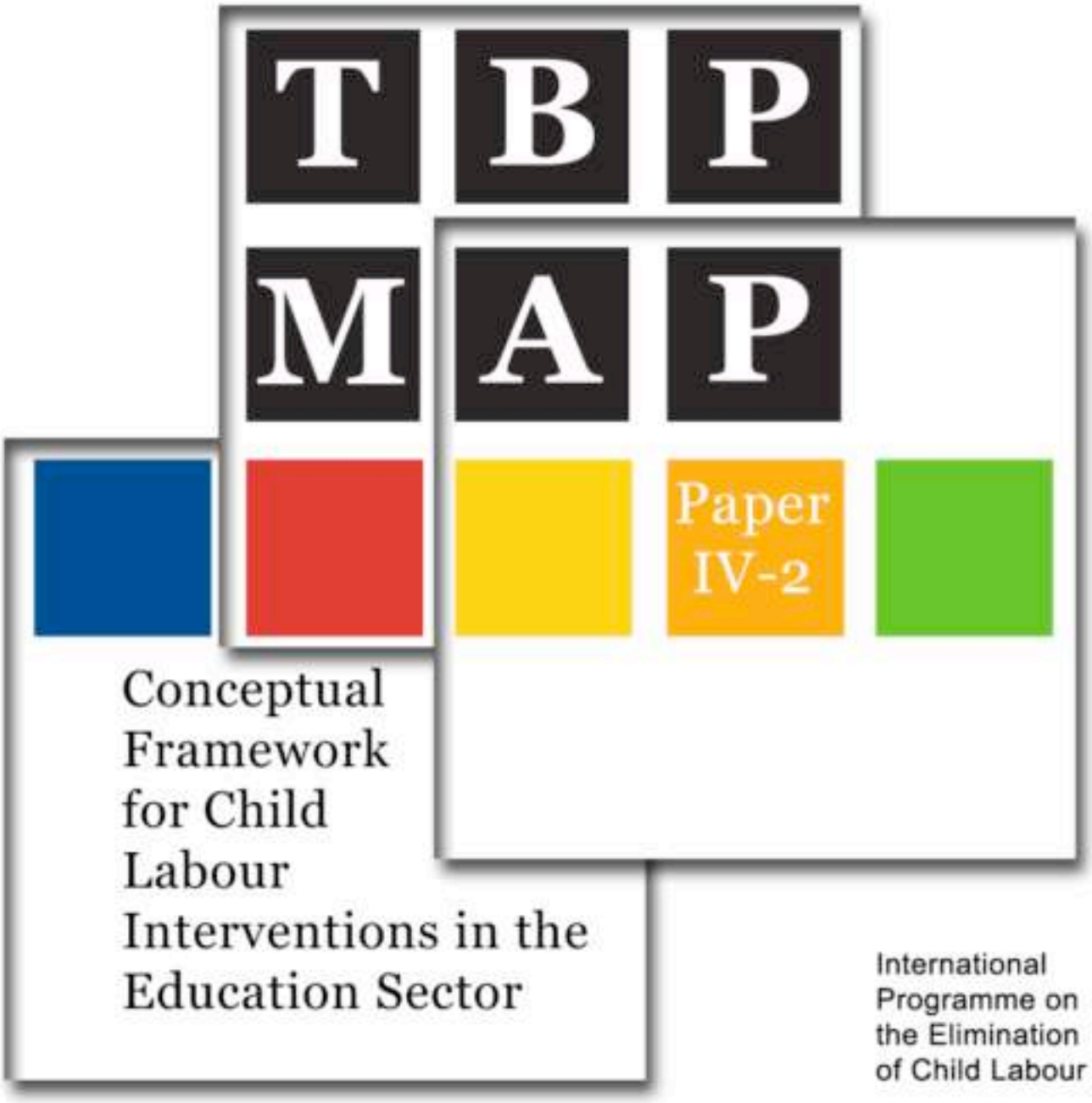
International Labour Office

Time-Bound Programme

Manual for Action Planning



International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

Conceptual framework for child labour interventions in the education sector

by

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1 Introduction

This paper provides a framework for the analysis of child labour issues and interventions in the education sector. Its main objective is to lay out policy options for making education systems more supportive of the fight against the exploitation of children, thereby facilitating the attainment of the twin goals of eliminating child labour and achieving universal basic education.

Two key International Labour Conventions are especially relevant to the discussion of child labour and education. The first is the *Minimum Age Convention,* 1973 (No. 138), which links the minimum age at employment with the age of completion of compulsory schooling. The second is the *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999* (No. 182) and its accompanying *Recommendation* (No. 190), adopted in 1999. Together, these instruments specify the kinds of work by children targeted for eradication, as well as recommended policy measures for addressing the child labour problem. In effect, *child labour* excludes work undertaken by young people, paid or unpaid, that is considered to be appropriate for their age and level of maturity. For example, "child labour does not include activities such as helping out, after school is over and schoolwork has been done, with light household or garden chores, childcare or other light work."[1]

Convention No. 138 requires ILO member States to legislate a minimum age for admission to employment in different kinds of work. In general, this minimum age should not be less than 15, although countries "whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed" could specify an initial minimum age of 14 years. The Convention does not apply to "work done by children and young persons in schools for general, vocational or technical education or in other training institutions, or to work done by persons at least 14 years of age" as an integral part of officially sanctioned training programmes and in accordance with officially prescribed conditions (Article 6). Moreover, it makes provision for the employment of children 13–15 years of age (12–14 years where the minimum age specified is 14) in *light work*, defined as work

(a) not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and

(b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received" (Article 7).

In contrast, the Convention specifies a minimum age of 18 years for "any type of employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons" (Article 3).

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[1] ILO: *A Future Without Child Labour: Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, International Labour Conference, 90th Session 2002, (Geneva, ILO, 2002), p. 9.

Article 2 of Convention No. 138 specifies that the minimum age should not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling, which should by implication be no less than 15 years, or 14 in the special cases noted above. Unfortunately, this attempt to link educational policy with child labour policy remains a distant dream in many countries, because even today, and even more so at the time the Convention was agreed to, there are vast numbers of children whose schooling experience ends well before attaining the age of 14.

Convention No. 182 pulls various ILO and other international instruments (including the Convention on the Rights of the Child) relating to the most intolerable forms of child labour together under one Convention, singling them for eradication as a priority. These *worst forms of child labour* include:

(a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
(b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
(c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; and
(d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children" [Article 3].

For these activities, a child is defined as anyone below the age of 18.

To recap, the kinds of activities subsumed under child labour and which the two ILO Conventions aim to eradicate fall under three categories:

(1) Labour that is performed by a child who is ***under the minimum age*** specified for that kind of work (as defined by national legislation, in accordance with accepted international standards), and that is thus likely to impede the child's education and full development.
(2) Labour that jeopardizes the physical, mental or moral well-being of a child, either because of its nature or because of the conditions in which it is carried out, known as ***hazardous*** work.
(3) The unconditional worst forms of child labour, which are internationally defined as slavery, trafficking, debt bondage and other forms of forced labour, forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict, prostitution and pornography, and illicit activities.[2]

Convention No. 182 specifies that each Member shall, taking into account the importance of education in eliminating child labour, take effective and time-bound measures to "ensure access to free basic education, and, wherever possible and appropriate, vocational training, for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour". The accompanying Recommendation No. 190 adds as a possible measure aimed at the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour: "adopting appropriate measures to improve the educational infrastructure and the training of teachers to meet the needs of boys and girls".

Also relevant to the topic of this paper is the *Resolution Concerning the Elimination of Child Labour*, adopted at the 84th Session of the International Labour Conference in 1996. Noting the persistence of child labour despite the existence of laws prohibiting child exploitation in virtually every country, the linkages between poverty and child

[2] ibid.

labour and the consequential need for sustained economic growth leading to social progress, in particular poverty alleviation and universal education, the Resolution invites governments and, where appropriate, employers' and workers' organizations, to:

- "formulate and implement educational and developmental policies essential for the elimination of all forms of child labour, in particular those aimed at providing employment for parents of working children and facilitating the transition of working children from work to school";
- "initiate activities targeted at working children and their families such as the establishment of day-care centres, schools and training facilities";
- "promote access to basic education for girls and boys alike on an equal basis, which is crucial to the success of any effort to progressively eliminate child labour";
- "allocate resources to develop education, including compulsory primary education accessible to all, vocational training and guidance".

2 Basic premises

It may be appropriate at the outset to state a number of basic premises that underlie this report. They are as follows:

(a) Work undertaken by children can usefully be divided into four categories: light work, non-hazardous work, hazardous work and the unconditional worst forms of child labour. Light work constitutes child labour if undertaken by children below the specified minimum age (12 or 13 years). Some types of activity can be excluded from minimum age legislation and hence fall outside the category of child labour for all ages. These include household chores, and work in family undertakings, provided they don't impede the child's education and development. The education system's potential role in addressing child labour issues will differ for each of these categories.

(b) The concept of work needs to be broadened to include household, non-market work, which is more common for girls than for boys. Leaving it out introduces a gender bias into child labour statistics. The fact that such work is unpaid should be no objection – so is some work included in the labour force. The fact that it is not included in most data sources means that what data are available should be utilized to indicate the biases inherent in measures that do not include such work.[3]

(c) Bringing children within the school system will significantly assist in eliminating child labour, including its worst forms. (In general, countries where the worst forms of child labour are in evidence are those in which universal basic education has not been reached. But many of the effects here are indirect rather than direct).

(d) Bringing children within the school system (even full-time) will not *necessarily* prevent their simultaneous exploitation in the workforce.

(e) Working while studying is not necessarily exploitative. In some circumstances, light work may contribute to the child's skill

[3] D. Levison, K.S. Moe and F. Knaul: "Youth Education and Work in Mexico", in *World Development*, 2001, Vol. 29, No. 1, p. 168.

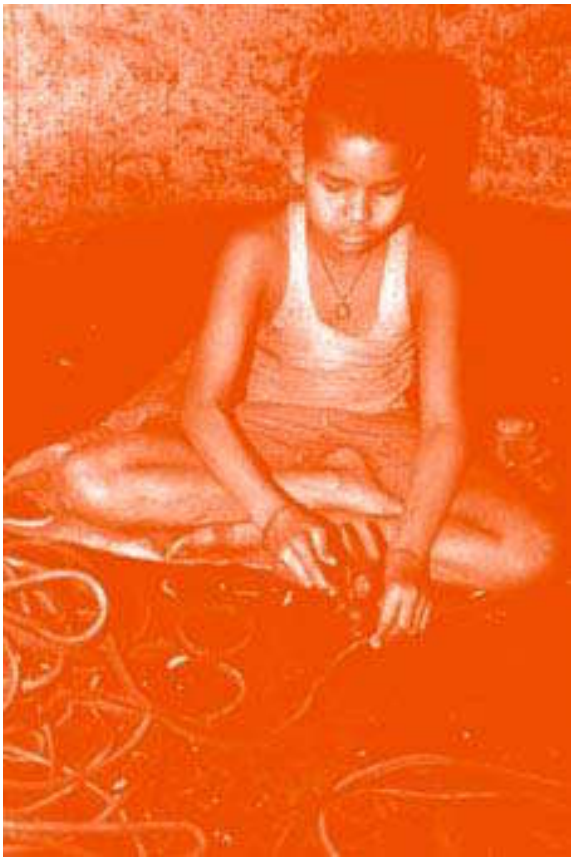
development, and in others it may be the only way the child can afford to stay in school. On the other hand, if work interferes unduly with schooling, it may lead to poor performance and even dropout. Each particular situation needs to be assessed.

(f) From a macro perspective, the labour market and human resource development benefits of reducing child labour and eliminating its worst forms are crucial: these include increases in relative wages for unskilled labour; demographic bonus from fertility declines; improved human capital; democratisation. But significant reduction in child labour, and resulting human capital benefits, presupposes availability of quality schools, and income alternatives for poor families.

(g) Education itself – in low quality schools, with abusive teachers – can be just as detrimental to children as many forms of child labour. From a child's perspective, schooling is just another form of work – along with housework, and various forms of unpaid and paid work.[4] It is not just schooling, but quality schooling, addressing the real needs of students, that is needed.

(h) Where children's work results from household poverty, it may be unrealistic to expect its elimination in the short term. "If poverty is the problem, then stopping children from working when they need money to support themselves and their families will only add to their economic difficulties".[5] In the short term, it may be more realistic to aim for the:

- elimination of the worst forms of child labour;
- reduction of other forms of child labour;
- provision of education to those children in appropriate forms of work, as a transitional measure, with the overall goal of eliminating child labour in the long term.



