

Comparison of survey instruments for collecting data on child labour

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1. Introduction

1.1 This paper compiles the available research on the comparison of the three main survey instruments for collecting data on child labour. These are the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS), surveys by the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). The surveys are conducted by World Bank, the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour of ILO (ILO-IPEC), and the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF), respectively. Much of the material in this report is drawn from Grimsrud (2001) and Blunch, Dar, Guarcello, Lyon, Ritualo and Rosati (2002).¹

1.2 In the introduction, the objectives of these survey instruments are defined. In Section 2 their methodologies are compared. In Sections 3 and 4 the sample sizes used under these survey methodologies are compared and the characteristics of some of the country surveys that have been conducted using these survey instruments are presented. Finally, in Section 5, the LSMS and SIMPOC surveys from Zambia are compared. In the annexes, additional background and complementary information to the main text is provided.

1.3 The main objective of the World Bank's LSMS surveys is to collect household data that can be used to assess household welfare, to understand household behaviour and to evaluate the effect of various government policies on the living conditions of the population. LSMS surveys, given their objective, collect data on many dimensions of household well-being (consumption, income, savings, employment, health, education, fertility, nutrition, housing and migration). Information on children's activities is therefore available in economic activity and other modules. In other words, the multi-topic integrated nature of the LSMS surveys renders it necessary that the entire survey be looked at to get all the available information relevant to children's activities.

1.4 SIMPOC surveys are different from LSMS surveys, in the first instance, by their overall objectives, which include developing standard indicators of child labour at the national level, measuring the incidence, causes and consequences of child labour and measuring the impact of intervention programmes and policies. SIMPOC surveys mark an important development by moving beyond using economically active children as a proxy for child labour. The way of asking about economic activities has changed by including both unpaid and remunerated work and progress has been made in mapping children's non-market work like housework.

1.5 MICS surveys have been designed by the UNICEF for countries to adopt as household survey tools in order to fill data gaps. The current data on key indicators for assessing progress are lacking for many countries. The focus of MICS surveys is on a number of child welfare indicators including infant mortality, education, water and sanitation, malnutrition, immunisation, health, childbirth, family planning and child labour.

¹ This report is only for internal use and is intended to provide a readily available compilation of the available research. Thus, the language of the original text in the references has often been incorporated.

2. Methodology: LSMS, SIMPOC and MICS surveys

2.1 In the LSMS surveys normally three kinds of questionnaires are used: the household, community characteristics and price questionnaires. A fourth type of questionnaire, the school or health facility questionnaire is also used sometimes. The household questionnaire collects information on household members, the community characteristics questionnaire collects information from community leaders and groups on community infrastructure and the price questionnaire collects information from market vendors on prices.

2.2 Household members are defined to include all the people who normally live and eat their meals together in a dwelling. Those who have been absent for more than nine of the last 12 months are excluded, except for the head of the household and infants less than three months old. Information on migrant children is normally collected. For the household questionnaire, general information is provided by the individual designated by household members as the household head or the individual indicated to know the answers. In some LSMS surveys, the head of household is the only member interviewed, but these surveys are the exception rather than the rule. More generally, in most sections of the questionnaire each member of the household is asked to respond for him or herself; parents are allowed to respond for younger children (usually children below the age of 10-12 years). In the case of young children, it is preferred that the interviewer identifies the individual who is best prepared to respond on behalf of the child. The reality of survey implementation is that this is not always the best-informed adult though every effort is made to get the best information possible. In fact, one of the fundamental tenets of the living standard measurement study is that all individuals capable of responding should respond for themselves.

2.3 The questionnaires reflect the strong emphasis of LSMS research on consumption data for analyzing poverty. Additionally, a wide range of income information is collected. This includes information at the level of individuals in formal sector jobs (detailed questions about wages, bonuses and in-kind compensations), on secondary and principal jobs and at the household level (agricultural and small enterprise modules). This is discussed further in the employment data from the LSMS.

2.4 The LSMS survey instrument as structured makes data available on a variety of individual characteristics from the same household. More specifically, the household survey contains modules (sections) that aim to collect data on household demographic structure, housing conditions, schooling, health, employment, migration, expenditure and income, household non-agricultural businesses, agricultural activities, fertility and contraceptive use, savings and credit and anthropometric (height and weight) measurements. This makes possible an analysis of important relationships among different aspects that make up the quality of life. Recently LSMS surveys have implemented the community level questionnaire using focus group methodology to give a broader context to the quantitative data. Separate qualitative surveys have been

aimed at issues, such as cultural context, that do not come up in quantitative surveys, and to discover others that may be added to quantitative surveys for further study.

2.5 With regard to employment, it is worthwhile to note that LSMS survey questions are based on ILO standards. Information on both current and usual work is collected. For work performed in the last seven days, information is collected on hours, length of employment, type of employer, taxes, distance and travel time to work, money, in-kind compensation and other benefits. Similar questions are asked on the secondary job. It is recommended that questions on employment be asked of all household members (above the cut-off age).

2.6 The standard LSMS uses the ILO approach to determine whether a person was economically active during the last seven days or over the past 12 months. This is normally done by mapping the magnitude of wage employment, unemployment, farm labour and self-employment. In a standard LSMS, therefore, no special attention is given to the fact that children may be employed without pay. Children's remuneration may often be part of a parent's pay or children may work without pay in order to obtain a paid position in the enterprise at a later stage. Under such circumstances, the non-accounted unpaid work of children will imply underestimation of the number of child labourers in the labour market in many of the LSMS data sets. Even if some of the LSMS surveys include questions in the questionnaire that try to identify unpaid work in the labour market, asking about paid labour as an entry question to the child labour module may lead to unpaid child workers being under-represented. Furthermore, the LSMS surveys do not normally map household work done by children. Due to this and given that the surveys make possible collection of data on school attendance, it is possible to divide children into four groups: children only attending school, those combining school and labour market work, those only in labour market work and those who are neither working nor in school.

