

2007 Annual Report for ACT/EMP's Child Labour Project shows that Employers' Organisations are taking more and wider range of actions that are having an impact in combating child labour in Africa, Eastern Europe and Caucasus

The Annual Report highlights how over the past year, the project has helped set in place child labour services provided by employers' organizations (EOs) such as training programmes, advice on child labour legislation and developing policies and codes of conduct. The project has also enabled the involvement of employers' organizations in influencing national child labour policies in Moldova and Malawi. The project is currently working with EOs in 9 countries from Africa, Eastern Europe and Caucasus.

One of the major events of 2007, an [Interregional Conference for Employers on the Fight against Child Labour](#) for top-level representatives of 14 national employers' organizations in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It aimed to highlight the problem of child labour and share experiences in combating it. A Joint Statement was adopted, where the EOs declared their commitment to eliminate child labour through: raising awareness; advocating compliance with national and international laws on child labour; cooperating with national governments in developing and implementing elimination strategies at the national, regional and sectoral level, in particular towards the worst forms of child labour and by promoting education and health policies that support the lives and skills of children.

Concrete steps to promote collaboration between employers' organizations on tackling child labour were discussed, with proposals tabled for a future Inter-Regional Conference to be held in Azerbaijan. There was also a demand for having the newly published ILO-IOE Child Labour Guides translated into Russian. Both of these requests will be realised during 2008.

The ["Guides for Employers on Eliminating Child Labour"](#) developed by ACT/EMP, in collaboration with the International Organisation for Employers (IOE) were finalized and published in 2007. The Guides were then launched at the Employers' Group meeting at the International Labour Conference in June, and has since been translated into French, Spanish and Russian, with copies distributed worldwide to businesses, employers' organisations, development agencies, universities and NGOs. ACT/EMP will organize the launch of the Spanish version of the Guides at a regional conference to be held in Latin America in October 2008, while the Russian version will be launched at a regional conference in Baku, Azerbaijan in October 2008.

In December 2007, the national employers' association of Ghana (GEA) launched the Guides at a ceremony attended by more than 80 business leaders and development organizations. The event attracted wide media coverage. In Mongolia, the employers' federation is translating the Guides into the national language and will develop corresponding training programmes. The national employers' organizations in Azerbaijan, Ghana and Georgia also have plans to use/adapt the guides for the development of training materials in their respective local languages.

In 2008, ACT/EMP will develop an outreach strategy to market its recent publications (such as the Child Labour Guides) to the business world. In collaboration with the IOE, ACT/EMP also plans to reach out to multi-national companies.

Country-level summary of main achievements in 2007:

Moldova: The employers' federation [launched a Code of Conduct on the elimination of child labour](#) in the agricultural and food processing sector. This was the result of an extensive awareness-raising campaign conducted by the national agricultural organization (FNPAIA) through its pool of trainers attached to its regional branches. The code was officially launched at an open Board Meeting in Chisinau in December. The event was covered by several TV and radio stations, including BBC Radio.

Ghana: The Ghana Employers' Association assisted 5 plantations to develop and disseminate codes of conduct for their suppliers in the oil palm and rubber sectors. To monitor compliance with the codes, an 'inspection team' was set up and trained. The Team comprises representatives from the plantations, Factories Inspectorate Division and trade unions. An IPEC specialist on OSH (from Geneva) conducted the training programme.

In addition, the Ghana Employers' Association, at the request of companies in the cotton growing sector, has started an awareness-raising campaign in the cotton-growing regions of northern Ghana and plans to assist the cotton company in developing a policy aimed at curbing the use of child labour.

Uganda: As part of bi-partite effort between the national employers' organization (FUE) and the national trade unions (NOTU) [the survey on child labour in the inland fisheries sector was finalized](#).

Malawi: The national employers' organization, ECAM, launched its Child Labour Policy. The on-going awareness campaign against child labour was extended to an additional tea-growing district, Nkhatabay, and closer ties were forged with the national smallholder association NSHTDC. In addition training and advocacy materials were translated into the local Chichewa language.

Ethiopia: The employers' federation (EEF) extended its awareness raising campaign against child labour to 5 additional plantations in the tea and coffee sector, bringing the total number of plantations covered by the project in Ethiopia to eleven.

Mongolia: The national employers' organization, MONEF, continued lobbying for the adoption of the new law on artisanal mining, which will if passed regularize the mining sector and diffuse the conflict between the gold mining companies and the informal miners.

A key feature of the MONEF project is the Memorandum of Understanding between the organization and the formal mining companies. When mining companies sign the MoU they pledge not to use child labour, and to collaborate with Government in efforts to eliminate child labour. By the end of 2007, a total of 41 companies had signed the MoU, twenty of which had undertaken various CSR initiatives including helping children return to school,

contributing to school building funds and employing informal miners. Another 19 companies are scheduled to sign the MoU in early 2008.

Azerbaijan: The employers' organization, ASK, expanded its awareness-raising campaign against child labour to the tea and tobacco growing regions of Azerbaijan. Roundtable meetings were held and training and information materials are being produced to sensitize communities to the problems of child labour.

Georgia: A survey on child labour was conducted in the fruit-growing regions of Georgia aimed at assessing the prevalence of child labour. The findings were presented at a national conference organized by the GEA and later at awareness-raising workshops in the regions.