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**Eliminating the worst forms of
child labour in Asia**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Child labour has attracted increasingly more attention from multiple organizations since the early 1990s. The results are numerous. Practical action against child labour, in the form of policies, programmes and projects has been building on an unprecedented scale. The struggle against child labour has gained momentum and a wide variety of players now participate. These include governments; NGO's; trade unions; employers' organizations and international organizations.

IPEC. Launched in 1992 as a single donor programme with six participating countries, the International Labour Organization's *International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour* (IPEC)¹ has evolved into a partnership of nearly 90 countries. The programme plays a vital global leadership role with action programmes world-wide and mobilizing international support for action against child labour. Donor support for IPEC during 1998-1999 reached unprecedented levels. Today, 19 donor countries and four organizations are contributing to the programme². In Asia, IPEC has Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with 11 countries³, and a less formal involvement with two other countries⁴.

Key Features of IPEC's Strategy

The aim of IPEC is the progressive elimination of child labour, giving priority to the worst forms. The political will and commitment of governments to address child labour – in co-operation with employers' and workers' organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant parties in society – is the basis for IPEC action. Member states confirm this commitment by signing an MOU with the ILO to initiate action within the framework of IPEC. The Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work adopted in 1998, Convention 138 and Convention 182, and their accompanying recommendations, provide the policy framework for IPEC.

Two main strategies can be identified: the country programme approach and comprehensive and integrated projects. Country programmes involve a broad-based partnership – which is the foundation for sustainability – built from the start through an emphasis on in-country ownership. Broadly, these programmes consist of the following steps: (i) situation analysis; (ii) developing and implementing national policies; (iii) capacity building of relevant organizations and setting up institutional mechanisms (country programmes are guided by a National Steering Committee); (iv) awareness raising nation-wide, in communities and workplaces; (v) law enforcement; (vi) direct assistance to children and their families; (vii) mainstreaming child labour issues into socio-economic policies,

¹ IPEC is now an integrated part of the In Focus Programme on Child Labour.

² Germany, Belgium, Australia, France, Norway, Spain, The United States of America, Canada, Denmark, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, European Commission, Italian Social Partner Initiatives, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Austria, Finland, Japan, Poland, Japanese Trade Unions Confederation (RENGO), Sweden, Comunidad Autonoma de Madrid.

³ Thailand, Indonesia, India, Philippines, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Laos.

⁴ Viet Nam, China

programmes and budgets.

In places where country programmes are already in place with a firm political commitment, IPEC action also includes targeted projects to eliminate child labour in specific hazardous sectors or selected industries. These projects generally include workplace monitoring and social protection components and cover specific industrial sectors or geographical areas. They establish systems that withdraw children from specified workplaces, seek to keep the workplaces child labour free, and ensure that children withdrawn from work and their families are provided with realistic developmental opportunities.

Worst forms of child labour. Given the intolerable and exploitative nature of the worst forms of child labour on the one hand, and the little resources, lack of alternatives and low capacity within many countries on the other hand, action needs to be prioritized. The worst forms of child labour have always been a priority but they have assumed even greater significance since the adoption of new Labour Standards at the ILO International Labour Conference in June 1999. In Asia, target groups include children in prostitution and trafficking; in bonded labour; children in domestic work; children in agriculture; fishing operations; informal work sector; hazardous industries such as fireworks or bidi making; mines; brick kilns; automobile repair and other industrial workshops; the carpet industry and leather tanning.

What are the worst forms of child labour?

One of the important achievements of the new ILO Standards, is that it provides a clear consensus on the types of activities considered 'the worst forms'. According to the text of Convention No 182, they comprise: all forms of slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children; debt bondage; serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; the use, procurement or offering of a child for prostitution; production of pornography or pornographic performances; the use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs; 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.

Each country, after consulting with employers' and workers' organizations and other interested parties, must decide which of the latter types of work, should be included as a matter of priority. The text of the accompanying Recommendation No 190, advises that, in doing this, special attention is given to work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse; work underground, underwater, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces; work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads; work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels or vibrations damaging to their health; work under particularly difficult circumstances, such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer. The Convention also requires states to take account of the special situation of girls.

Prevention and removal. Two approaches are applied. Prevention remains as the most cost effective. Children already in the worst forms of child labour must be withdrawn, rehabilitated and reintegrated.