2.7 A modified application of the standard LSMS survey techniques can be found in the LSMS survey for Guatemala (2001). This survey contains many features that were not included in earlier surveys, notably a series of screening questions to identify individuals who are doing either paid or unpaid work. The survey asks initially if the respondent worked during the last week. If the respondent says no, a series of questions follow to verify that the respondent truly did not work:

- a. Did you work for even one hour?
- b. Did you work in a family business?
- c. Did you work as an unpaid apprentice?
- d. Did you sell something in the streets or in a kiosk?
- e. Did you help on the family farm?
- f. Did you clean cars or shoes or collect trash?

2.8 If the response to any of these questions is yes, the respondent fills in the economic activity module. Information on time spent collecting firewood and fetching water is collected. Other exceptions from the standard LSMS survey techniques are found in the LSMS survey for Ghana (1987-88) and for Nicaragua (2001). While the former collected data on days and hours spent doing household chores for each household member above the cut-off age (for Ghana seven years of age), the latter included a question about the number of hours spent in domestic household chores for

all individuals whether working or not. General time use modules are included in some surveys, for example the Jamaica surveys.

2.9 With regard to school attendance, data are normally collected for each household member five years or older on self-reported literacy and innumeracy, school attendance completion and current enrolment. For all individuals who attended school during the past twelve months, data are collected on expenses, scholarships, and distance and travel time to school. Additional relevant information collected by the surveys include that on work-related illnesses and household expenditure on health care and medicine. Work-related illnesses during the last thirty days are reported together with accidents during the last year.

2.10 To summarize: when analysing child labour from LSMS surveys, information needs to be drawn from several of the modules, including the education, migration and household enterprise modules. Where these modules include information on the hours spent in household work and the potential health threat posed by work activities, it is possible to extract the number of child labourers from the LSMS instrument. Such information is more likely to be found in the most recent LSMS surveys. With regard to employed children and/or the worst forms of child labour, since the LSMS surveys are based on a relatively small sample it is difficult to analyse particular characteristics present in only a part of the sample. Nevertheless, LSMS survey instruments serve a unique and useful role in enabling an analysis of the connection between household living standards and child labour, where child labour is proxied by the number of economically active children.

2.11 The SIMPOC surveys have developed a standard module (core questions) that can be linked to labour force surveys and a special household survey for child labour. Additionally, methodology for supplementary approaches to the household based survey, such as, community/town/village level surveys (key informants), employers and work place surveys, street level child labour enquiries and rapid assessment methodologies (joint ILO-UNICEF approach) have been considered and applied.

2.12 The household based sample survey uses a questionnaire divided into several parts. The first part of the questionnaire is addressed to the head of the household or his/her proxy and asks questions about household composition, demographic characteristics of each household member and the economic characteristics of household members aged five years and above. A second part may follow and be addressed to the head of the household, or his/her proxy, which includes questions on detailed child activities and conditions for those aged five to 17. Finally, a special part of the questionnaire is normally addressed to each child between five and 17 years of age usually residing in the same household. This special part asks about the child's activities and conditions of work.

2.13 The SIMPOC surveys are better positioned than LSMS and MICS surveys in a crucial way. This relates to the respondent identified for the various kinds of questionnaires that these surveys incorporate. A few LSMS interview only the head of the household, usually the father. The MICS approach, on the other hand, consists of interviewing only the mother. The latter is considered better than the former as experience shows that the father is not always properly informed about the activities of all the children and that the mother may be better informed about the activities of

the children than the father is. The best and most extensive approach, however, is the one adopted by SIMPOC and most LSMS surveys, namely, interviewing all members of the household above a certain age.

2.14 The type of data made available within the SIMPOC approach may be classified by questions addressed to the head of the household concerning each child in the household aged 5 to 17, and by questions addressed directly to children aged 5 to 17. The former types of questions include those on:

- schooling and non-schooling activities (both economic and non-economic, 'current' and 'usual', and duration of 'usual' employment or work); primary (principal) and secondary (subsidiary) economic activities of each child aged five to 17 who is a member of the household; details on the current economic activity of the child, including the type of occupation, goods produced or services rendered, and, when working for someone else, the employer's industry and location of the workplace
- earnings and other benefits; working hours and conditions; the child's contributions to the household
- work-related injuries and illnesses suffered by the child caused by his/her work in the past; other safety and health aspects at the workplace
- housekeeping activities carried out regularly in own parents/guardians household; the types of tasks and number of hours devoted to such work on a daily/weekly basis
- in the case of children aged five to 17 who work and live somewhere else, details on where they live, their occupations, earnings, their contribution to the household, why and how they left the household to work elsewhere.