[4] S. Baker: "Child Labour in Changwat Khon Kaen, Thailand: The State of Play",(unpublished PhD thesis, Canberra, Australian National University, 1998).

[5] ibid. p. 78.

3 General incidence of child labour and its correlates

It is very difficult to estimate the number of child labourers in the world, because censuses and labour force surveys typically do not include information on work of children aged 5–9, and many of them do not include information on the labour force status of anyone below the age of 15. Anker[6] believes that the under-reporting of child labour force activity in surveys is probably greater than in the case of women.

The uncertainty is reflected in the wide range of available estimates of the number of child labourers from ILO sources — from 73 million aged 10–14 according to "very limited statistical information obtained from about 100 countries" to 250 million aged 5–14 in developing countries in 1995 according to "experimental surveys carried out by the ILO's Bureau of Statistics in a number of countries".[7] The most recent ILO estimates indicate that in 2000 there were 206 million economically active children aged 5–14 years in developing countries (211 million in the whole world).[8] Although this figure suggests a decline in the incidence of working children in developing countries since the 1995 estimates (from 24.7 per cent in 1995 to 20.2 in 2000), the ILO cautions care in making such comparisons, because of differing data sources and different extrapolation methodologies. [9] What is clear is that economic activity among children remains a phenomenon of considerable proportions.

To deal effectively with issues of child labour requires statistics that are more nuanced than a single-figure estimate of incidence. The basis for these more nuanced estimates must be a better understanding of the varieties of child labour actually in existence. For example, the ILO Conventions recognize that some forms of child labour are worse than others. As noted earlier, ILO Convention No. 138 classifies light work as work which "should not be harmful to the child's health or development, should not interfere with school instruction, should not take place during school hours and should not be more than specified prescribed hours of work". [10] Certainly, much of the work that children do is relatively light work on the family farm such as tending animals, cutting grass, scaring birds or fetching water; or light work in small family enterprises, such as minding the store for short periods or assisting in cottage industry. The most recent ILO estimates draw the distinction between economically active children and child labourers, by subtracting from the number of economically active children at ages 12–14 those whose economic activity was adjudged to be "light work". Employing this adjustment, the number of child labourers in the 5–14 years age group is estimated as 186 million, among a total of in 211 million working children.

It is important not to make the mistake of assuming that unpaid family work is synonymous with light work. Actually, most working children are unpaid family workers rather than employees or self-employed. For example, in Pakistan, about 70 per cent of working children aged 5–14 are unpaid family helpers.[11] Although work of this kind may not be

[6] R. Anker; *Conceptual and research frameworks for the economics of child labour and its elimination*, IPEC Working Paper, (Geneva, ILO, 2000), p. 11.

[7] ibid., p. 2.

[8] ILO: *Every child counts: New global estimates on child labour*, (Geneva, ILO, 2002)

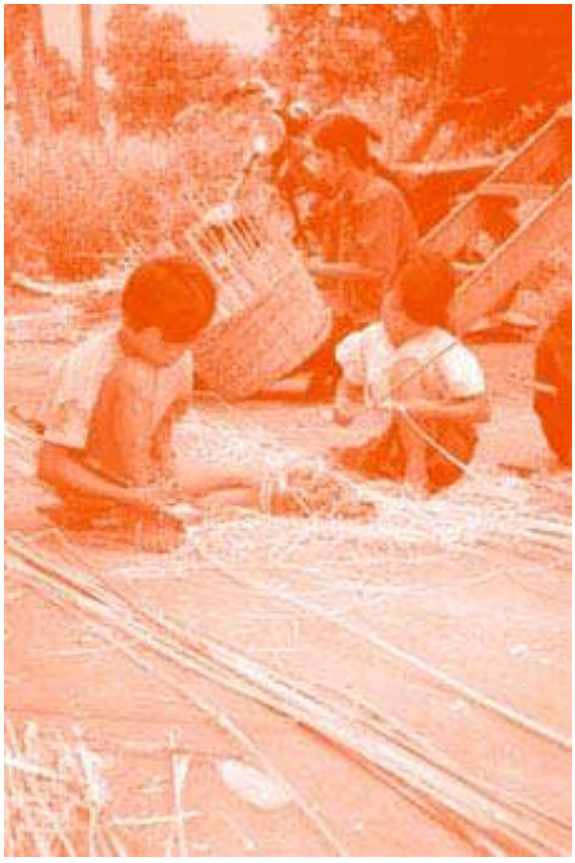
[9] ibid., pp. 18-19.

[10] ILO: *Child Labour: Targeting the Intolerable*, (Geneva: ILO, 1996).

[11] ibid.

considered as damaging to children as some kinds of exploitative work outside the household, in some cases it *is* exploitative; moreover, it can, like other forms of work, take children away from schooling.

The ILO adjustments, though they make allowance for light work, fail to make allowance for an even more important kind of work: unremunerated housework. This accounts for much of the work children do, but is *not* included as work by traditional definitions. Failure to adjust for this kind of work biases the estimates by underestimating the work of girls, in particular.



In most developing countries, the greater part of work undertaken by children (according to conventional definitions of work) is in agriculture (for example, in Zambia, 87 per cent of work by children aged 5–17; in Thailand, over 65 per cent of work by children aged 13–14). Recognition of this fact needs to underlie efforts to eliminate child labour. Nevertheless, there is an extraordinarily wide range of children's work, in both rural and urban areas. For example, in urban areas of India, children are employed in tea stalls, restaurants or as household workers in middle class homes. Large numbers work in cottage industries producing carpets, matches, firecrackers, cigarettes, brassware, diamonds, glass, hand-loomed cloth, embroidery, bangles and other traditional handicrafts. Some become prostitutes or live in the streets, begging or picking rags and bottles from trash for resale.[12]

In population censuses, many countries collect data on labour force participation and characteristics only for the population aged 15 and above. In this sense, they "define away" the issue of child labour. Other countries collect labour force data for the 10-14 age group, others for the 12–14 age group, and a few for the 6–14 or 7–14 age group. Data for the 10–14 year age group in Asian countries around 1995 showed that the following percentages worked:

Nepal, 45 per cent

Bangladesh 30 per cent

Pakistan 18 per cent (but 7 per cent according to the Child Labour Survey of Pakistan 1996)

Philippines 17 per cent (ages 5–14)

Cambodia 16 per cent

Thailand 16 per cent

India 14 per cent

China 12 per cent

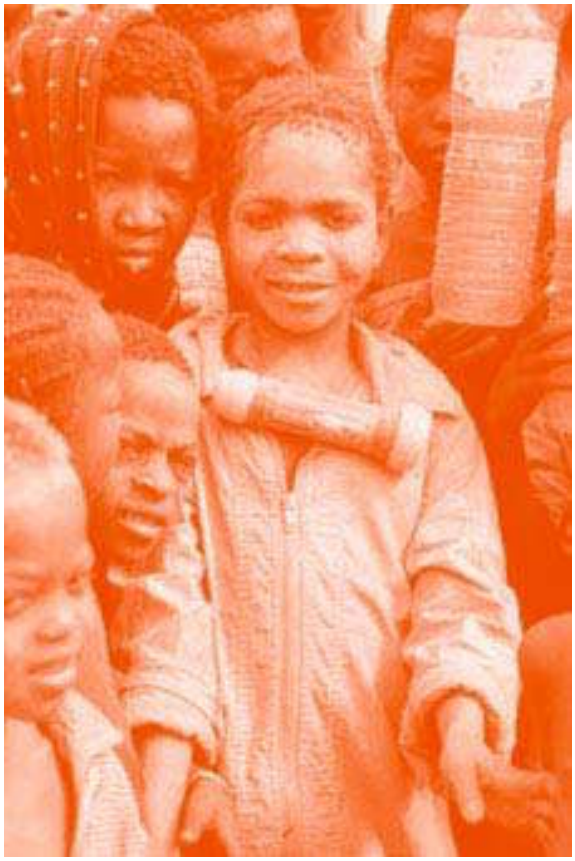
Indonesia 10 per cent

Vietnam 9 per cent

[12] M. Weiner: *The Child and the State in India: Child Labor and Education Policy in Comparative Perspective*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1991).

There are two main problems with such information. The first is that it underestimates the work activities of children in the sense that it does not include household work of the kind that does not enter labour force statistics. The second is that it is rarely cross-tabulated with the child's school attendance status, in order to show whether working children are also attending school or not.

Nevertheless, time series analysis of such data can tell us something. Table 1 shows the evidence on labour force participation by children aged 10–14 in Indonesia over a quarter of a century, a period when school enrolment rates rose substantially. In view of the general consensus that labour force participation of children tends to decline over the course of economic development it is no surprise that labour force participation by children declined steadily in Indonesia over the 1971–1995 period, for both males and females.[13] After 1980, the figures in urban areas showed no clear trend, and the decline in the overall figures reflected both continuing declines in rural areas and the increase in the proportion of the population living in urban areas, where child labour force participation was lower.



[13] J. D. Durand: *The Labour Force in Economic Development: A Comparison of International Census Data 1946-1966*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1975).

Table 1: Indonesia: labour force participation rates at ages 10–14, 1971–1995

	Male	Female	Total	Urban			Rural		
				Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1971	18.3	13.7	16.1	7.4	6.9	7.1	20.6	15.3	18.0
1980	12.9	9.5	11.3	3.3	4.3	3.8	15.6	11.0	13.4
1990	11.9	8.9	10.4	4.3	5.0	4.6	15.0	10.5	12.8
1995	10.3	7.7	9.0	3.7	4.3	4.0	13.5	9.4	11.5

Source: Population Censuses; 1995 Inter-Censal Survey.

It is important to understand the correlates of child labour, including the typical household situation of children who work. For example, because job opportunities for children are greater in primary industry and in other informal sectors of the economy, children of informal sector workers tend to be more strongly represented in employment than children of formal sector workers. Other factors are important in explaining this correlation, of course, including the typically higher household income of formal sector workers, providing less need for their children to work.

Various studies in South Asia stress the complexity of factors conditioning children's work. Although poverty is a crucial cause, and child labour tends to be greater in agrarian contexts, when poverty levels are controlled, wide variations in child labour can still be observed, even when only agrarian contexts are considered. A recent study concluded: "…while child labour may indeed be high in agrarian contexts, it declines with rising levels of development. …Within villages, the relationship between child labour and household wealth (land and other assets) tends to vary according to overall development and the resulting structure of local opportunities, positively in poorer villages and negatively in more developed ones. Child labour is likely to be higher among wealthier, land-owning households in more traditional, agrarian contexts with few links to the wider economy; it tends to be lower among the better off in situations of modernized agriculture and diversified livelihoods."[14] Reduction of child labour in land-owning households in traditional agrarian contexts could well require changes in agricultural techniques, as well as in educational curricula and in the school calendar.

Another important issue — one that is highly relevant for the role of schooling in reducing child labour — is the hours typically worked by children, and the regularity of their employment. For example, in Pakistan, among working children aged 5–14, 46 per cent worked more than 35 hours a week, or a full working week, 16 per cent worked 25–34 hours, 20 per cent 15–24 hours, and the remaining 18 per cent worked less than

[14] N. Kabeer: *Deprivation, discrimination and delivery: competing explanations for child labour and educational failure in South Asia*, Working Paper No. 135, (Sussex, Institute of Development Studies, 2001). p. 12.

15 hours. [15] This last group, in particular, had some potential to combine school with work, depending on whether their work schedule was consistent with going to school. In Malaysia, where housework was also included in work, the average hours of work for 7–9 year old children who worked was about 7 for Chinese and Indian girls, but only 3 for Chinese and Indian boys.

Hours of work were less for Malays. At ages 10–14, at which age almost all girls worked and about two thirds of boys, these hours increased to about 13 for girls and 8 for boys.[16] Almost all these children were also in school. In other words, when housework is included as work, the great majority of children aged 10–14 in Malaysia are both in school and working — but their hours of work, on average, are not very long.

[15] ILO: *Child Labour: Targeting the Intolerable,* op. cit., Table 3.

[16] D. De Tray: "Children's work activities in Malaysia" in *Population and Development Review*, 1983, Vol. 9, No. 3, Table 2.