The process of withdrawing children from their work ranges from persuasive – such as dialogue with families, the children and law enforcement authorities – to coercive - such as rescue operations. Many practical problems can arise during implementation of removal programmes. They include problems with family reunification; dilemmas over the recycling of the withdrawn children; the lack of temporary shelters; illegal actions as only law enforcers have the right to enforce withdrawal and the need for new modes of cooperation between governmental and non-governmental partners, including trade unions, and employers' organizations.

When children are involved in work that harms them because of the working conditions or environment, a gradual and phased approach may be used. The work hazards should be removed and children should gain access to education, however they can, in a transitional phase, continue to be involved in light work that is not dangerous. Interventions can relate to occupational safety and health, technology improvements and the provision of social services such as legal or medical assistance, health, nutrition and recreational services.

However, for child victims of human rights violations, as described in the text of the Convention, such as child prostitution, drug trafficking or bonded labour, the withdrawal should be immediate and complete. They cannot be helped by the provision of support services while they continue to be in a slavery or abusive position.

Aim of the paper. Eight countries have ratified Convention No.182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour⁵ from the date of its adoption to the date of writing this paper. While no country in Asia has yet done so, an increasing number of countries are working towards ratification. After ratification the important work of implementing its provisions begins. Experience gained in the past can provide valuable guidelines for policy formulation and for the development of programmes and projects targeting the worst forms of child labour.

The purpose of this paper is to facilitate the process of implementation. First, it provides an overview of the key strategies involved in practical action to combat the worst forms of child labour. Second, the paper offers some examples to demonstrate how these strategies are applied in practice. Finally, the paper sums up some lessons learned for policy making and implementation.

2. STRATEGIES FOR PRACTICAL ACTION AGAINST THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR

Political will. Experience has shown that withdrawing children from the worst forms is possible, but can not be successful without a strong political will. This will must be embedded in a national policy that addresses issues such as improved legislation and enforcement; improved methodologies for identifying these children; awareness raising at all levels of society and the provision of viable alternatives for the children and their families, including rehabilitation measures.

⁵ Seychelles, Malawi, Ireland, Slovakia, Botswana, Finland, Brazil, United States of America

2.1 Policies at the national level

Multi-pronged strategy. Experience has shown that single-issue approaches and narrowly focused projects to combat the worst forms of child labour seldom achieve a sizable effect by themselves. Therefore a first requirement – after priorities have been set on what are the most critical forms of child labour – is that these activities are integrated into a larger whole. Policies should incorporate a multi-pronged strategy that encompasses the development of appropriate legislation and its enforcement, the promotion of fundamental rights and principles at work, and other human rights issues. It should also link with areas like income generation, employment promotion, welfare and the advocacy of childrens' rights.

Time-bound plan of action. Such a policy will then be the framework for a time-bound plan of action to be implemented by a broad alliance. A formally established institutional mechanism facilitates the coordination of implementation and monitoring of the plan of action.

ILO Standards. One of the most important tools for improving legislation and practices on the worst forms of child labour is to promote the ratification of the ILO Conventions No 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, No 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and No 29 on Forced Labour. The important test then lies in how the country meets its commitments. This involves the strengthening of existing laws as well as the machinery to enforce these laws, including the labour inspectorate and, where appropriate, the police, and other groups.

Education policies. Another important aspect is the provision of an integrated policy and plan of action for the provision of quality education that is relevant, accessible and free for all children. Child labour concerns should be explicitly addressed and integrated into this policy. Transitional education needs to be provided to those who are in the workplace to wean them from hazardous work and should consist of an integrated package of general education, life skills and practical skills training. It should aim at mainstreaming the younger children into formal education and vocational training systems. Also important are suitable options for older children who are not able to continue formal education and who should be prepared to enter the labour market.

2.2 Improving the knowledge base; knowing who are the highly vulnerable children

Where is child labour located. An important requirement for appropriate planning and priority setting is the availability of information about where the highest concentrations of hazardous child labour are located, and what are the characteristics of these groups. Traditional statistical surveys provide essential information on the causes, consequences and characteristics of child labour, and they are fundamental to long term planning.