2.15 The latter types of questions include:

- whether attending school or training institution and, if not, the main reason for not going to school or training institution
- if combining schooling and work (whether economic or non-economic work, including housekeeping activities), the effect of such work on schooling
- work-related injuries and illness, other safety and health aspects at the workplace in the past; types and seriousness of the injuries/illness; responsibility for covering costs of medical treatments and hospitalisation
- age when started work for the first time; reasons for working and whether or not satisfied with present job; if not satisfied, the reasons why; own perceptions about working; current choice and future plans

2.16 Both sections may include questions on whether the child is working for someone else, name and address of the workplace of the employer, industry, relationship with the employer, salaries/wages and mode of payment, hours of work and whether working during evenings/nights or on weekends and public holidays; details on all other benefits, for example, paid holidays, overtime pay, full or subsidized meals/uniform/training etc.; social security benefits (including health, family or unemployment insurance and pension plans) and union membership of the child. The questionnaire also asks whether the child is supervised or not on the job by adult(s), and negative consequences of working (for example, frequency of exhaustion, heavy physical work, stressfulness, risks and types of hazards with details

of each category). These are all examples of questions where the number of potential respondents is so few that a large and stratified sample is necessary.

2.17 The most recent SIMPOC surveys mark an important departure from their older versions and from the LSMS surveys by attempting to capture the unpaid work of children. An attempt is made to capture the unpaid work of children in the labour market context and in the domestic/household context. The former is captured by retaining the term *economically active* or *active* in the labour market as defined by ILO, but excluding the condition of pay or remuneration. Information on the non-market work of children, including housework and work duties at school (SIMPOC survey, Zimbabwe) is captured by including questions about a child's work in their own household. Detailed information is made available on hazardous forms of non-market work and domestic services on the borderline between fostering and work arrangements. Important developments in the SIMPOC surveys enabling the collection of such information have included those in sampling procedures, importantly, the use of a multi-stage stratified sampling design to make sure sufficient numbers of both working and non-working children are included in the sample.

2.18 With regard to the measurement of children's time use, it was concluded from four experimental surveys undertaken by ILO in 1995 that such surveys are difficult, time-consuming and present their own range of problems. A disadvantage of most of the techniques is that they require the child and/or parents to recall information, opening the way for selective memory and socially desirable biases. It was found that a survey technique which relied on asking children to recall, when presented with a list of different activities, how they spent their time over the past three days was not satisfactory for the purpose of investigating their activities or the intensity of the work. Even when presented with a long list of economic and non-economic activities, many children could not recall the activities in which they had been engaged during the 24 hours preceding the survey. And even when they were able to identify the activities, they had little recollection of the amount of time spent on each. Most children seemed to remember only those activities that they liked most, especially those in which they earned good money.

2.19 With regard to health and hazardous working conditions, as for the case of age of starting work, only market work is normally mapped. Information on idleness and accidents is however collected from or about all children. SIMPOC surveys thus differ from the LSMS surveys as they directly make available information on accidents and illnesses whereas the latter would require a scan of the various modules. SIMPOC survey instruments have an advantage over the LSMS and MICS surveys as they incorporate the rapid assessment methodology, which enables an analysis of potentially dangerous situations. The SIMPOC programme has tried, through household based surveys, to focus particularly on the worst forms of child labour in the labour market for children working for someone not in their own household. This is a very small group and it has been necessary to design a very particular sampling procedure in order to secure a sufficient number of respondents. The benefit of this methodology is the ability to describe the different trades where economically active children are occupied, as well as relevant wage levels and potential health risks.

2.20 Finally, the MICS framework looks at children in households aged five to 14, who are currently working (paid or unpaid; inside or outside home). The survey

instruments are comprised of a household questionnaire, a questionnaire for women of reproductive age (ages 15-49) and a questionnaire for children under five. The child labour section is found in the household questionnaire and is supposed to be answered by the child's caretaker, usually the mother. The MICS surveys employ a third and different approach from that employed by the LSMS and SIMPOC surveys in capturing the labour market work of children. The MICS surveys divide labour market work of children into two: labour market work for someone in their own household and labour market work for someone outside their household. The data are calculated separately for paid, unpaid and domestic work of more than four hours duration per day.

2.21 The questions asked by the interviewer include those about children's level of education and their age. These together provide an indication of children's performance with regard to repetition. Additional information is collected on the number of days in school last week and any repetition in the previous year. A first question in the child labour section is whether during the past week the child worked for a person who was not a member of the household. The reply categories are 'yes for pay', 'yes, unpaid', or 'no'. Information on hours worked is also collected. Additional information is collected on work outside the household during the past year as well as information on household work, work on the family farm or in a business. All in all, the child labour section contains nine questions.

2.22 The MICS has a less comprehensive survey design than SIMPOC and LSMS. Children themselves are not interviewed and, generally speaking, the questionnaire is shorter. Also, MICS differs in its methodology by asking questions of the mother rather than the child. This reduces time spent in the field and the cost of applying the survey, but may influence the results. MICS child labour questions are specifically designed to obtain as much information as possible on the issue and do not contain all the adult labour market measurement characteristics that are found in the questionnaires designed by the other agencies.

2.23 To summarize: in the context of the MICS survey, omission of questions on job-seeking, unemployment and secondary employment helps much in terms of making the questionnaire short and not very much is lost in terms of information. This is the only instrument that systematically collects information on housework and it includes a category of unpaid work outside the household. The main gaps in the survey instrument remain with regard to information on the type of work or activity needed for an indication of whether the work is health threatening. Also, information on health and nutrition status is collected only for children younger than five. An important opportunity for collecting data that could show the link between children's work and their health is therefore lost with the decision not to extend the age limit for questions on health and nutrition to 14.