4 School dropout and child labour

Often it is household poverty that leads children to drop out of school and to enter the labour force. Even when schooling is "free", typically some kind of fee charges are made, but more importantly, other costs including transport, school uniforms, snacks, payment for books, etc. mount up and place education beyond the reach of children from poor households. In one study in Eastern Indonesia, lack of money was the reason given by half to two thirds of all children who failed to continue in school[17], and other reasons given sometimes disguised what was really a poverty reason. Other Indonesian studies confirm this finding.

The withdrawal of a child from school is often precipitated by a crisis in the household. A household member may experience an illness requiring significant payments. If it was the child in question who became sick, the problem is not only medical costs but also the problem of catching up with missed schooling. The father may lose his job, or suddenly desert the family. In such cases, some households will ask for help from extended family members, or borrow money. Others will bow to circumstances and withdraw a child from school, particularly if they are already under pressure from the school for late fee payments.[18] Indian studies also stress the role of child work as a buffer in times of crisis: the desertion, illness or death of the father or the main breadwinner; loss of household livelihoods in the aftermath of floods or other crises.[19]

It is important to distinguish between dropping out of school because the family cannot afford the costs of education, and dropping out because the family needs the child to work. Children who drop out of school will not necessarily enter the labour force. Indeed, in one study in Eastern Indonesia, the initial assumption that compulsory schooling at the lower secondary level would not work because parents would need their children to work had to be discarded. It was found that economic activities did not draw children away from school because there were very few economic activities that the children could undertake. What drew them away from school was simply the inability of poor families to afford the costs of schooling.[20] Paradoxically, those households that had home enterprises able to absorb the labour of children were usually of higher socio-economic standing and therefore more able to pay the costs of schooling. A similar finding is recorded in a Kenyan study, which cites poor performance in school and inability to pay school expenses, rather than labour market opportunities for school-age children, as the most common reasons for dropping out of school.[21]

These studies in Indonesia and Kenya are not unique. Survey data commonly show

[17] Daliyo, et al.: *Child Labour and Educational Planning in Nusa Tenggara Barat and Nusa Tenggara Timur*, (Jakarta, Australian National University PPT-LIPI and Demography Program, 1999), Table 4.4.

[18] Central Independent Monitoring Unit of the Scholarships and Grants Program: *The effects of the scholarship program at the household level*, (Jakarta, Warta CIMU,2001), p.9.

[19] K. Mathur and P. Bhargava: *Child Labour in the Home-based Industries in the Wake of Legislation. Gem Polishing Industry of Jaipur*, (Jaipur, Institute of Development Studies, 2000) and S.L Bissell: *Manufacturing childhood: the lives and livelihoods of children in Dhaka's slums*, PhD dissertation, Key Centre for Women's Health in Society, (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 2000).

[20] Daliyo et al.: op. cit.

[21] C. Buchmann: "Family structure, parental perceptions, and child labor in Kenya: what factors determine who is enrolled in school?", in *Social Forces*, 2000, 78(4), p. 1379.

that a substantial fraction of children neither attend school nor participate in work outside the home. Many of them may be engaged in household work. But frequently they are idle because there are no reasonable work opportunities, and at the same time, parents cannot send them to school either because of a lack of resources. "If school is incorrectly thought of as the only alternative to work, a policy that reduces child work … may simply increase the pool of idle children …".[22]

[22] P. Deb and F. C. Rosati: *Determinants of child labor and school attendance: the role of household unobservables*, paper presented at the Conference on the Economics of Child Labour, Oslo, 28-29 May 2002, (Oslo, 2002), p. 3

5 To what extent are schooling and work combined by children?

The idea that schooling and work are mutually exclusive activities for children is erroneous. Unfortunately, censuses and labour force surveys frequently "define away" the possibility of schoolchildren working, by requiring people to be recorded in their "principal activity", which precludes their being recorded as both working and going to school. In other cases, although the respondent can indicate more than one activity (e.g. in the Indonesian labour force surveys, the respondent can fill both boxes 'working' and 'attending school'), they are required to indicate which activity is the principal activity, and only this activity is tabulated.

There is another way in which many censuses and surveys 'define away' the possibility of children working: this is by collecting information on work only for the population aged 15 years and above. Or again, as in the case of the Indonesian labour force survey, the information on work is collected for the population aged 10 and above, but it is published only for the population aged 15 and above. In short, in this case, as in many others, less use is made of information collected on aspects of children's work and the way it is combined with schooling than is actually possible.

In actual fact, many school-going children in developing countries also do some productive work, not to mention housework. This is eminently possible because the school year and the school day are often quite short (and frequently exaggerated by official statistics). Double shifts in primary schools are common in developing countries, especially in urban areas, and the length of the school day rarely exceeds four hours in the double shift situation. In Bangladesh, public primary schools are open about 120 days a year and the school day is 3–4 hours of class time.[23] In Vietnam, the mean number of hours in school per week varies between 16.4 in grade 2 and 23.2 in grade 9.[24] If there are five days in the school week, this implies a range of less than four hours to almost five hours per day, and somewhat less if the school week consists of six days.

Evidence from around the world indicates that school is not full time, with the average school year in both developed and developing countries around 200 days and 1,000 hours.[25] Even recognizing that some children have to spend time travelling to school, there are plenty of non-school days, and plenty of hours in school days, left over for work if such work is available and desired.

Unfortunately, the available data on combination of schooling and work come in many forms, so that comparability is difficult to achieve. What we would really like to know is:

- What proportion of children are both working and in school?
- What proportion of working children also go to school?

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[23] M. Ravallion and Q. Wodon: "Does child labour displace schooling? Evidence on behavioural responses to an enrollment subsidy", in *Economic Journal*, March 2000, vol. 110, C160.

[24] State Planning Committee, General Statistical Office: *Vietnam Living Standards Survey, 1992/93*, (Hanoi, General Statistical Office, 1993).

[25] J-W. Lee and R.J. Barro: *Schooling quality in a cross-section of countries*, Development Discussion Paper No. 659, (Cambridge, Harvard University, Institute for International Development, 1998).

- What proportion of children in school also work?
- How does working affect the academic performance of school children?

5.1 What proportion of children are both working and in school?

In urban Mexico, survey results show that 21 per cent of youth aged 12 to 17 concurrently attend school and work.[26] One study in India[27] showed that among boys aged 6–15, 38 per cent attended school but did not work, while 26 per cent attended school and worked.

Among girls, the comparable proportions were 34 per cent and 17 per cent. Pakistani data show much lower proportions of 10–14 year old children combining school and work: tiny proportions in urban areas, rising to 7.5 per cent of boys in rural areas.[28] These are only a tiny proportion of all those in school. One reason for this may be that because of Pakistan's low educational enrolment ratios, by ages 10–14 those in school tend to be the children of the better off, who do not need their children to work.

In Cambodia, because of the low proportion of children recorded as working, only 6 per cent of boys and 5 per cent of girls aged 10–14 are both working and in school (Table 2).

Table 2: Cambodia 1999: workforce participation of children, and percentage of working and non-working children who attended school*

	Percentage working	Percentage attending school among:		Percentage of all children who are both working and in school
		Working children	Non-working children	
Boys 5-9	3	50	47	1.5
Girls 5-9	2	66	47	1.2
Boys 10-13	10	59	86	5.9
Girls 10-13	9	54	85	4.9

*Part-time or full-time

Source: Computed from Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 1999

[26] Levison, Moe and Knaul 1999, op.cit.

[27] B.M Dinesh: *Economic Activities of Children: Dimensions Causes and Consequences*, (Delhi: Daya Publishing House, 1988), Table 6.2.

[28] V. L. Durrant: *Adolescent Girls and Boys in Pakistan: Opportunities and Constraints in the Transition to Adulthood*, Research Report No. 12, (Karachi: The Population Council, 2000), Figure 7.2.

5.2 What proportion of working children also go to school?

Another way of looking at the evidence is to examine the proportion of working children who attend school. The ILO's latest estimates on child labour indicate that close to half of all working children are also enrolled in school. Surveys of working children in Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru find that the great majority attends school.[29]

In rural Ghana and Ivory Coast, approximately 70 per cent of working children aged approximately 7–14 also attend school.[30]

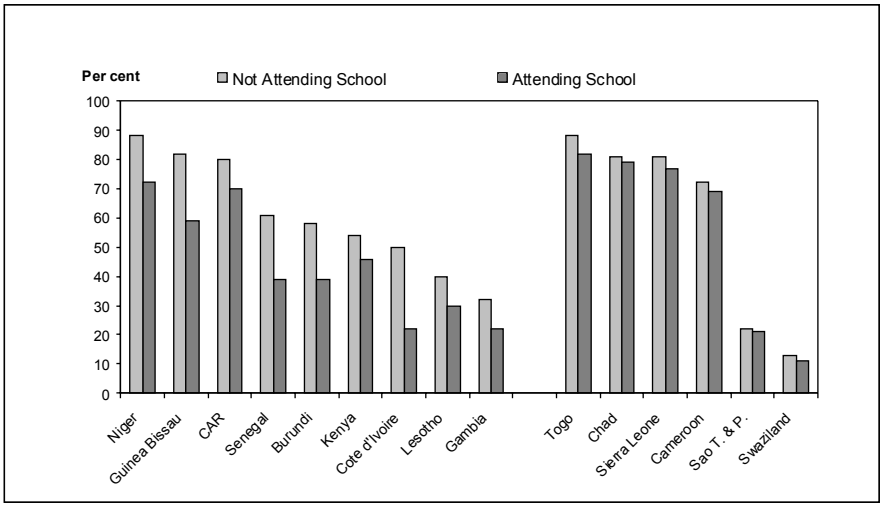
5.3 What proportion of children in school also work?

Figure 1 shows the situation in a number of African countries. Among school-going children aged 10–14, the proportion who are also working ranges from less than 20 per cent in Swaziland to approximately 80 per cent in Togo. But in the majority of the countries included, the proportion of school-going children who work ranges between 40 per cent and 80 per cent. The proportion of non-school-going children who work is higher. In most cases it is not enormously higher, but in Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal and Burundi the differences are more striking, particularly in the urban areas (data not shown), where Kenya, too, shows very wide differences.

[29] M. Binder and D. Scrogin: "Labor force participation and household work of urban schoolchildren in Mexico: characteristics and consequences", in *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 1999, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 123.

[30] Anker: op. cit., p. 20.

Figure 1: Child work among children 10-14 years of age by school attendance in Sub-Saharan Africa



Source: UNICEF End Decade Databases

Table 3, from a study in rural Karnataka, India, is revealing, although unfortunately it presents the data in averages, without detailing the proportion of school-going children who do not do any productive work. In this study, school-going boys on average spend more time on schooling than on household or productive work, but nevertheless, these kinds of work combined occupy more than half as much time as schooling does. For school-going girls, household and productive work combined also occupy more than half the time that schooling does. The key difference between school-going boys and girls is that directly productive work occupies a greater time than housework for boys, whereas for girls, housework occupies a considerably greater time than directly productive work.

The other key point to emerge from Table 3 is that non-school-going boys and girls spend a somewhat longer time on household and productive work combined than school-going boys and girls spend on household work, productive work and schooling combined. They spend four or five times as much time on directly productive work as do school-going boys and girls.

Data for Cambodia are also of considerable interest (see Table 2). According to the definitions of work used, only a very small proportion of boys and girls aged 5–9 are working, but in the age group 10–13, the proportion working rises to 10 per cent and 9 per cent respectively.[31] In this age group, for both boys and girls, a much higher proportion of the non-working children are in school, but more than half the working children are also in school.

An infinite range of situations can be observed where schooling and work are combined by young children. In Malaysia, a study of children employed in eating stalls showed that some of them came home from school, did their homework and had a meal and then went on their bicycles to the family foodstall,

[31] Interestingly, the percentage attending school among children aged 10-13 is higher than among those aged 5-9, suggesting considerable late entry, since the official age to enter school is six.

where they would work until 8 or 9 p.m.[32] During weekends and holidays, they would spend longer at the foodstalls. Some other children worked from 5 to 7 hours at the foodstall every day. They either completed their homework in school or just after school and spent very little time at it. These kinds of working hours clearly put great strain on their ability to perform well in school.

In small family enterprises, be they family farms in rural areas or family shops or foodstalls in urban areas, a pattern whereby schoolchildren help out outside of school hours is very common. The father may be the proprietor of the shop, assisted by the mother part of the time and by the child or children outside of school hours. The work may not be very intense, and sometimes serving in the shop can be combined with doing homework in slack periods.