Vulnerable groups. Some of the worst forms of child labour have particular features, such as being illegal or hidden, and it is difficult to capture these groups in mainstream

research. Some children are particularly vulnerable to abusive and exploitative work because of their age and sex, because they live and work on their own, or because they belong to socially excluded groups. Mapping out the geographical areas and focusing first on the vulnerable sections of society, by providing them with tailor made responses, is an effective way to use limited resources.

New methodologies. This requires the use of additional methodologies. Rapid assessments, participatory and qualitative research, need to be part and parcel of all preventive as well as curative programmes to ensure that interventions are appropriate to the needs of the specific target group.

Vulnerable groups	Targeted interventions
<p><u>Girl workers:</u> Cultural traditions in many parts of the world are such that parents systematically favour the education and development of boys rather than that of girls – this shows clearly in lower school enrolment rates and higher drop out rates. Their work is often invisible, and their problems and survival strategies different than boys. They are even more attractive as workers because they are socialized to be docile and obedient, and they are especially vulnerable to some of the worst forms of child labour such as child prostitution and domestic work. Many of them are also bonded.</p> <p><u>Street children</u> are another highly vulnerable group. Often abandoned, on their own, and exposed to negative peer pressure, they become easily involved in petty crime, alcohol and drug abuse, and in the worst forms of child labour.</p> <p><u>Socially excluded groups:</u> At particular risk are children from groups that are excluded from mainstream society – ethnic minorities, single-headed households, indigenous or tribal populations or the lower castes, migrants, slum dwellers, dysfunctional or poorly educated families. Bonded or trafficked children often belong to these groups.</p>	<p>Successful strategies include intensive awareness raising in communities where there are social and cultural constraints; provision of schools and child care facilities near the homes; female teachers; promotion of gender fairness and equality in schools and investment in the education and skill training of mothers. Specially vulnerable are pregnant girls and teenage mothers.</p> <p>Interventions must be well integrated and considered worthwhile by the children. These can include street education in an atmosphere of freedom and trust building, providing hands-on-learning and counseling, as many of these children are traumatized. Rehabilitation for substance abuse may also be necessary.</p> <p>Two principal causes for their high vulnerability are lack of income and attitudes and practices; factors that need to be addressed consistently and in an integrated manner, through social and economic empowerment programmes, safety nets, and special schooling provisions. Successful strategies can include, involving adults from these socially vulnerable groups; providing teachers from the same socio-cultural background and providing young people with employment opportunities in their own communities.</p>

2.3 Awareness raising

Raise awareness of different groups. Awareness raising leads to a good understanding of the issues and to the commitment of the groups concerned. Any attempt to combat the worst forms of child labour must include intensive awareness raising at the workplace; among employers; managers and young and adult workers and in communities.

Pay attention to culture and gender. This is especially true for the types of work that carry cultural and gender elements, or to which children are exposed because of ignorance. As gender is an important element of the problem, all strategies for action and all interventions should be gender sensitive. In many cases this will require an explicit gender component.

Who should be targeted, how, why

- ✓ *Parents*: home visits, monthly meetings, educational workshops, organizing committees, setting up self-help groups, women's groups, involving them as peer educators; incorporating explicit messages in children's and adult's education on the existence and nature of the worst forms of child labour.
- ✓ *Religious leaders, community leaders and community members, women's groups*: can be active members of child watch committees that take action and monitor child labour problems in their own villages. They can also be used for sensitization of parents and children.
- ✓ *Trade union leaders, teachers, educational leaders and their organizations*: can influence policies, but are also in a good position to raise awareness on the importance for education and training as alternatives to child labour, mobilize communities and implement tailor-made educational programmes; teach children as well as the parents about the risks involved in certain kinds of work. Teachers in particular can help to prevent child labour; they have daily contact, can monitor patterns of attendance and investigate reasons for absence.
- ✓ *The business sector, employers, manufacturers, (sub) contractors*: can monitor that workplaces remain child labour free and can also provide better opportunities and provide funding
- ✓ *Local community groups, trade unions and governmental agencies*: They can monitor workplaces, enforce legislation, negotiate with employers; integrate child labour in other mainstream activities.

2.4 Participation of target groups

Ownership. Experience shows that programmes using a participatory approach that actively involves the children, parents, community leaders and teachers, are the most successful. Participation is important at all stages including the planning phase. It builds ownership and empowers people and groups which in turn ensures sustainable results.