2.24 Having analysed the methodologies of the LSMS, SIMPOC and MICS surveys areas for potential improvements are summarized as follows:

- (1) *Concept of child labour*: being economically active or in the labour market is, as mentioned above, not the same as being a child labourer. Nevertheless, it is useful to utilise this concept as a point of departure for measuring the incidence of child labour. However, even identifying the economically active children is

problematic, because most children work in their own household or on the family farm and even those working outside the household in most cases work together with their parents or other family members. Only a relatively small proportion of children are employed directly by an employer. The way the questions are posed should take these facts into consideration. Many children even among those working outside the household do not receive wages. The use of different categories of child work raises the issue of how to understand the term work in other parts of a survey questionnaire. For the concept of non-economically active child labourers or non-market work, more needs to be done, including through rapid assessment studies, to develop appropriate survey methodologies. In addition the notion of what does and does not constitute work varies within different cultures and between households. Another problem is posed by the fact that child labour is prohibited in most countries and asking direct questions about children working could lead to inaccurate answers.

- (2) *Survey design*: the sample size will always be a compromise between the desirable and the achievable. While a relatively small sample may be sufficient where our chief concern is to map children's activities and the general magnitude of child labour, a large sample is required where our chief concern is with the types of work that children do and the health risks involved in different occupations. These two aspects of survey design need to be borne in mind while constructing an ideal sample for the concerned purpose.
- (3) *Survey methodology*: an important question concerns who the respondent is. This aspect has been discussed earlier with respect to the advantages and limitations of the different survey instruments. Regardless of the approach followed, the survey should record whether the child is answering for him or herself, or, if the child is assisted by an adult.
- (4) *Definition of children and households*: different cut-off ages are in use currently. While a natural cut-off age would be the age of normally starting primary education, the same would differ from country to country and for international comparisons a common approach would be preferred. This should be picked up again when analysing the data. Another area of inquiry is how to define who belongs to a household. A fairly common approach used here is including all persons normally sleeping in the household. It is important to make sure that this includes both foster children and domestic servants staying in the household.
- (5) *Type of occupation and industry*: for labour market work, there is a need to develop the question regarding type of occupation and type of industry. Both are terms taken from international standards for adult work and these data are insufficient to identify the types of tasks the child is actually undertaking. While references to standards should be possible to make when analyzing the data, the questions themselves need to be more suited to the type of work children actually do.
- (6) *Education and health*: given that child labour is defined in large part by the effect of work activities on a child's educational opportunities and health, sufficient information needs to be collected in these two areas. In addition to the standard questions, more information could be obtained about potential conflicts

between school and work. For instance, information may be collected on whether a child had to drop going to school last week due to labour market work or housework or, whether a child had to stay away from school some time during the last 12 months because of labour market work or housework (e.g. in the harvest season).

- (7) *Socio-economic indicators*: poverty is regarded as one of the most important determinants for child labour. Any child labour survey should therefore include information that can analyse the relationship between poverty and child labour. General household surveys cover many of the household characteristics, such as parent's work and educational status and number, age, and gender of siblings. Collection of such information also needs to be included within the ambit of the special child labour surveys.
- (8) *Analysing the data*: given a comprehensive data set the challenge in analysing child labour is combining needed indicators like labour market work, housework, school performance, age and exposed health risks, in order to identify the group of children coming under the definition of child labour. Normally, all surveys map the 'current' and the 'usual' activity of children. Current status applies to activities during the reference week, and usual status to the 12-month period preceding the inquiry date. Analogous mapping should be done for non-market work and for school attendance. Mapping the usual activities is particularly important as this approach takes into account seasonal variations, which are characteristic of a considerable proportion of children's activities, including schooling.
- (9) *Worst forms of child labour*: as noted earlier, the SIMPOC programme aims to collect information on the working conditions of children working outside the household, in order to map the worst forms of child labour. As very few children fall into this group, a survey design problem is immediately apparent. At this point, one probably has to decide whether to collect information on child labour in general, or to carry out special surveys with specially designed samples for finding children working outside the household.

3. Sample size: SIMPOC, LSMS and MICS surveys

3.1 Samples in LSMS surveys are relatively small, ranging from 1500 to 5000 households. The samples are normally drawn in two steps based on enumeration areas and on randomly chosen households within these areas. It is usually recommended that the economic activity module be administered to all household members of ages legally marking the start of formal education and above. For example, if children first enrolled in school at the age of 7, it is recommended that all individuals 7 and older respond to the module. In some LSMS surveys the cut-off age may be higher (say, 10 years) due to national regulations.

3.2 Sample sizes in ILO-assisted labour force surveys/SIMPOC-surveys are relatively large, up to 10,000 households, in other words, more than twice the size of a LSMS survey. The ILO approach implies pegging a labour force survey. The SIMPOC standard manuals call for a complete listing of households in all areas

covered prior to the sample selection of households for interviews. During the listing exercises, certain basic information is to be collected on each household. This basic information includes the total number of household members, the number of children in the age group 5 to 17, the total number of persons aged 17 and above and an indication of the number of children aged 5 to 17 who may be engaged in economic activities. Such information is used for stratification and selection of the required number of households for the sample. It is recommended that a multi-stage (two or three stages) stratified sampling design be used to select the required number of households. Using the household listing as a sampling frame as well as the basic information collected during the listing, all listed households in each unit of the segment can be grouped into the following three strata:

- (i) households with at least one paid child worker (in the specific age group);
- (ii) households without a paid child worker but having at least one child working as an unpaid family worker (in the same specific age-group); and
- (iii) other households (in the same age group).

3.3 As a final stage in the sample selection procedure, a specified number of households in each of the above three strata is selected by means of a self-weighting systematic sampling design with probability proportional to size.

3.4 Finally, the recommended overall sample size for the MICS survey is in the range of 2,500 to 14,000 households. The roster requires information on the mother or primary caretaker of any children aged 5 to 14. Questions about children's work in the child labour module are answered by this caretaker.