Table 3: Average time input in hours per day of school-going and non-school-going children in different work activities by age and sex, rural Karnataka, India

	Per cent in school	School going children			Non-school going children	
		Household work	Directly productive work	Schooling	Household work	Directly productive work
Boys						
5-7	78	0.70	0.62	3.16	2.04	1.58
8-9	74	0.64	1.58	3.35	1.76	3.95
10-11	63	0.84	1.25	4.00	1.15	5.61
12-14	40	0.93	1.68	4.20	1.03	6.34
5-14	66	0.74	1.16	3.52	1.41	4.71
Girls						
5-7	59	1.16	0.36	3.08	2.60	0.85
8-9	56	1.57	0.52	3.46	2.71	3.01
10-11	39	1.95	0.74	4.04	3.43	3.06
12-14	23	2.18	0.57	3.94	3.97	4.08
5-14	46	1.52	0.50	3.45	3.27	2.81

Source: R. Kanbargi and P.M. Kulkarni "Child work, schooling and fertility in rural Karnataka, India", in R. Kanbargi (ed), *Child Labour in the Indian Subcontinent: Dimensions and Implications*, Delhi: Sage Publications, 1991) , Table 8.3.

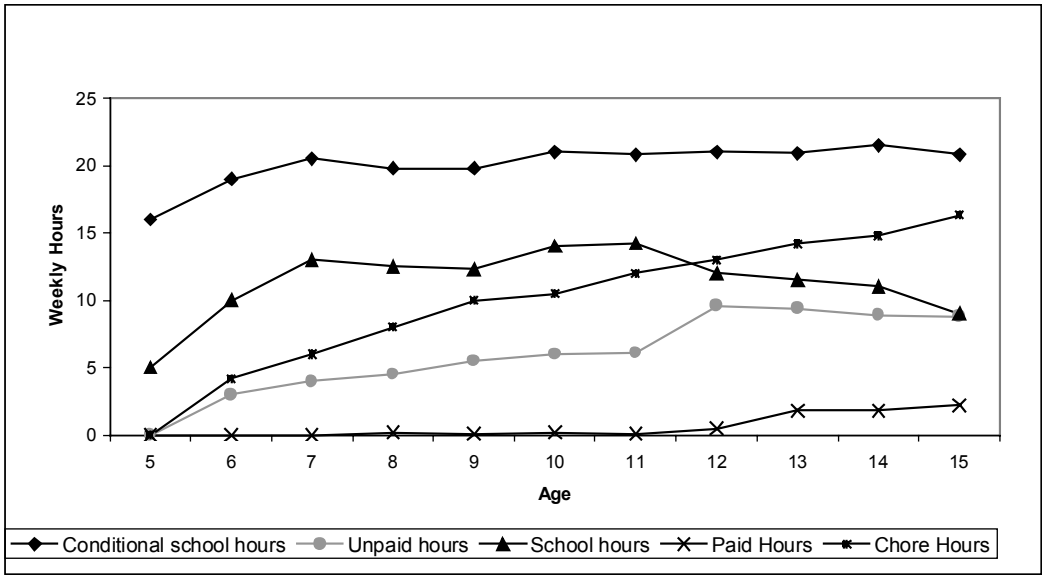
[32] M. George: "Children and employment in Peninsular Malaysia", in K.S Jomo. (ed.), *Child Labour in Malaysia*, (Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Institute for Advanced Studies, 1992), pp. 36-37.

The above brief review of evidence on combination of work and schooling by children raises a number of issues. One is the scarcity of data suitable for analysing combination of schooling and working. Another is the lack of information on another important aspect of children's work —i.e. work on household activities such as cleaning, fetching water and cooking. Such activities can be very light, without much effect on children's concentration in school, or in some circumstances, they may constitute quite heavy work, with long hours. Much better information is needed on the whole range of children's work activities, including housework, if its relationship to schooling and school performance is to be assessed.

A study in Peru raises the possibility that household work, as opposed to labour market work, is a primary deterrent to schooling for adolescent girls. This conclusion is based on the data presented in Figure 2, which shows the average weekly hours that all girls aged 5–15 spend in school, in paid work, in unpaid work, and in doing chores. It also shows average weekly hours in school for only those girls who attend school, labelled "conditional school hours". Time spent in all three categories of work increases fairly steadily with age, while school hours increase, then decrease as girls drop out. But whereas girls spend very little time in paid work, and only 5 to 10 hours on average in unpaid work, they are spending quite a few hours per week in household chores; even 6 year-olds do almost 5 hours per week, and by age 13 the figure is up over 15 hours a week.[33]

[33] D. Levison and K. S. Moe, "Household Work as a Deterrent to Schooling: an Analysis of Adolescent Girls in Peru", in *Journal of Developing Areas*, 1998, pp. 342-343.

Figure 2: Weekly hours of activity, girls 5 – 15, Peru 1985



Source: D. Levison, and K.S. Moe: "Household work as a deterrent to schooling: an analysis of adolescent girls in Peru", in Journal of Developing Areas, (1998), Vol. 32, Fig. 2.

5.4 Effect of child labour on school performance

There is not a great deal of information about the effect of child labour on school performance, and the few available studies are of limited value because of their use of proxies for school achievement that are not fully satisfactory, their failure to include household work in the equation and in most cases, a failure to take account of hours worked.

One study in Kebumen regency in Java, Indonesia, showed that work either within or outside the household had a negative influence on the success of children's studies.[34] Another study in Eastern Indonesia, admittedly dealing with older youth nearing the end of upper secondary education, found an adverse effect on school performance among those from isolated rural areas who worked as glorified domestic servants in households in the town in order to complete their education.[35]

A study in Lima, Peru, found that of children who combined school and work, only one third thought that working had a bad effect on their schooling, although this conclusion seemed questionable, given the long hours worked by most of these children and the additional travel time for some of them. The study found that children working in largely home-based occupations, like domestics and shop and restaurant workers, had higher

[34]Soeyatno: "Pengaruh pekerjaan anak di rumah dan di luar rumah, waktu usia sekolah terhadap keberhasilan pada akhir program studi di Kabupaten Kebumen", in Elly Yulia and Rina Sufiani Saari (eds), *Rangkuman Laporan Penelitian tentang Anak Indonesia, Suplemen 2*, (Jakarta, PDII-LIPI and UNICEF, 1985).

[35] G. W. Jones et al.: "Issues in the expansion of high school education in poor regions: the case of East Nusatenggara, Indonesia", in *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 1997, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 59-84.

attendance rates than those working outside the home at fixed locations such as market stalls and building sites.[36]

Econometric studies appear to show children's work adversely affecting school performance[37], and one claims to show that the adverse effect is strongly correlated with hours of work.[38] However, the proxy for school performance in this study is whether the age of the student is higher than the age by which they should have graduated from the level of education in which they are enrolled. This is interpreted to indicate repetition of grades, but it could well reflect late entry, which would have very different implications.

[36] J. Boyden: "Working children in Lima, Peru", in William E. Myers (ed.), *Protecting Working Children*, (London, Zed Books, 1991), pp. 29-30.

[37] G. Psacharopoulos: "Child labour versus educational attainment: some evidence from Latin America", in *Journal of Population Economics,* 1997, vol. 10, pp. 377-386 and C. Heady: *What is the effect of child labour on learning achievement? Evidence from Ghana*, Innocenti Working Paper No. 79, (Florence, UNICEF, 2000),

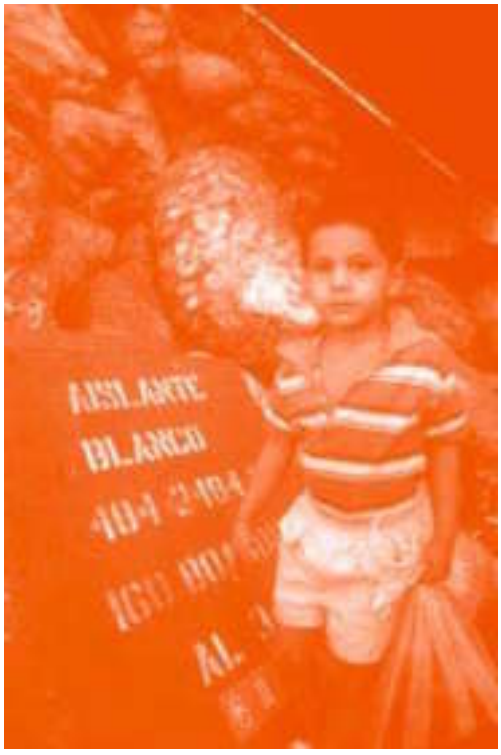
[38] F. C. Rosati and M. Rossi: *Children's working hours, school enrolment and human capital accumulation: Evidence from Pakistan and Nicaragua,* paper presented at Conference on the Economics of Child Labor, Oslo, 28-29 May, 2001, (Oslo, 2001).

6 Poverty and the worst forms of child labour

The kinds of activities described by Convention No. 182 as constituting the worst forms of child labour were listed in Section 1. Clearly defined are the "*unconditional worst forms*" (the first three groups in the list). In contrast, the criteria for deciding whether work is likely to "harm the health, safety or morals of children" are less clear-cut. Recommendation No. 190 that accompanies Convention 182 mentions a number of these, including: unhealthy environments; exposure to hazardous substances and agents; heavy loads; dangerous machinery, equipment or tools; work in unacceptable places, such as under water, underground, at heights and in confined space; work in particularly difficult conditions, such as at night, for long hours, or involving unreasonable confinement on an employer's premises.

It is often argued that poverty leads to exploitative child labour. Although it is true that exploitative child labour flourishes in situations of extreme poverty and breakdown of the social fabric through civil war and militia recruitment, it is hard to sustain the argument that poverty *causes* exploitative child labour. In some very poor societies, such exploitation does not exist, whereas some exploitative forms occur in reasonably well-off societies. For example, child pornography takes place in wealthy as well as poor societies. In a number of countries, certain regions are known to supply a high proportion of young girls recruited – and sometimes sold by parents – to the sex trade. These regions are poor, but the question remains: why do parents here sell daughters to the sex trade, whereas in other, equally poor regions, they do not? Similarly, use of children in armed conflict frequently results from total breakdown of government, rather than poverty per se. Again, children's compulsory labour because of debt bondage and serfdom is certainly related to poverty, but in the context of particular political, social and institutional structures. Until the political, social and institutional structures are changed, reducing poverty should help to reduce child exploitation, but will certainly not eliminate it.

It needs to be noted that in circumstances where poor families depend on their children's work for survival, it may not be sufficient to ban child labour in work considered hazardous or too hard for children, as this can result in the transfer of these children into work that is worse for them than the work originally undertaken. Bans on hazardous or hard work for children will only really work if accompanied by special efforts to enhance adult incomes for poor families, make appropriate education more readily available, and in many cases make light work also available.



7 Progress towards universal basic education

7.1 Basic education and compulsory education

In most developing countries, basic education has generally been considered to mean primary schooling, which in most cases continued for 6 years, starting at age 6 or (sometimes) 5 or 7.[39]

In those parts of the world where universal primary school education has been attained, the goals for many have shifted up, with the aim of providing 9 years' basic education. Basic education is often declared compulsory. In many countries, however, compulsory education is unenforceable, because of the lack of sufficient school places or teachers to accommodate all potential students in the relevant ages. Countries differ in the extent of realism in their declarations about compulsory education. For example, Bangladesh has modest goals of enforcing compulsory education between ages 5 and 10. On the other hand, many African countries declare education compulsory up to age 13 or 14 – often, an unenforceable rule because of the lack of school places. Both Indonesia and Thailand have extended the period of compulsory education to 9 years, but in both countries, this is unenforceable. Interestingly, the Philippines, which has higher school enrolment ratios than either Indonesia or Thailand, makes education compulsory only between ages 6 and 12. This is more realistic, and the Philippines can probably enforce compulsory education between these ages. Given that the cut-off age for child labour is 15, we need to be clear about the levels in the school system that are relevant for children in the ages up to 15. Given that the duration of primary school in most countries is six years, and the entry age in most countries is 6, then if all children enter at the correct age, and there is no repetition of grades, these children would complete primary school at the age of 12. Then in most countries, lower secondary schooling is provided for three years, which would take the student to age 15 if there were no repetition.

The real-world situation differs from this model to a considerable extent. Particularly in the poorer countries, there is often delayed entry into school, and considerable repetition of grades. Consequently, many students are well beyond the age of 12 when they complete primary school.[40] In reality, then, primary school is the key level of schooling relevant to the elimination of child labour, together with the first two grades of lower secondary school.

7.2 Progress towards achieving universal primary education

The goals of major UNESCO meetings such as the Karachi Plan and the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 emphasized the attainment of universal basic education (meaning primary school

[39] UNESCO: *Statistical Yearbook 1999*, (Paris, UNESCO, 1999), Table 11.1.