Mechanisms. Consultative mechanisms are needed to ensure that stakeholders have been part of the process of planning, problem-solving and decision-making. Decentralization of authority to local governments and community structures has often resulted in effective community participation.

In several countries, encouraging examples have shown how people, once they are committed, become very much involved in identifying solutions, and take responsibility for what they have come to consider 'their cause'. They find creative ways to reach out to 'invisible' children, such as self help groups or telephone hotlines. Local community watches, such as child welfare or vigilance committees have proven to be an effective tool and are increasingly used in many countries. These committees can monitor, undertake action and even provide limited resources and services where necessary. They provide vital information on working children, for example, and on the incidence of trafficking and active recruitment for child work. In some cases, they have succeeded in tapping local government resources for working children, such as for scholarships and support for para-teachers in non-formal interventions.

2.5 Providing alternatives

Integrated interventions. Programmes for prevention or withdrawal must be made up of a set of integrated interventions which needs to be designed carefully. Care has to be taken to ensure that the attempts to remove children from one sector or industry do not push them into other exploitative or abusive industries or occupations.

Depending on the situation of the target group, it can require interventions in education, counseling support, trauma treatment, the provision of a complete residential facility, assistance in reintegration with the family – or referral to such services provided by other organizations – compensation of income losses, income generation for the family, and other measures for economic and social empowerment.

The costs involved are often very high. More importantly, investments made are only successful, if, at least to some extent, the results achieved can be sustained. This requires innovative thought and action.

2.5.1 Education

Usable skills. The provision of education is most important to combatting child labour. Training initiatives are especially important when the target group is older. These programmes require careful planning to ensure that skills being imparted are in demand in the labour market and that the children will be able to acquire and utilize the skills they gain.

Mainstreaming and the challenges. While the preferred intervention is to integrate children at risk or those who have been removed from exploitative work into existing school and programmes, this is often not easy. Sometimes, parents react negatively as they don't think school attendance is relevant and does not compensate the lost income. Some children are too old, have been out of school for too long, or have had traumatic experiences and can't cope in a normal school environment. Flexible non-formal education can act as a bridge between work and school, and can facilitate the entry of children in formal schools, including the vocational training system. To counter the tendency of creating two systems, it is recommended that for such non-formal education programmes, functioning alongside the formal system, a system for accreditation be developed to ensure standards are consistent and respected and allow for an easier transition between both. Often, vocational training is more popular because it provides more realistic work.

measures are needed

Curricula must respond to the children's conditions, needs and problems.

Educational packages should be sensitive to age, gender and social class. Programmes that have a skill component must focus on skills that are locally employable. The inclusion of counseling facilities and peer support is important when children are mainstreamed into formal schools or when they are expected to look for work after they have completed the package. Other additional support services must also be provided when appropriate, including tutorial sessions, materials and book lending schemes. Support services may be required for the parents and teachers as well, guiding them on how to support their children

2.5.2 Income generation for parents and families and other income replacement strategies

Economic empowerment. In some cases the income that children earn is significant for sustaining families. As much as families would prefer to educate their children, they need the children to earn. The economic empowerment of poor and socially disadvantaged families whose children are at risk of becoming involved in the worst forms of child labour, or have been withdrawn from it, is therefore very important. Especially relevant are interventions for women's social and economic upliftment.

Lost income needs to be replaced with training and income generation activities for the families and the provision of credit, loan and saving facilities. This can involve more and better jobs – through income generating opportunities, employment creation, poverty alleviation schemes and small enterprise development.

Social safety nets. Destitute families, where possible, need to be linked up with existing social safety net mechanisms provided in the country, so that they have access to family subsistence allowances or other benefits in order to enable their children to benefit in removal programmes. Resources for such family subsistence allowances are best provided by governments, since such recurring costs are difficult to be sustained by donor funds through technical cooperation programmes. Several governments are providing such options to children and their families from government welfare funds.