4. Data sets: highlights of LSMS (Pakistan, Gambia) SIMPOC (Pakistan, Zimbabwe) and MICS (Gambia, India) surveys

4.1 First, for the Pakistan Integrated Household Survey a sample of 4,800 households was selected using a two stage, stratified random sample. The survey mapped the number of economically active children down to the age 10 years, the average weekly working hours, the reasons for not going to school and the reasons for dropping out of school. Work was divided into paid agricultural work and paid non-agricultural work. For the worst forms of child labour, bonded labour was treated as permanent work. While all household members aged five and above were asked about education and all household members aged 10 and above were asked about employment and family labour, only females were asked about time use. This separation of males and females in the questionnaire on the household roster is a reflection of the technique employed in carrying out the interviews. For the interviews, male respondents were interviewed by males and female respondents by females.

4.2 The LSMS Gambia (1994) was undertaken with a sample size of only 1,400. The questions on labour and education were limited to the head of the household. General LSMS standards for sampling, questionnaire design and concepts, was followed. The cut-off age was seven years and results were presented within a four category classification, namely, children working only, children studying only, children working and studying and children not involved in any activity.

4.3 Next, the SIMPOC Pakistan (1996) child labour survey of Pakistan is an example of a survey built on SIMPOC methodology but with some modifications. We detail below the sampling design of this survey. The primary sampling units (PSUs) were the enumeration blocks in urban areas and villages in rural areas. 1865 sample PSUs covered in the survey were selected from each ultimate stratum by the probability proportional to size method of selection. Within each sample PSU, clusters of approximately 75 households were formed. These clusters were treated as secondary sampling units (SSUs). One cluster from each sample PSU was selected randomly and listed all households within a cluster on a special listing form developed for the CLS. The number of households listed in this manner totalled 140,298. These households were listed according to two strata: with or without an economically active child aged five to 14. The particularity about this survey is that only households within a cluster having at least one economically active child in the five to 14 age range were included in the final stage, making this not a representative sample for all households but only for households with children in the labour market. All in all 13,962 economically active children aged five to 14 were enumerated by adhering to the current status approach (last week reference period) and usual status approach (last 12-month reference period).

4.4 SIMPOC Zimbabwe (1992) survey is an example of a SIMPOC survey with a national amendment pointing in another direction. Here the definition of child labour rather than of economically active children is a basis for mapping the phenomenon. The area sampling frame used for the child labour survey was the 1992 Zimbabwe Master Sample developed by the central statistical office following the 1992 population census. A two-stage geographically stratified sampling design was applied. The households were selected by random systematic sampling. A total of 13,591 households were selected from household lists of 55,176 households.

4.5 This survey focused on children's activities (economic and non-economic), income /earnings, employment conditions and occupational health and safety of children aged between five and 17 years. The analysis was presented by sex, province, urban and rural areas. The division of child labour into economic versus non-economic activities was based on ILO definitions. Economic activities were categorized into two broad areas, namely:

- i) activities for pay, profit and/or family gain, including the child him or herself running any kind of business, big or small; unpaid help in a family business; helping with farming activities on the family plot, food garden, cattle post or kraal; catching or gathering any fish, prawns, shellfish, wild animals or any other food, for sale or family consumption; doing any work for a wage, salary or payment in kind; begging for money or food in public; and
- ii) other economic activities, including fetching wood sekeeping and family care activities (household chores), where either a parent or grandparent or guardian or more than one of these relatives is present in the household, and
- i) school maintenance, cleaning or school activities – for example, cleaning toilets, maintaining the school grounds

4.6 However, the survey sought no information on the child labour situation in schools. Non-economic activities in this survey were therefore restricted to housekeeping activities. Also, this survey introduced three qualifications for being a child labourer in the labour market. These were (a) engagement in economic activities for three or more hours per day; (b) provision for the allowance of children's involvement (aged 15 and above) in some form of work in accordance with national law; (c) involvement in housekeeping activities for five or more hours per day. These positions were consistent with the Zimbabwe labour regulations governing the employment of young persons. The Zimbabwean labour regulations stipulate that a child performing light work as defined in the law should not work more than six hours per day.

4.7 With regard to the questionnaire respondents, it was found that most children, especially those below the age of nine, found it difficult to comprehend or logically respond to some questions and therefore it was difficult to seek independent information without asking their parents/guardians. In most cases children were interviewed at their homes and their parents or employers were aware that they were being interviewed about child labour. It was found in some cases that children were not entirely free to give their views and perceptions of the subject without fear of retaliation from parents or employers who might be exploiting them. Influence from this was minimized through training the enumerators and explaining the purpose of the survey. An additional problem was that the term child labour survey was misunderstood and created suspicions as to its objectives among parents or employers who use children for adult work.

4.8 An important lesson that can be derived from the above is that a single study cannot capture all child labour issues without overloading the questionnaire and creating difficulties in its administration. There are yet other kinds of hidden activities of children that cannot be captured through the household based approach. Other related child welfare survey modules need to be applied separately on issues such as street children, child prostitutes and living conditions in the homes of children whose activities cannot be studied by a household survey. Supplementary information of interest could be on child sexual abuse, drug abuse, married children and orphanhood.

4.9 A brief mention is made of MICS Gambia (2000). The sample size of the survey was 4528 households. The survey captured information on the number of children (5-14 years) working outside the household for wages, the number working outside the household without pay, the number working in the household, the number working on the family land or in the family business. Information was also collected on the number of children in the primary school age group attending school and the number of children reaching grade five having entered school in grade one.

