50	63	113
Expectations related to children's study/vocational training	15	32	47	8	8	16	10	12	22	33	52	85
Expectations related to spiritual and material supports for children's study/vocational training	25	35	60	10	8	18	13	11	24	48	54	102
Total	58	92	150	25	21	46	48	56	104	131	169	300

d. Educational level of non-working children's parents

Table 53: Educational level of non-working children's parents divided by ethnic group

Educational level	Kinh group				Other				Total
	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	Father	Mother	Guardians	Total	
Illiterate	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	3	4
Uncompleted primary level	6	4	0	10	2	0	0	2	12
Complete primary level	15	4	3	22	2	1	0	3	25
Complete lower secondary level	18	1	0	19			0	0	19
Complete higher secondary level	6	1		7	2	1	0	3	10
Total	46	10	3	59	8	3	0	11	70