There have been many examples where support services are provided to attract parents' and children's participation in programme activities. Sometimes incentives come in connection with school attendance of children. They can include health care, nutrition, cash payments, scholarships, school materials, school uniforms and transportation. Because the motivation for participation is mainly external, there are risks involved in this approach. They need to be carefully assessed in advance. First, sometimes the inclusion of these incentives is based on misconceptions. Experience has shown that (i) income earned is not always essential for the survival of families, and that (ii) parents are willing to invest in the development of their children, provided they consider the education and other services relevant. Second, these programmes have a high cost and are therefore not easily sustainable. This has in some cases been effectively addressed, by involving the schools and pursuing policy support and resources to implement income replacement measures. Third, if it becomes known that a programme contains a cash benefit component, it can become more difficult to reach the intended target groups

because relatively better off, more powerful parents will wish to enrol their children in the programme. Moreover child workers can be perceived as privileged, which creates inequalities in the communities, while it may even encourage parents to remove children from school so that they could be included as beneficiaries. Fourth, cash incentives have a tendency to create a dependant attitude without enhancing personal marketable skills or capacity.

To achieve a careful balance between necessity and efficiency the following measures have proven to be successful.

- ✓ Encourage children's participation in the programme.
- ✓ Parents can work as volunteers for the programme and their activities can depend on their individual talents and skills. This should be discussed from the outset. This kind of participation is likely to increase their appreciation of the impact of the benefits of the programme.
- ✓ It can also be useful to focus on income saving or expense reduction, instead of purely income generation. Some programmes produce the goods that meet the basic needs of the children and their families, helping them manage existing resources. This approach helps to practice problem solving and planning for very practical life needs, while also giving a sense of achievement to fulfil their immediate needs.

2.5.3 Rehabilitation

In addition to education, training, and health services, former child workers need to be provided with intensive counselling, a safe environment and often legal aid. In many cases, drop-in centres have been set up as a first call station, often run by NGOs, who offer professional services from social workers, family or child therapists and psychiatrists.

It is also important to provide continued support to the children and their families because for many of them, experiences have been traumatic. And, unless they receive personalized and professional social assistance for a longer period of time, they are likely to remain marginalised by society.

3. ILLUSTRATIONS FROM SOME PROGRAMMES IN ASIA

A wealth of information has been accumulated through IPEC programmes over the years. This section of the paper demonstrates how the strategies discussed above are applied in practice. Each programme selected has its own features however one common denominator is that they provide a set of integrated interventions.

Even though the numbers of children reached are relatively small, it shows that important achievements can be made with small budgets. Naturally, replicating these programmes on a larger scale requires extensive resources. Hence, the importance of

integrating child labour issues in the mainstream planning of governments and the need for continued international assistance in combating the worst forms of child labour becomes apparent.

3.1 Nepal - An integrated approach to address child bonded labour

Bonded labour is a complex problem. In spite of its legal abolition in 1924, it persists in five districts in Nepal, better known as the 'kamaiya system'. Indigenous families enter into annual employment contracts and because remuneration is inadequate for their basic needs, they take up loans. This leads to an accumulation of debt, and whole families, including children, are bonded to their employers for life.

This situation could only be effectively addressed through collective action at the national level, supported by a strong political will. Thus, a sustainable and large scale effort was needed. IPEC joined hands with UNICEF and the Government to develop an integrated programme. This is now being implemented by several partners, including the Government, employers' and workers' organizations, and NGOs.

Some of the achievements so far have been that the Government, in 1999, adopted a National Plan of Action, which is currently under implementation. The 9th Plan of Nepal (1995-2000) also allocated resources to address bonded labour. IPEC supports capacity building activities such as facilitating national workshops, training and awareness raising of government officials. Additional awareness raising activities for the public at large were conducted to spread information and produce social change.

'Kamaiya Liberation Forum' were established at the district level and trade unions have become increasingly involved in the liberation movement. When the legal mandate of trade unions was recently expanded to the informal sector, more agricultural workers joined the movement. They protested against the bonded labour system and negotiated for fixed minimum wages. As the movement gathers strength, the Kamaya's are beginning to escape from a state of passive resignation to their fate.

Children are provided with non-formal education, after which most of them are enrolled into formal schools. Special attention is given to the girl child. Many of them work as maids for the landlords. Working long hours for no pay, they are deprived of education and other development opportunities. They are hidden from sight and vulnerable to sexual and other abuse.

Economic empowerment of parents is also of critical importance. Parents are provided with entrepreneurship, vocational training, health care and counseling. Group formation is encouraged, among others for the establishment of cooperatives.

So far, the programme has been successful, but given the vast scale of the problem much more needs to be done. Continued efforts are needed on all levels, and more resources for the programme are being mobilized.