4.10 MICS India captured information on virtually the same counts as described above in the case of Gambia.

5. Zambia: comparison of SIMPOC and LSMS surveys

5.1 This section analyses and compares the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS) with the SIMPOC survey carried out in Zambia. The LCMS was carried out

by the Zambian Central Statistical Office in 1998 as part of the World Bank Priority Survey programme. The survey sample comprised 16,710 households, representing a sampling fraction of about one household per 113 households. The survey followed a stratified survey design, covering 8,487 households in rural areas and 8,223 households in urban areas. Each household was visited once. The sample design used the Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) method, implying allocation of the total sample proportionally to each stratum according to its population share. The sample selection also followed the PPS method.

5.2 The SIMPOC survey, too, was carried out by the Zambian Central Statistical Office in 1999, under the joint auspices of ILO (SIMPOC programme) and UNICEF's MICS. The survey sample comprised of approximately 8000 households yielding national and provincial level estimates. Households were stratified into urban and rural areas and into three categories: 1) those with at least one child working for pay or profit, 2) those with at least one child working but not for pay or profit, and 3) those with no children working at all (for rural areas, households were also stratified based on the scale of their agricultural activity, using a recent agricultural survey). Households were selected using the PPS sampling method (modified using the Square Root Method).

5.3 SIMPOC and LCMS, in the first instance, differed in the scope of their definitions of working children. In the SIMPOC survey, children were considered working if they responded that they were working or assisting with work of any kind. In the LCMS survey, children were considered working if they responded that they were in wage employment, or running a business/self employed, or farming, fishing, or forestry or if they reported that they were a full time student and reported working in the last 12 months and were currently engaged in any income-generating activities or farming. Furthermore, though neither questionnaire included domestic chores as a main economic activity, the SIMPOC survey contained a separate set of questions specifically looking at this issue. The LCMS too collected information on household chores but only in the context of reasons for not attending school.

5.4 The SIMPOC and LCMS surveys also differed in the way they measured children's activities. Children can be grouped into essentially four non-overlapping activity categories: children who work only, children who study only, children who both work and study, and children who neither work nor study. The two surveys measured each of these categories differently. While both used the concept of main economic activity, there were slight variations in the wording used for the reference period. SIMPOC referred to the last seven days as the reference period whereas LCMS referred more broadly to current economic activity. Additionally, the SIMPOC survey looked at the main economic activity over a one-year reference period, important because child work is often seasonal and may not fall within a particular 14-day period.

5.5 With regard to the questions used to determine a child's school attendance status, differences are apparent between the SIMPOC and LCMS questions. The SIMPOC questionnaire referred only to the primary or secondary school attendance status of children, whereas the LCMS also included children attending pre-primary school. The SIMPOC question added a clarification at the end of the question in order to capture any children who may have been on holiday at the time the questionnaire

was administered, but children on holiday were not captured by the LCMS questionnaire. The SIMPOC survey collected information on children's birthdays, needed to determine the proportion of six year-olds born after the birth date cut off for entering school, while the LCMS survey only collected information on children's age. Neither survey looked at the regularity of attendance, relevant because children reported as currently attending school may actually have been frequently absent from class.

5.6 A noted difference also existed between the surveys in their measurement of children combining school and work. The SIMPOC survey allowed children to respond that their main activity was full-time student, but asked no follow-up question about whether children who reported being full-time students also worked. The LCMS survey, on the other hand, asked children who reported being full-time students whether they also had a job or business in the last 12 months, and, if so, whether they were currently engaged in any income-generating activities or farming.

5.7 The SIMPOC survey yielded a slightly higher overall estimate of children working only, but not a consistently higher estimate across age or sex. The LCMS survey yielded a very slightly higher overall estimate of children only attending school, but again this result was not consistent for all ages or both sexes. The two surveys generated almost equal estimates of children combining study and of children neither studying nor working.

5.8 Next, the two surveys are compared with regard to the information collected for measurement of characteristics and conditions of child work. For this purpose, the sector of work and the modality of employment serve as indicators contributing to an understanding of the nature of child work. For sector of work, both surveys utilize international standard industrial classifications. For modality of employment, the SIMPOC survey included a category, namely working for/in private household, which was not included in the LCMS survey. Otherwise the information collected by the two surveys was broadly similar.

5.10 Both surveys indicated that the overwhelming majority of working children, male and female, were found in the agricultural sector and worked unpaid within their families. Only the SIMPOC survey went beyond sector and modality of employment to collect additional information on actual conditions facing children in their workplaces. The SIMPOC questionnaire asked children about the strenuousness of their work, their work environment, their exposure to potential risks such as machinery and chemicals, their relationship with their employer, abuses suffered at the hands of their employer, work benefits and remuneration. Neither survey collected information regarding children's total labour supply (i.e. average total hours worked), critical to evaluating the intensity of work and to determining how much children's labour contributed to household income and welfare.

5.11 With regard to the measurement of the health impact of child work, the health status of child workers provides important information concerning the harmfulness of work. The information collected by the two surveys in this area differed somewhat, limiting the comparability of the survey results. The SIMPOC survey looked at the work-related health problems of working children in considerable detail, collecting information on the frequency and severity of injuries and on the frequency, type and

severity of illnesses, over both 14-day and one-year reference periods. The questions were addressed to the main respondent as well as to the children themselves. But the SIMPOC questions looked only at working children and in the case of illness or injury, only referred to those illnesses or injuries that were directly related to their work. This means that it was not possible from the survey results to compare the health of working children with that of children falling into other activity categories.