[40] For example, in Thailand, 45 per cent of students aged 12-14 (the official ages for lower secondary school) were still in primary school. And yet Thailand's problem of over-age pupils is probably less severe than in many other countries. The slow pace of completing primary school is the main reason for the prevalence of gross primary school enrollment ratios well over 100 in many developing countries. The gross ratio applies the numbers of primary school pupils to the age group designated for this level of education. If there is considerable repetition, many primary school pupils are over the official completion age, but they remain in the numerator for calculating the rate.

education) for all children. In the case of the Jomtien conference, the target date was set at 2000. This target was not reached. Considerable progress has been made towards achieving universal primary school education in recent decades (see Table 4)[41], though in important regions of the world – notably Africa and South Asia – universal primary education still remains a distant dream. The decline even in the gross primary school enrolment ratio in Africa between 1980 and 1990 was particularly disturbing. At the individual country level, disappointing results were achieved in a number of countries. For example, the gross primary school enrolment ratio in Pakistan crept up from 40 in 1965 to 44 in 1986; in Bangladesh from 49 to 60; in Somalia from 10 to 20; in Senegal from 40 to 55. In Ghana it had fallen from 69 to 63.

A major problem in primary schooling is the low primary school completion rates in many countries.[42] Although percentages of children entering grade 1 are lowest in Africa, retention rates are particularly low in South Asia and South America, so that in all three of these regions, the proportion of primary school-aged children reaching grade 5 is about half.[43] This means that, despite gross primary school enrolment ratios which exceed 100 in many of these countries, and thus give the impression that universal primary school education has been reached, universal completion of primary school education is far from being reached. In 1995, only 47 per cent of children beginning primary school in Bangladesh, 62 per cent in India, and 75 per cent in Indonesia, completed their primary education.

[41] Interpretation of Table 4 requires some caution, because the figures rely on official reports supplied by governments, and these differ according to the time of the school year when the data on enrollments are collected, the degree of accuracy in reporting, and the number of days and hours per day that primary school pupils are actually in school in different educational systems. (See G. W. Jones: "Global human development: the education agenda", in *Facts and Fancies of Human Development*, Occasional Paper Series 1/2000, (Canberra, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, 2000), pp. 100-119); and for India specifically, M. Weiner: op. cit., p. 8)

[42] World Bank: *Priorities and Strategies for Education: A World Bank Review*, (Washington, DC, The World Bank, 1995), p. 41.

[43] ibid., pp. 41-42.

Table 4: Trends in Gross Enrolment Ratios, 1960-1997

		Adjusted gross enrolment ratios (%)*		
Region	**Year**	**First level**	**Second level**	**Third level**
Developed countries	1960	106	55	14
	1970	99	76	26
	1980	101	89	36
	1990	101	94	44
	1997	103	100	52
Developing countries	1960	60	13	2.0
	1970	81	23	2.9
	1980	95	35	5.2
	1990	99	42	7.1
	1997	102	52	10.3
Africa	1960	44	5	0.7
	1970	56	10	1.6
	1980	80	22	3.7
	1990	78	30	5.1
	1997	81	34	6.9
Latin America	1960	73	14	3.0
	1970	106	27	6.3
	1980	104	44	13.7
	1990	105	51	16.8
	1997	114	62	19.4
South Asia	1960	62	15	2.2
	1970	70	23	4.1
	1980	76	28	4.3
	1990	90	40	5.7
	1997	95	45	7.2
Eastern Asia	1970	91	25	1.4
	1980	110	44	3.8
	1990	118	47	5.9
	1997	118	66	10.8

*Adjusted for country differences in the length and official age span of elementary schooling Source: UNESCO: Statistical Yearbook 1983 (Paris, UNESCO, 1983) and Statistical Yearbook 1999 (Paris, UNESCO, 1999).

7.3 Progress in lower secondary schooling

Lower secondary school is crucial for the elimination of child labour, because it covers the ages where the incentive for children to be in the workforce is strongest. As noted above, in most school systems, if children enter school at the designated age and progress without hindrance, they will enter lower secondary school at the age of 12, and graduate from this level at age 15. In actual fact, many students do not enter secondary school until age 13 or 14, but whether they enter at 12, 13 or 14, these are the years in which children's value as labour is much greater than at earlier ages, because of their greater physical strength, their greater maturity and the additional knowledge they have acquired.

However, the enrolment ratios at the lower secondary level are considerably lower than at the primary level, and the transition point from primary to lower secondary school is the point at which there is normally considerable dropout from the school system. There are multiple reasons for this:

- Costs per pupil year at this level are normally higher for the family (often by a factor of three) than at the primary level. Therefore poor families often cannot afford to pay the monetary costs involved.
- The opportunity cost of keeping children in school at this level is normally higher because of the greater potential for the child to be a productive member of the labour force at this age.
- Frequently, there are simply not enough school places available to absorb all the potential pupils, should they all wish to be enrolled.

There are basic philosophical issues about declaring education at this level to be compulsory if some parents are too poor to pay the costs involved. At the very least, it would appear incumbent on governments declaring education at this level to be compulsory to ensure that fees are not charged at this level, or that poor families are subsidized to keep their children in school.

How can children be expected to stay in school at this level if the quality of the education offered is very poor and the returns to their education are likely to be low? Such issues are particularly relevant to children of poor parents, because typically the schools their children can attend are of very poor quality, and their labour market returns after leaving school are likely to be lower than average, both because they have learned less and because of discrimination in the labour market.

What has been the record of expansion of lower secondary education in recent years? Basically, it has been rather disappointing. The international statistical base lumps lower and upper secondary education into the one category, but it can be expected that the countries with only modest increases in secondary education as a whole generally had only modest increases in lower secondary education. "In countries with a secondary gross enrolment ratio (GER) of less than 40 per cent, participation rates have not increased significantly over the last decade; in countries with secondary GERs between 40 per cent and 70 per cent, the average GER has increased from 49 per cent to only 56 per cent".[44] As populations have continued to grow, the absolute number of those without access to secondary schools has increased, especially in the poorest developing countries.

[44] K. Lewin and F. Caillods: *Financing Secondary Education in Developing Countries*, (Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 2001), p. 5.

7.4 Special issues for girls' education

Special attention has been paid over the past decade to the need to raise educational enrolment rates for girls. There are two main reasons for this emphasis. First, in some regions of the world, enrolment rates of girls are well below those of boys, even in primary school and especially so at higher levels of education. Secondly, in addition to the natural justice argument for making education equally accessible to boys and girls, an accumulating weight of evidence shows that educating girls has important developmental spin-offs. As Schultz observes, not only are the market returns to women's education at least as high as those to men's education, but women's education is also likely to bring important social externalities in fertility, nutrition, and children's health and schooling.[45]

Actually, in some regions of the world, there is little difference in enrolment ratios between girls and boys at primary and lower secondary levels.[46] But in others – notably where the incidence of child labour is high, such as South Asia and parts of Africa – girls are discriminated against even at the ages of elementary education.

In relation to the topic of the current report, the particular disadvantage faced by girls in accessing elementary education is important to bear in mind, because, as will be pointed out below, the kinds of work engaged in by girl children differ from those engaged in by boy children, and elimination or reduction of child labour among girls may require some differences in approach from those required to address the labour of boys.

7.5 "Education for all" targets of UNESCO

The World Conference on Education for All considered basic education to be education that fulfils the basic learning needs of all – children at primary school level, youth who are out of school and adults requiring lifelong basic education support. Such education can be provided through a variety of delivery systems – formal primary schooling, non-formal/alternative schooling for those with limited or no access to formal schooling, literacy programmes and skills/apprenticeship training schemes. These basic learning needs "comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions and to continue learning".[47] Children who are out of school for a variety of reasons need flexible educational arrangements to meet their basic learning needs.

Basic education is seen as empowering the poor if a number of conditions are fulfilled. First, a broad and functional view of education should be taken, covering the entire spectrum of activities and processes that govern the life of the community. Secondly, basic education programs should evolve from the developmental needs of the community as an integral component of overall community development. Thirdly, basic education can be effective in combating poverty to the extent it is supported by and works in a

[45] T. P. Schultz: "Returns to women's education", in Elizabeth King and M. Anne Hill (eds.), *Women's Education in Developing Countries: Barriers, Benefits and Policies*, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), p. 84.

[46] J. Knodel and G. W. Jones: "Post-Cairo population policy: Does promoting girls' schooling miss the mark?" in *Population and Development Review*, 1996, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 683-702.

[47] UNESCO:*Basic Education for Empowerment of the Poor*, (Bangkok: UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, 1998), p. 11.

synergistic alliance with other social, economic, cultural, political interventions.[48] Finally, educational functionaries and front-line workers should go beyond their traditional roles and function as development agents working in cooperation with other actors in the community as partners in a common cause.

7.6 Quality concerns: it is quality basic education that counts

Far too little attention has been paid to educational quality in discussions of educational planning and basic education targets. Though there are considerable problems in finding appropriate measures of educational quality[49], the evidence is overwhelming that the quality of education tends to be worst in rural, especially isolated rural areas.[50] Schools in some poor countries, especially those in isolated rural areas and in urban slums, are often extraordinarily bad. Buildings are ramshackle and often hazardous; teachers are poorly trained, badly paid, lacking even rudimentary teaching aids, and poorly motivated; toilet facilities and water supply may be lacking, so that children have to relieve themselves in nearby fields or streams; and education may consist almost entirely of rote learning. Such is the faith of uneducated parents in education that even such conditions, by themselves, do not often cause the withdrawal of children from school, but over time, especially if the education does not appear to help in finding jobs, parents will become loath to continue their children in school, especially in view of the costs involved.

These conditions especially count against continued education for girls. The lack of toilet facilities, the distance that must be travelled to school, and fear of abusive teachers or harassment by teachers or fellow pupils, affect girls more than boys, because parents tend to be more protective of girls and more worried about physical or moral dangers to them. Thus poor quality schools are likely to be correlated with poorer attendance by girls than by boys.

In such circumstances, it would be naïve to think that making education compulsory would by itself ensure that all children stayed in school. In general, children will attend school only if parents are convinced that schooling will benefit them, especially if parents are dependent on their children's economic contribution.[51]

[48] ibid., p.16.

[49] Some of the indicators frequently used include levels of education of the teaching force, pupil-teacher ratios, absenteeism of pupils and teachers, and pupil performance in tests of various kinds. Relevance of the curriculum to students is undoubtedly an important aspect of educational quality, but difficult to measure.

[50] World Bank: op. cit.

[51] H. Brasted and D. Wright, 1996, "Why worry about child labour?", in *Asian Studies Review*, 1996, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 53-58; and M. Black: *Street and Working Children: Innocenti Global Seminar Summary Report*, (Florence, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 1993), p. 13.

8 Reasons for non-achievement of the educational goals

Why have the educational goals set for the world not been reached? There is no single reason, but a set of interrelated reasons, including demographic factors, poverty, lack of priority to education by governments, and inappropriate mix of government educational expenditures. Many of the countries that have performed most poorly have been racked by civil wars or ethnic unrest.

First, it is worth examining Table 5, which shows the characteristics of countries falling within different categories of GER at the secondary level. This table shows that low secondary enrolment ratios are found in the poorest countries, which are less urbanized and have much higher average population growth rates than the other countries. A correlate of these high population growth rates (which stem from high fertility levels) is a high youth dependency ratio (population aged 0–14 compared with the total population).

Another important characteristic of the countries with very low secondary GER is that their ratio of unit costs at secondary level to unit costs at primary level is 3.5, whereas it is less than 2 for all other groups of countries. Unless the relatively high unit costs of secondary education can be lowered in the countries with very low GER, their prospects for raising enrolment ratios quickly are not promising.

Table 5: Characteristics of countries grouped by levels of secondary Gross Enrolment Ratios

	GNP per capita ($PPP) 1995	Population growth rate (%) 1995	0-14 year dependency ratio 1985 (%)	0-14 year dependency ratio 1995 (%)	% of population urban 1995	Ratio of unit costs at secondary to primary 1995
Very low GER	1,680	2.88	86	83	32	3.5
Low GER	5,792	2.12	72	64	53	1.8
Middle GER	7,802	1.18	48	43	68	1.5
High GER	15,881	0.81	38	34	73	1.3

Note: Very low GER: 7 to 40 per cent; low GER: 41 to 70 per cent; middle GER: 71 to 90 per cent; high GER: above 90 per cent.

