

IPEC's Global Campaign
for Ratification of Convention No. 182
on the Worst Forms of Child Labour

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Overview and Objectives

The Campaign for Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour aims to achieve universal ratification as quickly as possible, building upon the momentum of the unanimous adoption of the Convention by the International Labour Conference on 17 June 1999.

But ratification is only the first step. The Ratification Campaign must also set the stage for immediate and effective implementation of the Convention and its Recommendation, through the establishment and implementation of national policies, legislation and time-bound programmes. In doing so, the Campaign also will raise long-term awareness and understanding of child labour issues in member States.

Target Audiences

While it is appealing to attempt to conduct a massive global campaign that targets the general public, it is essential that the Ratification Campaign for the new Convention remained tightly focused on several key target audiences:

- Parliamentarians and government officials involved in decision-making directly related to ratification by their governments
- Inter-governmental organizations that are existing or potential partners in the Campaign
- Officials of employers and workers organizations that are existing or potential partners in the Campaign
- Representatives of non-governmental organizations, including women organizations, and religious organizations that are existing or potential partners in the Campaign
- International and national news media.

With effective outreach to these target audiences, the general public should receive significant amounts of information on the worst forms of child labour, primarily via television, the print press and the World Wide Web, as well as via the campaign activities of IPEC's social partners.

Campaign Cycles

The intensive phase of the Ratification Campaign is envisioned as a two-and-a-half year initiative that began in June 1999 and will end in December 2001. Like any well-planned campaign, this effort will have several cycles of activity.

During the start-up phase, which ran from June to end-December 1999, the ILO/IPEC established a Ratification Campaign Team and its technical infrastructure, including a work plan and Events Calendar. The Campaign Team:

- ❑ Began gathering significant information from the field on ratification prospects, using this information to help target priority countries for ratification efforts
- ❑ Produced a wide range of advocacy materials, including print, video, electronic slides (PowerPoint) and portable exhibits
- ❑ Identified and impacted on 34 key events or conferences around the world, between August and end-December 1999, where key target audiences attended; this included speeches by ILO officials, extensive distribution of printed materials, display of large portable exhibits and distribution of the Campaign's main video
- ❑ Started offering assistance to ILO and IPEC offices, as well as social partners, on conducting national ratification campaign initiatives.

The current cycle of the campaign is perhaps its most intensive and covers the year 2000.

Among the Campaign's most important actions in 2000 are:

- ❑ Ongoing creation and broad distribution of advocacy materials; for example, the Campaign has already distributed – globally in English, French and Spanish – some 20,000 copies of the main campaign brochure to parliamentarians, government officials and to officials of employers organizations, trade unions and non-governmental organizations
- ❑ Identifying and are making an impact on 50 to 100 key events and conferences during 2000 with presentations from ILO officials, as well as, lobbying, exhibits and materials distribution
- ❑ Starting to make a major impact on the news media, both internationally and in key priority target countries; internationally there has been significant coverage from organizations such as BBC and Sky TV, and nationally and regionally there has been coverage in Southeast Asia, on the Indian subcontinent and in East Africa
- ❑ Launching, later in the year, an International Support Committee, which will bring a variety of VIPs into the effort, including elder statesmen and women, professional athletes and entertainers.

The third cycle of the Campaign will take place during 2001. The first order of business will be to refine the list of priority countries targeted for ratification and to keep up pressure for ratification via national campaigns. The Campaign also will impact on another 50 to 100 key events and conferences. Early next year will be a time for exchanging information among those conducting national ratification campaigns, in order to learn what approaches work best. Other strategies developed for 2001 will depend on the results of the Campaign in 2000.

Strategic Considerations for the Campaign

An international campaign for ratification must strictly follow certain well-tested principles for successful outreach. These include:

- ❑ **A multi-cultural emphasis.** The Campaign and the materials produced for it must be planned, designed and produced for maximum multi-cultural usefulness, in order to leverage the impact of campaign expenditures on a global scale.
- ❑ **Solution-oriented messages.** The Campaign must use positive, solution-oriented messages. Whenever problems of child labour are presented, they must be followed-up by the presentation of possible solutions
- ❑ **Visual communications.** Emphasizing visual communications enables the campaign to maximize the multi-cultural usefulness of the materials.
- ❑ **Design and stylistic consistency.** There must be consistency of visual design and writing style, particularly in the production of printed and online materials, in order to enhance the Campaign's credibility, cost-effectiveness and audience impact.

Advocacy Content

There must be a consistency of approach in terms of the content, and the content to be communicated must be based on IPEC case studies, best practices reports and, more generally, success stories from the field. These stories must include human interest – meaning they must explain, in personal terms, how specific children and families are being helped by initiatives to combat child labour.

Campaigning Materials

An effective Campaign must employ a wide range of information dissemination vehicles in order to reach key target audiences and to help build broad public support for action against child labour.

This includes more traditional materials such as publications, as well as **non-traditional communication methods** for reaching people in the poorest areas, where child labour is often a major problem. Street theatre, radio programmes, travelling puppet shows, wall posters and non-broadcast displays of video productions are some of these useful techniques.

Television, while perhaps the most expensive communications medium, remains perhaps the best way to engage target audiences. Hence, the Campaign will produce a series of short videos, primarily designed for placement on general news programmes in any country.

The **Internet** is an effective – and highly cost-effective – medium for reaching audiences, although primarily in the developed world, where online campaigning, via the World Wide Web, is an increasingly important tool, especially for non-governmental organizations.

The IPEC Web site, to be radically upgraded in 2000, will emphasize the Campaign, as well as serve as a central vehicle for information dissemination on child labour.

Together with the Internet, **Interactive CD-ROMs** are an inexpensive means of distributing large amounts of information. CD-ROM displays on stand-alone computers also have already been effectively used by the Campaign at a number of events in 1999.

Portable exhibits are an important means of making an impact at key events and conferences. New, lightweight materials employed in the Campaign's main exhibit have made this a user-friendly means of setting up impressive displays in three languages at numerous conference and workshops.