5.12 The LCMS questions on child illness/injury were somewhat less detailed, looking only at the type of health problem and whether or not medical help was sought. The questions referred to any type of illness or injury, regardless of whether or not they were work-related and therefore did not isolate the specific effects of work. Unlike SIMPOC, however, the LCMS questions were addressed to all children, thus permitting a comparison of the health status of working children with that of other children. The SIMPOC survey yielded a slightly higher estimate of current illness or injury among children who only worked than the LCMS survey, even though SIMPOC looked only at illness or injury that was work-related. Looking at the LCMS estimates of injury/illness prevalence across activity categories, it appears that working children are no worse off health-wise than other children.

5.13 With regard to the measurement of household and schooling expenditures, it is found that the LCMS survey questions were much more detailed than the SIMPOC survey questions. The SIMPOC survey questionnaire included six categories of household expenditures, that is, transportation to and from school, food, electricity, charcoal and firewood, water, rent and cable/pay T.V. The LCMS survey questions relating to household expenditures were much more detailed and numerous. The measure of household expenditures based on the LCMS survey was derived from over 50 detailed questions on expenditures for medical expenses, clothing and footwear, housing (rent, water, electricity, candles, firewood), cash remittances, public transport, personal transport, personal services (toiletries, cosmetics, laundry services, entertainment) and food. These differences in the survey questionnaires led to significant discrepancies in mean household expenditure estimates across the two surveys. The more comprehensive set of questions contained in the LCMS survey resulted, not surprisingly, in a much higher estimate of household expenditures, both food and non-food.

5.14 Second, schooling expenditures are considered. Here, important differences can be noted between the two surveys. The SIMPOC survey included information on the costs of transport to and from school, whereas the LCMS did not. The LCMS survey included costs associated with the purchase of books and stationary, as well as a residual category aimed at capturing any other additional expenses related to schooling, neither of which was included in the SIMPOC survey. The LCMS survey collected information on expenditures for the first, second and third school terms, while the SIMPOC survey only looked at schooling expenditures for the first school term. These questionnaire differences resulted in a substantial variation in the estimates of mean schooling expenditures across the two surveys. In this case it was the SIMPOC survey that yielded the higher estimate.

5.15 Lastly, the two surveys are compared with regard to measurement of correlates and determinants of child work and schooling. The results from the two surveys point to similar broad correlates of child work and schooling. Also, neither survey suggests

an important link between gender, child work and schooling. The surveys indicate that the schooling attendance of boys and girls is virtually equal. Both surveys indicate that child work is closely related to the child's place of residence (urban or rural). The survey results underscore the fact that child work in Zambia, as in most African countries, is primarily a rural phenomenon. A strong relationship between household expenditure, on the one hand, and child work and schooling, on the other, is also apparent from the two surveys. The effect is more pronounced for SIMPOC than for LCMS. The education level of the household head appears to be another important correlate of child work and schooling prevalence.

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Child labour definition, data and international legal instruments

Child labour is a complex phenomenon as not all work done by children can be regarded as child labour. A distinction must be made between child labour, on the one hand, and children's activities considered part of a natural socialisation process, on the other hand. Child labourers are those entering the labour market, or those taking on too much work and too many duties at too early an age. Thus, child labour is not defined by the activity itself equal to work, play, going to school or other activities that children might be occupied with, but by the effect the activity has on the child.

Various international legal instruments attempt to define child labour. The first attempt to define child labour in an international convention was made by the ILO at its founding congress in 1919. From the time of the first convention, which settled on 14 years as the minimum age for public and private industrial undertakings, to the adoption of convention 138 in 1973, a gradual development of the concept has taken place. The idea has been to determine which activities children should not be allowed to undertake in the labour market. Hence the ILO definition has until recently been based on the child's role in the labour market. A more comprehensive approach was taken through the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1979, in which the definition of child labour was based on the effect that the work may have on the child, regardless of whether the work could be classified as labour market work or not. The child rights principle was adopted by the ILO in 1999 through Convention 182 (C 182) on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. These three conventions, the ILO convention 138 (C 138), the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child and ILO convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour form the basis for the international definition of child labour.

The conditions set forth in the three Conventions are basically of a qualitative nature. The work or activities undertaken by a child, defined as a person under the age of 18, should not be hazardous or harmful to the child's health and physical, mental, moral, or social development. In addition, for children of primary school age, the work or activity should not interfere with the child's education. To make the qualitative definition operational, age limit conditions are constituted (in C 138) based on the current knowledge of the effect of work on children. There are various age limits, depending on the kind of work, when compulsory education normally ends, and whether the country is developing or industrialised.

First, there is a general definition of a child as a person less than 18 years of age. No person under 18 should undertake work that involves health-threatening or hazardous activities. Secondly, the minimum age of legally entering the labour market as a full-time worker is set at 14 years of age for developing countries and 15 in other countries. In all cases, full-time work must begin only after the age of completing compulsory education. Thirdly, the minimum age for entering the labour market doing light work is set at 12 for developing countries and 13 in other countries. At this age, the child can do some work outside of the household, provided that it does not interfere with schooling. The child may also enter into vocational training. If a child is under 12 to 13 years of age, he or she should not be active in the labour market, but

may still undertake duties within the household or under the guidance of the parents and as part of the socialisation process, provided the work does not interfere with schooling or pose a threat to health.

With respect to the development of core indicators and statistics on child labour, it is notable that the points of departure for the different survey instruments on child labour have been different. Until recently, the instruments have not specifically focused on trying to identify child labourers in accordance with national and international legislation. Instead data on economically active children (comprises persons in paid employment, self-employment and the unemployed) have been published as a proxy for child labour data.