Source: K. Lewin and F. Caillods: *Financing Secondary Education in Developing Countries*, (Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 2001) , Tables 2.2 and 2.6.

8.1 The demographic obstacle

Countries with high fertility rates, which lead both to high overall population growth rates, high proportions of the population in the school-going age groups, and high rates of growth of the school-age population, face a much tougher task in increasing school enrolment ratios than do countries with low fertility rates.[52] It is therefore not surprising that such countries, where the demographic structure is least favourable to educational development, tend to have the least developed educational systems. An example, based on the situation in Pakistan and Thailand, will illustrate the problem.

Pakistan's birth rate in 1995-2000 was approximately 38 births per 1000 population compared with 20 in Thailand, and the rate of population growth was 2.7 per cent per year compared with 1.3 per cent per year. Thailand has achieved universal primary school education, and made considerable advances through the 1990s in raising secondary school enrolment ratios. Pakistan was still far from its stated goal of universal primary education for all children, but a pattern of educational development is hypothesized in this example that would lead to the attainment of near-universal primary education and significant improvement at secondary education by the year 2020.

In order to isolate the effect of demographic factors on the burden of education in the two countries, let us make the simplifying assumption that we can turn the educational clock back in Thailand, to the extent that Thailand had achieved only the same level of enrolment ratios for the various levels of education in 2000 as Pakistan. Under this assumption, we find that, although the growth in enrolments required in both countries would be considerable just because the rise in enrolment ratios assumed is substantial, the required growth in enrolments in Pakistan would be much faster than in Thailand, simply because of the more rapid growth projected in its school-age population (see Table 6).

But the advantage of Thailand's demographic structure and trends does not end there. The enrolments per potential worker (the population aged 15-64) in 2000 are much higher in Pakistan, because of its unfavourable age structure, and over the 20-year projection period they increase slightly more in Pakistan than in Thailand, because of the greater decline in youth dependency ratios in Thailand (i.e. Thailand's potential labour force is continuing to grow, whereas the school-age population will actually begin to decline). Thailand, then, even if it had only achieved Pakistan's enrolment ratios by 2000, would have been facing a much easier task of raising these enrolment ratios, because of its more favourable demographic structure. And this is without allowing for the fact that Pakistan's workforce faces a greater additional burden in supporting increases in educational enrolment ratios than the last four columns of Table 6 indicate, because of its much lower female labour force participation rate than Thailand.

[52] G. W. Jones: "The Influence of Demographic Variables on Development via their Impact on Education", in A. J. Coale (ed.), *Economic Factors in Population Growth,* (London, Macmillan, 1976).

Table 6: Effect of demographic structure on enrolment trends in Pakistan and Thailand, assuming both countries began with Pakistan's enrolment ratios in 2000

Year	Net enrolment ratio		Primary school enrolments		Lower secondary enrolments		Enrolments per 100 potential workers			
	Prim.	Lower second.	Pakistan	Thailand	Pakistan	Thailand	Primary		Lower second.	
							Pak	Thail	Pak	Thail
2000	70	30	100	100	100	100	21	11	3.9	2.3
2005	75	35	119	111	132	112	21	11	4.5	2.4
2010	80	40	132	119	166	137	20	11	4.9	2.8
2015	85	45	161	120	208	153	22	11	5.3	3.0
2020	90	50	188	121	254	162	22	11	5.7	3.1

Source: Author's calculations, based on medium population projections of UN Population Division.

Most African countries could have been substituted for Pakistan in this example with similar results. The benefits for achieving educational goals of lowering fertility in high-fertility countries are obvious. However, in many African countries, another demographic phenomenon is causing added difficulty for educational planners. This is the high mortality rate resulting from HIV/AIDS. In some Southern African countries, incidence of HIV/AIDS is in excess of 30 per cent of the entire adult population. Since mortality from this disease is highest in the 20-29 year age groups, it is leading to serious depletion of the teaching force. If attrition in this group reaches 3 per cent per year, half will have died within 24 years. This will seriously affect the chances of raising enrolment ratios, quite apart from other likely demographic consequences of the AIDS epidemic, such as short-term rises in dependency ratios and an increase in the proportion of school-age children who are orphans.[53]

8.2 The poverty obstacle

Table 5 showed that countries with low secondary GERs are poor. Two-thirds of them are in Africa. Their poverty holds down school enrolment in two ways. First, poverty limits the budgetary ability of governments to provide sufficient school places for all — or even most — potential secondary students, even if the government gives high priority to education. Secondly, poverty limits the likelihood that a household will be able to afford to keep children in school, even if the places are there. There is abundant evidence that poverty is closely correlated with the incidence of child labour. But, the children of the non-poor seldom work even in very poor countries.[54]

At the household level, the poverty factor in school dropout has been noted in Indonesia. For children in isolated rural areas, transport costs can be a significant deterrent to continuing in school. But there are often a complex of other factors as well, related to poverty: an inability to pay school fees; need for children to work to supplement family income; poor nutrition leading to low levels of concentration in class; more frequent absence from school due to ill-health, and as a result, poor performance in tests.[55]

[53] Lewins and Caillods: op. cit., p. 35.

[54] K. Basu and P. H. Van: "The economics of child labor" in *American Economic Review*, 1998, Vol. 88, No. 3, p. 415.

[55] E. M. Sweeting, and Muchlisoh: *Determinants of Repetition, Dropout, and Transition in Primary and Junior Secondary Schools*, Technical Report No. 18a, Central Program Coordinating Unit (CPCU), (Jakarta, Ministry of Education and Culture, 1998), pp. vii-xi.

Nevertheless, the relationships between work, schooling and poverty are complex, and these relationships need to be untangled before conclusions on the competing nature of these activities are reached.[56]

The poverty and demographic obstacles are unfortunately closely linked. It is precisely in those countries where the demographic obstacle to providing enough school places is greatest that the poverty obstacle is also the greatest. The demographic obstacle not only operates to make it hard to provide enough school places, at a given level of national economic prosperity; it also inhibits the attainment of higher levels of national prosperity. Without wanting to go in detail into what is a very controversial area, it is worth noting that the most reliable cross-country regression studies of experience during the 1960-95 period show that declines in fertility and mortality (which on balance generated declines in population growth rates) contributed positively to economic growth.[57]

8.3 Lack of priority to education by governments

While it is easy for any special interest group to claim that governments are not placing enough attention on their special area of interest, the case can certainly be made that many governments should be devoting a higher proportion of their resources to education than they are. Given the voluminous literature indicating the importance of mass education to human, social and economic development[58] (it can be persuasively argued that countries that have so far failed to provide universal basic education should be devoting a larger share of national budgets to this end. This argument gains extra force in view of the large amounts of resources channelled to military expenditure and self-aggrandisement by ruling elites or lost to waste and corruption in many countries. A recent study shows that, although countries differ widely in the share of GNP devoted to public expenditure on secondary education, there is a fairly strong positive association between this share and the GER at this level of education.[59]

Governments claiming to be serious about wanting to eliminate child labour have a special responsibility to be serious about developing a system of compulsory education. India appears as a paradox in this regard. Although it has been consistently at the forefront of Asian countries in responding to child labour, including legislatively, child labour shows little sign of diminishing. As Weiner (1991) has persuasively argued, there is really not the will in India to insist on

[56] V. L. Durrant: *Adolescent Girls and Boys in Pakistan: Opportunities and Constraints in the Transition to Adulthood*, Research Report No. 12, (Karachi: The Population Council, 2001), p.61.

[57] A. Kelley and R. M. Schmidt: "Economic and demographic Change: A Synthesis of Models, Findings, and Perspectives", in Nancy Birdsall, A. C. Kelley and Steven W. Sinding: *Population Matters: Demographic Change, Economic Growth, and Poverty in the Developing World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2001).

[58] C. Colclough and K. M. Lewin: *Educating All the Children: Strategies for Primary Schooling in the South*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993); Shireen Jejeebhoy: *Women's Education, Autonomy and Reproductive Behaviour: Experience from Developing Countries*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995); Richard Easterlin: "Why isn't the whole world developed?" in *Journal of Economic History*, (1981), Vol. 41, No. 1; G. Ranis et al., "Economic growth and human development", in *World Development*, (2000) Vol. 28, No. 2.

[59] Lewin and Caillods, op. cit., Chart 2.5.

basic education for all because traditions of caste and class inequality — supported by religious ideology and practice — give normative sanction to inequality in this aspect of Indian society as well. Thus basic education has not been made compulsory in any state of India. A recent report found discrimination against scheduled caste settlements in decisions about school location, and a "growing social distance between teachers, who are still disproportionately recruited from the upper castes, and pupils who are increasingly drawn from lower status and caste groups, partly because of the expansion in enrolment rates and partly because better-off parents are increasingly sending their children to private schools".[60]

India is certainly not alone in lacking the political will to insist on compulsory education and everything that goes along with it. There are great differences between governments in the extent to which they are serious about wishing to overcome long-standing social inequalities by creating educational opportunities for all.

Indonesia and Vietnam provide examples of countries where anti-colonial nationalist movements gave the initial impetus for campaigns for universal literacy and basic education. Indonesia was poorly served in terms of education by colonial Dutch rule. On achieving independence, the new government embarked on a programme of achieving literacy through community efforts. It also stressed the development of a basic education system, and primary education expanded rapidly in the 1970s, with the use of some of the windfall gains from the oil price increases to construct and staff primary schools. Universal primary school education was claimed to have been reached around 1983, which was true if by universal education was meant that nearly all children spent at least some time in school, but not if it meant that all children completed primary education, because only 75 per cent of children starting primary school complete the level even now.[61] Nevertheless, based on the relative success in reaching universal primary education, the sights of Indonesia's planners shifted higher, with the goal of extending compulsory education to the lower secondary level by making nine years' education compulsory. However, it is impossible to enforce nine years' education, because there are not yet enough school places at the lower secondary level to accommodate all the potential pupils. The goal is not an unrealistic one, though, particularly in the light of the fertility declines achieved in Indonesia, which mean that the number of children entering the ages of secondary education are no longer increasing.

8.4 Inappropriate mix of public educational expenditures, even where considerable priority is given to education

Given the consensus in the literature about the high returns to primary education, there is clearly too large a proportion of public expenditure on education going to tertiary education in many of the countries where primary and secondary enrolment ratios are low. The unit costs of a primary school place are much lower than those of a tertiary place, so diversion of some of the funds allocated to tertiary education could achieve considerable results in raising primary and secondary school enrolment ratios.

The misallocation of funds to tertiary education is most marked in African countries. Public spending per student in higher education in Africa is about 44 times spending per student in primary school, much higher than in any other

[60] The Probe Team 1999, cited in Kabeer, op. cit.., pp. 20-21.

[61] G. W. Jones and P. Hagul: Schooling in Indonesia: crisis-related and longer-term issues", in *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, (2001) Vol. 37,No. 2, Table 1.

region.[62] Despite the low GER at the primary school level in African countries, which should be providing a strong incentive to devote funds to primary education, the share of tertiary education in public spending on education is higher in Africa than in any other region.[63] In India, from 1951 to 1976, the percentage of the education budget that was allocated for primary education dropped from 43 to 27 per cent.[64]

Countries which spend a high proportion of the education budget on higher education and yet have not succeeded in achieving universal primary education are implicitly indicating that they are not interested in providing equality of opportunity to children to get a start in building their human capital. Unfortunately, quite a number of countries remain in this category. Though many of them are very poor, the evidence from equally poor countries is that they could provide universal primary education if they placed enough importance on this goal.

[62] The comparable figures are 14 times higher in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia, seven times higher in Latin America and the Caribbean, eight times higher in the Middle East and North Africa, and 2.5 times higher in OECD countries (World Bank, 1995: Table 3.3).

[63] World Bank: op. cit., p. 58.

[64] Weiner: op. cit., p. 93.

9 Indicators for monitoring improvements in educational coverage and quality from a child labour perspective

The discussion to this point has attempted to document the extent to which children below the age of 15 are involved in schooling and in various kinds of work, and to identify and document aspects of education and educational systems that are relevant to eliminating the more harmful aspects of child labour. It has become clear that there is a need for great improvements in data needed to monitor the reduction in child labour, and the role of education in addressing this problem.

One important need is for the data on labour force collected in censuses and surveys to be collected for children aged 10–14 and ideally 5-9, as well as those aged 15+. It is also important that the questions used, as well as the tabulations produced, enable respondents to indicate that they are both attending school and working. Only then can a better picture be obtained of the prevalence of labour force participation by children who are enrolled in school.

Such information from censuses and surveys can only give a very broad indication of the combination of work and schooling by children. To give a more detailed picture, time use studies are needed that can document, not only time spent in school and in officially recognized work activities, but also in household work. Regularity of attendance at school and hours of schooling needs to be part of the information base. Such studies need to address the patterns of time use, not only during school term time but also during school vacations.

One important point has been stressed throughout this report, and will be emphasized in the recommendations sections to follow. This is that the role of the education system in combating child labour should be seen, not simply as providing a place where children must spend considerable periods of time, thus reducing the possibility that they will be employed in full-time work, but rather as playing a much more active role in creating a society where child labour is not seen as an option. In this context, the quality of education provided, especially to the children of the poor, is crucial. The database for monitoring educational quality needs to be capable of isolating problems of educational quality geographically and according to categories of schools. Many kinds of data are relevant for monitoring educational quality, including tests of literacy, mathematical competence, etc. among students; and information on the qualifications and experience of teachers, on the hours actually spent by students in school per day, per week and per year, on the availability of textbooks and teaching aids, on the physical state of school buildings and their furnishings, and on the availability of water and toilets at the school. The morale and dedication of teachers has been shown to have an important role in the performance of students.[65] This is not easy to measure, though one can expect it to be influenced by such factors as the inspection system in place, pay levels for teachers compared with other comparable occupations, regularity of receipt of salaries, and the dedication and effectiveness of the school principal.

[65] G. Carron and T. N. Chau: *The Quality of Primary Schools in Different Developing Countries*, (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1996).

Finally, attitudinal studies of parents and children are needed to indicate their perceptions about education and what it can do for them; about their perceptions of the quality of the schools serving their children; about compulsory education; and about what work it is appropriate for children to do, including those children who are in school.

10 Ways in which expanded compulsory schooling can assist in eliminating child labour

- Expanded compulsory schooling raises the opportunity costs to parents of their high fertility. It will therefore contribute to lowering fertility and to changing parents' calculus about children as economic assets in the short term; and to creating a new understanding whereby investing in the human capital of fewer children will contribute to the economic welfare of the family.
- Lowered fertility, in turn, makes a positive contribution to economic development and elimination of poverty, and facilitates meeting the goal of providing universal basic education.
- Human resource development through expanded schooling contributes to economic development and the elimination of poverty. Given the importance of poverty as a cause of child labour, child labour should thereby be reduced.
- With economic development, demand for child labour of the exploitative kind diminishes. This particularly applies to slavery and bonded labour, and labour of the kind that requires hard physical labour for minimal returns.
- At the household level, compulsory schooling reduces (but does not eliminate) the opportunity for children to be employed exploitatively.
- Once schooling is legitimated as the proper place for children, it is less likely that children will miss or leave school to engage in work.
- Parents normally view school-going children differently, and are less likely to make strong demands on them.[66]
- Through contacts with teachers, exploitation of children can to some extent be monitored.
- Taking a longer-term view, expanding compulsory education now will facilitate the elimination of child labour in the next generation, because holding other things constant, more educated parents are less likely to have their children working rather than in school.

There is little doubt that countries that succeed in making basic education to age 14 or 15 compulsory will thereby put teeth into the goal of minimising child labour. However, there is not much point in declaring it compulsory unless this can be enforced. Table 7 shows the situation

[66] J.C. Caldwell: "Mass education as a determinant of the timing of fertility decline", in *Population and Development Review*, (1998), Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 227.

in a number of countries in the 1990s. It is clear that in a country such as Malawi, where the duration of compulsory education was eight years and the minimum age for employment 14 years, all primary school aged children should have been in school. But even the gross enrolment ratio was only 66 per cent, indicating that compulsory education was not being enforced. There are two basic preconditions for making compulsory basic education enforceable. The first is that the schools and teachers must be in place to accommodate the children. The second is that poor parents must be capable of paying the financial costs of keeping their children in school until the end of the compulsory school age. (The opportunity cost is another matter).

Table 7: Compulsory education, enrolment ratios and minimum age for employment, selected countries, 1990s

Country	Compulsory education (duration in years)	Primary gross enrolment ratio 1990	Minimum age for employment (1992)
Bangladesh	5	77	12
Cote d'Ivoire	6	69	14
El Salvador	9	79	14
Guatemala	6	79	14
Guinea-Bissau	6	60	14
Malawi	8	66	14
Morocco	9	65	12
Senegal	6	58	14

Source: World Bank: *Priorities and Strategies for Education: A World Bank Review*, (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 1995), Table 6.1.

Unfortunately, the countries with a high incidence of child labour tend to be those where an extended period of compulsory basic education is not yet in sight. Therefore the broad macro approach that must be followed includes (a) reduction of fertility rates where these are still high, in order to slow the increase in the school-aged population; (b) increasing the public resources put into primary and lower secondary education, to ensure that resources of schools and teachers are in place; (c) seeking greater efficiencies in the provision of education, such that unit costs are lowered without lowering the quality of education.

The challenge of expanding coverage of education in the countries where it is lowest is, unfortunately, immense. Lewin and Caillods show that, especially for African countries with low enrolment ratios, the task is one that must realistically be expected to take a long time to achieve. As shown in Table 8, in sub-Saharan Africa, on average, countries would need to allocate nearly 4 per cent of GNP to secondary schooling alone to achieve GER2 of 60 per cent (col. 5) and over 5 per cent of GNP to achieve GER2 of 80 per cent (col. 6), with

current cost structures.[67] This is clearly unlikely to happen, especially when the amounts needed to reach GER1 of 100 per cent are added (col. 8).[68] Certainly, child labour is related to lower secondary rather than upper secondary education, but expansion of the two levels cannot be completely divorced.

Aside from the need to increase overall budgetary allocations to education, and increased emphasis on basic education within these allocations, there may be various ways to reduce the unit costs of lower secondary education. Although such ways will be country-specific, depending on particular circumstances, they could include limiting enrolment in high-cost technical and vocational streams, adoption of a core curriculum with limited options at lower secondary level, increasing pupil/teacher ratios where these are low, increasing average size of lower secondary schools, increasing teacher hours worked if low, increasing the proportion of lower-cost teachers within suitable support structures, modifying salaries where these are leading to excessive cost,[69] reducing non-essential boarding, and reducing non-salary costs.

Efficiency in lower secondary school could also be increased by reducing drop-out and repetition, eliminating payment of salaries to ghost workers, training teachers to teach several subjects, improving supervisory patterns, and other means.[70] Unfortunately, the challenges of reducing costs and increasing efficiency are likely to be greatest in schools serving low-income rural populations, among which child labour is likely to be common. But until serious attention is given to this problem, which is clearly reflected in the much lower educational enrolment ratios in rural than in urban areas in most developing countries, achievement of universal basic education extending to the end of the lower secondary level will be impossible.

[67] Lewin and Caillods: op. cit., Chapters 3 and 11.

[68] For another estimate of the costs of attaining universal primary and lower secondary education, see P. Matz: *Costs and Benefits of Universal Education to Replace Child Labour*, Research paper, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, (ILO, Geneva 2002).

[69] This modification could be downwards (to be achieved through pay restraint and increases below the rate of inflation), where teacher salaries are above levels for comparable groups, or upwards, where low salaries are resulting in widespread resort to second jobs by teachers.

[70] For more details, see. Lewin and Caillods, op. cit., pp 350-353.

Table 8: The financial challenge of increased secondary enrolment

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	GER1	GER2	Education as % of GNP	Education expenditure. On secondary as % of GNP	% of GNP needed:			
					For GER2 60%	For GER2 80%	For GER2 100%	For GER1 100%
Africa	85.9	28.2	5.8	1.4	3.8	5.1	6.3	2.9
Central America	104.1	49.3	4.3	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.9	1.5
South America	108.8	60.2	3.5	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.3	1.2
Asia*	99.9	51.4	4.2	1.2	1.5	2.0	2.5	1.7

Note: *Central America includes Caribbean; Asia includes Oceania.

GER1=gross enrolment ratio at primary school level; GER2= gross enrolment ratio at secondary school level

Source: K. Lewin and F. Caillods: *Financing Secondary Education in Developing Countries*, (Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 2001) , Table 11

11 Making the education system more supportive of the objective of eliminating child labour

- In traditional settings, parents benefit from the work provided by their children.[71] When compulsory education into secondary school is enforced, children become more expensive to parents, and this is likely to lead to a decline in fertility, as well as a new calculus giving more weight to child quality: the tendency for parents to invest more in the education of a smaller number of children. Therefore enforcement of compulsory education can be expected to play a significant role in reducing the incidence of child labour. How can the implied expansion of educational enrolments be most effectively achieved? "In many cases, expanded basic education coverage will require investments to expand school capacity, to train qualified teachers, and to provide suitable educational materials. But in other cases, where insufficient capacity is not the binding constraint, the demand for education will need to be increased through actions designed to improve educational quality, to improve the school environment, or to defray the direct and indirect costs of school attendance. This is particularly so in poor settings where children

[71] J.C Caldwell: *Theory of Fertility Decline*, (New York: Academic Press. 1982).

contribute more to the household than they consume".[72]

- In many countries the designation of education as compulsory to particular ages is symbolic rather than a policy with any "teeth" because of the failure to provide enough school places and because of the realization that some parents simply cannot afford the costs of secondary education.
- Since household poverty is a major cause of child labour, ways need to be found to enable poor households to keep their children in school rather than sending them to work. A theoretically possible way to enable poor families to keep their children in school is to develop adequate credit markets for education so that the poor can invest in the education of their children based on the expected effect of education on their future earnings. Proposals to utilize credit markets for this purpose appear to underestimate the difficulties involved, notably the risk aversion of poor households where investments are (by their standards) large, and the payoff uncertain and delayed. Probably more feasible are appropriate income support schemes for poor families who keep their children in school. Indeed, it seems unethical to introduce compulsory education policies, which require parents to keep children in school if they cannot afford the costs involved. Five main kinds of economic incentive schemes to assist poor parents to keep their children in school have been identified: (i) cash payments to low-income families; (ii) school vouchers; (iii) school-based food programmes; (iv) subsidies for school transportation; (v) education with income from work in apprenticeship schemes.[73]

A relevant program in Mexico is the Progressa programme, currently operating in some rural areas, in which poor families are identified through the use of household survey and other data. They are given cash payments amounting to approximately 22 per cent of family income on average. The money is given to the mother on the condition that her children regularly attend school.[74] A similar programme, though broader in scope, is the Brazilian Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (PETI), which aims to offset the direct, indirect and opportunity costs of schooling. The programme provides poor families with a monthly allowance per child enrolled in and attending school. Wherever possible, the allowance is paid to mothers or other female adults responsible for the child. After-school activities are also organized to keep children out of work in the hours they are not at school. Parents and older relatives are targeted for skills training and income- generation activities. Based on lessons from this programme, an ILO-UNCTAD Advisory Group developed the Minimum Income for School Attendance (MISA) Initiative, a minimum income support scheme tied to school attendance.[75]

In Bangladesh, the Food-for-Education programme aims to keep the children of poor rural families in school by providing monthly food rations to participating households as long as they send their children to primary school and the children attend at least 85 per cent of all classes each month. An assessment of this programme concluded that this incentive had strong positive effects on school attendance and some effect in reducing the incidence of child labour, although the increased schooling was mainly a substitute for uses of children's time other than labour force participation.[76]

[72] World Bank, op. cit., p. 97.

[73] Boyden et al.: op. cit.

[74] Anker, op. cit., pp. 26-27.

[75] Matz, op. cit., p. 20

[76] Ravallion and Wodon, op. cit., C173.