In 1995, the ILO published child labour statistics based on labour market surveys, including four so-called experimental surveys (Ghana, India, Indonesia and Senegal) where working children had been specifically looked at using the number of economically active children as a proxy for child labourers. As a result of using the category economically active, as proxy for child labour, ILO found that among full-time workers boys outnumbered girls at a rate of three to two.

At the 16th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1998, ILO discussed the concepts, definitions, measurements and classifications of child labour in more depth. The Conference recommended that work of a domestic nature (household chores) performed by children in their own parents or other relative's homes where they actually lived, should be included in mapping children's schooling and non-schooling activities. The recommendation indicates that non-market work of a domestic nature in the parents or guardian's household would then be classified and tabulated in various ranges according to the number of hours of performing such work in order to establish a threshold beyond which the activity could be deemed as constituting child labour. Together with the adoption of the new convention on the worst forms of child labour in 1999, the conference opened the way for a new survey instrument built around the SIMPOC programme. Parallel to this, UNICEF initiated its own process for obtaining better data on child labour based on the definition in the CRC. After the Oslo Conference on Child Labour in 1997, the World Bank was also drawn into the work of developing better child labour data. The World Bank bases its survey instrument, the LSMS, on the ILO definition of economically active children.

**Summary comparison of survey instruments –
SIMPOC, LSMS, MICS**

Respondent:

- ILO-SIMPOC – Head of household and child
- LSMS – Head of household and (not always) child
- MICS – mother

Sample Size and design:

- ILO-SIMPOC – 10,000 + special group of employed children
- LSMS – 2500 to 5000
- MICS – 5000 to 10000

General time use:

- ILO-SIMPOC - No
- LSMS - Rarely
- MICS – No

Labour market work, hours worked:

- ILO-SIMPOC - Yes
- LSMS - Yes
- MICS – Yes

Non-labour market work/housework, hours worked:

- ILO-SIMPOC - Yes
- LSMS – No, except collecting firewood and water
- MICS – Yes

Time spent at school:

- ILO-SIMPOC - Yes
- LSMS - Yes
- MICS – Yes

School performance:

- ILO-SIMPOC - Yes
- LSMS - Repetition
- MICS – Repetition

Cut-off age:

- ILO-SIMPOC – 5 years
- LSMS – start of primary education. Maximum 10 years of age.
- MICS – 5 years

Description of the work:

- ILO-SIMPOC – ILO adult standard
- LSMS – ILO adult standard
- MICS – None

Market work injuries:

- ILO-SIMPOC - Yes
- LSMS - No
- MICS – No

Non-market work injuries:

- ILO-SIMPOC - No
- LSMS - No
- MICS – No

Use of machinery and/or chemicals:

- ILO-SIMPOC - Yes
- LSMS - No
- MICS - No

Other survey instruments – DHS, Qualitative and WHO surveys

A. United States Agency for International Development, Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)

USAID has initiated and financed demographic and health (DHS) household surveys in a number of countries. The questionnaire used by DHS is quite similar to that used by the UNICEF MICS surveys. DHS maps both work and education status and in some cases special child labour modules are also included. DHS defines work as working for someone not a member of the household, paid or unpaid. Additionally, work on the family farm or in the family business and household work are mapped. Work for someone who is not a member of the household is divided into categories which are more suited than standard industrial categorization for child labour activities. The questions are asked of the head of the household and the term child labour is used in the heading of the module, both probably affecting the results.

Next, while the education status is mapped, the surveys do not normally include mapping conflicts between work and education activities or health and safety questions linked to work or other activities. In some surveys relevant information can be obtained on counts such as activities of children aged six in the last week, the main reasons for not going to school among children aged six, where children aged six worked during the last month and whether children aged five years and above were currently working.

B. Qualitative surveys

These surveys cannot be used to generate general data and are used in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the phenomena being surveyed. In this way, the surveys contribute to the process of developing proper survey instruments by helping to understand and refine concepts and indicators. An example of this type of research is the Rapid Assessment (RA) methodology developed by the ILO-International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) together with UNICEF. The aim of the RA methodology is to investigate the types of activities children undertake so as to aid the construction of relevant categories.

RA methodology uses several data collection strategies contemporaneously. Semi-structured interview guides are often used and numerical data may be collected. Rapid assessments do not use structured questionnaires as in the household surveys. The challenge is to get access to the informants who can best describe child labour and other activities undertaken by children. The strategies could include collecting existing information, discussions and consultations with knowledgeable individuals and organizations, in-depth discussions with key informants, observations, individual interviews and group interviews. Focus groups bring together a number of children and generate dynamics that cannot be obtained through individual interviews. Several methods are used to identify which children to interview. The ILO-UNICEF approach

is to start with discussions with country-level counterparts and partners to reach a consensus on country specific approaches. Local, national and regional consultations may be used to ensure consistency on issues of child labour and to distinguish between work, as a culturally perceived socialisation process, and labour detrimental to a child's development.

By using the rapid assessment methodology, one may identify and describe what children are doing at different times of the day, the different hazardous, unhealthy or illicit conditions some of their activities may involve, the characteristics of those children undertaking activities that may be defined as child labour and the characteristics of their families and social networks. Rapid assessment methodology may be particularly suited to determine the existence of hidden or hard-to-access forms of child labour.

C. World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO has taken up the question of children's environmental health, including the health effects of child labour. The aim is to develop, test and provide countries with a methodology for assessing the effects of environmental risks on the health of working children.