A related programme is the social safety net programme for education in Indonesia, introduced after the economic crisis broke in 1997. A key aim of this programme was to keep children in school who were in danger of dropping out, rather than to bring children into the school system. Unlike the Bangladesh programme, targeted children considered to be at risk of dropping out of school-received cash payments, which in most cases were passed on to their parents. An assessment of the programme concluded that, although targeting of the scholarships was not perfect, in general the scholarships did contribute to keeping the children in school.[77]

Important though income support schemes of various kinds are, however, they are not a magic bullet, for a range of reasons:

- Attention needs to be focused constantly on the quality of education and suitability of the curriculum. "Providing a midday meal may entice children to school, as in Tamil Nadu, but only a well-constructed curriculum will keep them there".[78]
- Another practical problem with income support schemes in low-income settings is that unless they are carefully administered and monitored, they provide a context in which corruption can flourish.
- Income support schemes are expensive and might not be sustainable particularly in low-income regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa or South Asia.
- The causes of school dropout are frequently a crisis in the family, such as the father's death, illness or loss of work, or his desertion of the family. Regular income support schemes will not be able to deal effectively with such crises.
- Another way of enabling poor parents to keep their children in school may be to reduce the cost of education for poor families. Although this may entail lowering the quality of education, it does not have to. For example, in Indonesia, during the economic crisis which began in 1997, relaxation of requirements for students to wear uniforms (formerly more than one set of uniforms was required for different purposes) and in some cases, shoes, significantly lowered the outlay parents had to make to educate their children.[79]
- The private-public mix in primary and lower secondary education is important. Although choice is desirable, and private schooling at this level is fine for families that can afford the fees and other expenses required, in principle free public schooling (or subsidization of the poor in public and private schooling) seem to be necessary prerequisites for an effective policy of compulsory education at these levels.
- Parents should be sensitized to the differences between child labour and light work and the impact of the former on the development of their children. When a child's contribution to household income is critical to the family's survival, the objective should be to encourage the transfer of children from child labour activities into light work, in accordance with ILO Convention No. 138, while ensuring that they are able to get the most out of their schooling. School calendars, for example, can be synchronized with peak demands for family labour, taking into account the agricultural cycle in rural areas; and curricula and methods of instruction need to be modified to take into account the experience and needs of such pupils.
- Given the particular problems faced by girls in some regions, planners

[77] Jones and Hagul, op. cit.

[78] Malcolm Falkus et al.: *Child Labour in Asia: Final Report for AusAID*, (Armidale, University of New England, 1996), p. 33.

[79] Jones and Hagul, op. cit.

need to give particular emphasis to measures directed in particular at increasing the school enrolment of girls. For example, hours of schooling need to be adjusted to minimize interference with domestic activities with inflexible schedules – perhaps meal preparation and child care – to make combining household work and schooling more feasible for many girls. Provision of child care programs adjacent to schools could also help girls who have child care responsibilities for their parents to stay in school.[80]

- Location of schools is important, because parents are loath to send children (especially girls) long distances to school. In Pakistan, the availability of schools, particularly of public, same-sex schools for girls, is fundamental to school attendance independent of individual and household factors.[81] The limited mobility of girls, related to norms of female seclusion, magnifies the problem of lack of girls' schools. In both urban and rural areas, adolescent boys attending school travel almost twice as far as adolescent girls at each level of schooling.[82] In Indonesia, too, daughters are more likely to be allowed to attend secondary school if a school is available nearby than if it is not, a factor that is less important in the case of boys.[83]
- In many countries, there is a need for more female teachers in rural areas. The tendency in some countries for the poorest rural areas to have fewer female teachers restricts the enrolment of girls.[84]
- Quality of schools is important in attempting to attract children there. In India, "in most places, the school presents a drab and dismal picture and holds little attraction for the child".[85] The same statement can be made for a depressingly wide range of situations through developing countries. Poorly trained, overworked and underpaid teachers; a curriculum out of touch with local needs and aspirations and at variance with the skill requirements of labour markets. In Indonesia, official data indicate that 23 per cent of primary school buildings (in some provinces, 30 per cent or more) are in seriously damaged condition, in many cases posing danger to teachers and pupils who use them - dangers of ceilings collapsing in storms, as well as general dangers to health caused by poor ventilation and lighting.[86] Many schools have no toilet facilities and no water supply, requiring pupils to use nearby fields or streams for toilet requirements, and providing a further disincentive for parents to send their daughters to school. Textbooks and teaching materials are often in short supply or completely lacking.
- A recent study on quality of primary schools in different parts of the developing world makes the following statement: "The general trend seems to be a continuous displacement of teachers from rural to urban zones on the basis of official criteria and of individual negotiating skills so that, in the end, the least experienced and least qualified teachers start or end up in the countryside".[87] Some way must be found to move away from the situation where the poorest teachers tend to end up in the schools serving the poorest pupils –

[80] Levison and Moe: op. cit., p. 186.

[81] Durrant: op. cit., p. 57.

[82] Durrant: op. cit., Table 4.9.

[83] M. Oey.-Gardiner: "Gender differences in schooling in Indonesia", in *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 1991, 27(1), p. 68.

[84] Carron and Ta: op. cit., p. 118.

[85] Government of India, Ministry of Labour: *Report of the Committee on Child Labour*, (Delhi, The Controller of Publications., 1979), p. 12.

[86] Ministry of National Education: *Indonesia: Educational Statistics in Brief 2000/2001*, (Jakarta: Koperasi Statistik Pendidikan, 2001), Table 19.

[87] Carron and Ta: op. cit. p. 251.

i.e. those with the greatest likelihood of dropping out early and entering the child labour force.

- An improved school curriculum will increase the likelihood of children staying longer in school. Lip service is often paid to making the curriculum relevant to conditions in rural areas, but the reality is frequently that the underlying implicit objective of education is to prepare students for higher studies of an academic kind, even though few primary or lower secondary students will actually pursue an academic education at a higher level. For example, in one study in a poor and isolated province in Indonesia, a surprisingly low proportion of students, even from the academic stream of upper secondary education, actually continued their academic studies at a higher level. Yet their curriculum was totally lacking in vocational elements.[88]
- In some countries, access of the poor and minority groups to a satisfactory standard of education is hampered by community norms and practices. Social exclusion on the basis of religion, ethnicity, and caste can severely limit the educational opportunities open to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. This can be exacerbated by the attitudes and practices of teachers drawn from a different social or ethnic background. It can also be exacerbated by low morale among teachers resulting from their low status and poor working conditions. To counter these problems is not easy, requiring as it does changes in norms and attitudes, but without such changes, the capacity of the school system to enrol and retain students from disadvantaged backgrounds will be seriously compromised.
- More broadly, in countries where the inadequate supply of schooling cannot be explained simply by the nation's poverty, but apparently also by a lack of concern at top levels of government with the provision of a sound education for all children, there is likely to be a complex of factors leading to poor educational outcomes. These may include non-supportive attitudes by bureaucrats in general and teachers assigned to teach the poor, because of beliefs about class or caste that do not give primacy to equalizing educational opportunities for all children.[89] As long as such attitudes remain, it will be very hard to build strong support – including budgetary support – for building an educational system that ensures continued schooling for all school-aged children; or to create consistent attitudes favouring a system of compulsory education, and all that this entails. A contrasting situation is where there is social mobilization in favour of education through school officials, teachers and parents, with government support; such an approach has led to very high enrolment rates for girls from poor families in Yunnan province, China.

11.1 Strategies for children constrained to work by the poverty of their parents

There is a key policy issue here. Even in countries where the government is serious in its efforts to reduce poverty, there will still be a proportion of children who drop out of school to work, because of poverty. In theory, two alternative approaches are possible – the first, to provide enough "income replacement" to their families to replace the contribution they would have made to the families' income, and cover out-of-pocket costs of their education. Examples of such programmes have been given above, but the subsidies involved are so large in scope that they would require a rethinking of where education fits in development priorities for very poor

[88] Jones et al.: op. cit.

[89] For example, on India see M. Weiner; op. cit.

countries. The second approach (not incompatible with the first approach) is to provide various forms of non-formal education, *not* to stop children working (if the type of work is appropriate for the child's age and does not fall within the worst forms of child labour), but to provide a better prospect for them in the future. There are many examples of such educational provision. Programmes run by BRAC in Bangladesh and Lok Jumbish in India are two examples.[90] In Indonesia, various forms of free education are provided for young people who do not have the option of attending regular schools because they have to work. In the open lower secondary schools (SMP Terbuka), schooling is provided in convenient locations and at convenient times for young people who have to work. There are no fees, uniforms are not required, and teachers provide their services free, though of course there are some out-of-pocket expenses. This system is quite well developed, and 70 per cent of students enrolled do finally graduate from this level of education.[91]

There are philosophical issues in providing non-formal education and vocational training to those children who cannot manage to stay in the full-time educational system. The MV Foundation in Andhra Pradesh, for example, argues that the only way to eliminate child labour is to universalize education, and the only way to universalize education is to eliminate child labour.[92] In other words, government will is crucial in enforcing compulsory education and the elimination of child labour.

Though child labour must be condemned and an uncompromising stance taken in favour of compulsory basic education, in very poor countries, elimination of child labour and enforcement of compulsory schooling cannot be achieved overnight. Therefore hard decisions will have to be made, attuned to the short-term reality that there will continue to be working children, but aimed at medium-term elimination of labour force participation by young children. These decisions need to be informed by a realistic appraisal of whether the kind of non-formal education offered is sustainable and leads to skills useful for gainful employment.

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[90] A.M.R Chowdhury: "Filling a critical gap in education: the BRAC non-formal primary education programme"; S. Rajgopal: "Operationalizing the right to education: the Lok Jumbish experience in Rajasthan" in N. Kabeer et al. (eds): *Needs versus Rights? Child Labour, Household Livelihoods, and Universalising the Right to Education in South Asia*, (Delhi: Sage Publications, forthcoming).

[91] A. S. Sadiman,, David Seligman and Raphael Rahardjo: *SMP Terbuka: An Indonesian Case Study*, (Paris, UNESCO, 1995).

[92] Kabeer: op. cit., p. 22.

12 Extent to which appropriate educational policies can address the issues of the worst forms of child labour

Though child labour in general is correlated with poverty, some of the worst forms of child labour are highly exploitative, and are not closely correlated with the income level of families. In other words, many equally poor families do not engage their children in the worst forms of child labour. In this situation, quality of enforcement of regulations prohibiting these forms of child labour appears to be the key factor.

One example may suffice. An intensive study conducted in Jakarta and in the district of Indramayu in West Java, a noted source area for prostitutes, found cases of parents selling their young daughters to a brothel in Jakarta, to reap the considerable payment for the taking of the daughter's virginity. Many of these parents continued to receive regular payments from the brothel, based on the daughter's continuing work as a prostitute.[93] Indramayu is a poor district, and the parents selling their daughters were also poor and without much education. But there are obviously many other poor districts, and many other poor and uneducated parents, who did not sell their daughters in this way. This is a criminal activity, and the immediate way to deal with it is to enforce the law, not to attempt to raise the incomes of these households or raise their education levels.

Similarly, street children are frequently the result of abusive home backgrounds, drug addicted parents, etc., rather than just poor households. Compulsory education will not get such children off the street and into school unless the children's overall circumstances are addressed.

Therefore it can be argued that appropriate educational policies can deal with these things to only a limited extent, particularly in the short run.

On the other hand, regular school attendance would make those forms of exploitative child labour that do not constitute criminal activities, such as bonded labour, almost impossible. It would also rule out the employment of children in hazardous industries and occupations that require presence at the work site for a full shift.[94]

To some extent, the environment created by a system of universal basic education can contribute to the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, through its general impact on society, and the role of children in that society.

- Such a society invests in the human resource development represented by children, and this makes it difficult for parents to benefit economically, at least in the short term, by having many children.

[93] See Yayasan Kusuma Buana et al.: *Anak Yang Dilacurkan: Studi Kasus di Jakarta, Jawa Barat dan Jawa Timur* [*Prostituted Children: Case Study in Jakarta, West Java and East Java*], (Jakarta: Yayasan Kusuma Buana, 1998). In some cases, the father took the initiative in selling the daughter, and the wife, although she did not agree, was too dominated by the husband to resist his plan.

[94] P. Matz, op. cit., p. 6.

- A better-educated public will be more aware of the worst forms of child labour, and more likely to be vocal in opposing them. It could be expected that this would result in fewer examples of exploitative and hazardous working conditions.
- When higher proportions of children are in school, it may be easier to monitor the activities of those who are not in school, and to detect exploitative, hazardous or immoral activities.
- Children can actually be taught in school about the problems of exploitation and victimization, and become more aware of any such activities in their own neighbourhoods. Children need to be armed with information about the possible hazards of work in family farms and businesses, and exploitation of children as wage earners. The school needs to arm children with information about their rights.
- Both teacher training and mobilization on the risks of child labour and the infusion of a child labour/child rights component in the curriculum may be critical to the prevention of child labour. Curriculum relevant to the child's daily life and future potential employment opportunities, with a strong life skills component, can ensure the retention of children at risk of working. Information on such issues as career counselling and apprenticeship programmes, credit schemes, and referral to advanced courses could also be integrated.[95]

[95] For further discussion of such approaches, see Paper IV-5: Combating Child Labour through education, available in the TBP MAP Kit or from the TBP MAP web site: www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/themes/timebound/index.htm