Title:	Towards elimination of child (bonded) labour in Nepal
Implementing Agency:	Department of Land Reform, employers, workers and non government organizations
Duration:	24 months (ongoing)
Budget:	US\$250,000
Aim:	Capacity building, prevention and removal of children in bonded labour situations.
Type of interventions:	Training of government officials and trade unionists, worker's education, policy building workshops, non-formal education for children, economic and social empowerment, monitoring and evaluation, community watches, awareness raising, skill training, cooperative development, coordination with programmes from other agencies including UNICEF, production and dissemination of information materials, additional resource mobilization.

3.2 Thailand - Mobilizing teachers to prevent child prostitution and trafficking

The risk of child prostitution is a particular problem in the northern areas of Thailand. Many children from poor families migrate to Bangkok or other urban areas, in search of sources of living and a more exciting life. Unaware of the problems that await them, many of these young girls are lured into prostitution by well-organized trafficking rings. Once this has happened, it is very difficult to reverse the situation and address the damage done. The size of this group is a much contested statistic, but the problem is generally recognized in the country as an important priority to be addressed and efforts for this are being taken on many fronts. The only effective way to address this complicated and delicate issue is through prevention. A well sensitized community and the availability of workable alternatives are important pre-conditions.

The aim of this programme was to set up a resource centre that has accurate information on the child labour situation and is able to spread information effectively. First, it used volunteer teachers, as well as relevant governmental and non government organizations to collect information on the incidence of child labour in the northern region of Thailand. Then, a well organized information package was developed, and used to make the situation known to the public.

The impact of the programme went much further. Thirty eight teachers became so involved that they voluntarily started acting as community watches. They had individual meetings with parents, used a video to alert the inhabitants of targeted villages on the dangers and deceptions involved, and provided counseling to girls at risk. Scholarships, which came from donations from the private sector, were arranged for them, as well as vocational training programmes for a smaller group of girls. It effectively changed the

lives of 3,400 girls, as well as the attitudes of their families and communities, improved the coordination between NGOs and the Government – which is now very good – and effectively introduced a working model of how community watches, built up from nothing but human commitment, can be instrumental in bringing about social change. The model has been further refined to increase the number of community watches.

Title:	Development of a Technical Resource Center for Campaigns Against Child Prostitution in Northern Thailand
Implementing Agency:	Thai Women of Tomorrow Programme, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University (NGO)
Duration:	12 months, (completed)
Budget:	US\$ 60,000
Aim:	Prevention of child prostitution
Type of interventions:	Awareness raising, mobilizing key groups through innovative methods, setting up community watches by teachers, 3,000 scholarships and 400 girls receive vocational training, strengthening collaboration between government and non governmental organizations, promote networking.

3.3 Cambodia - Trade unions remove children from hazardous work in brick making factories and become watchdogs

Brick making is a growing industry in suburban areas of Phnom Penh, employing many migrant families from rural areas. Workers live with their families in factory compounds and it is common that children work along with their families, especially during periods of peak production. Not only is their contribution quite important for the family income, but being migrants and having more difficult access to schools, they also have few other opportunities than to use their time for work. Working conditions are extremely hazardous; children are exposed to high heat; they work in noisy, dim, and badly ventilated places with inappropriate tools and hazardous machines. Accidents, some deadly, occur regularly. Children lose limbs or end up with lifelong injuries. Some children even become involved in bondage type conditions as they have to pay off advance payments made to their parents.

The programme, implemented by the Cambodian Union Federation (CUF), demonstrates how workers' organizations can play a significant role in the struggle against child labour, via awareness raising to change attitudes of parents, the provision of alternatives, and putting in place a system of workplace monitoring and negotiations with employers. With 18,000 members, CUF has enormous potential to reach people and create social change through a variety of awareness raising materials.

The union leadership trained some of their members on the problems involved and on the existing legal provisions. This turned them into change agents. Committed to their cause, they now convince the parents and employers to remove children from dangerous work, and ensure that these children have access to alternatives. They also negotiate with employers on the need to change the situation. Employers have been mobilized to

commit themselves not to recruit new under-aged workers. In the garment industry, where the union has a more formal presence, this commitment has been elaborated in a clause of the collective bargaining agreements.

At the start of the programme, many parents resisted the withdrawal from work of their children, but seeing how their children are provided with non formal education that prepares them for being mainstreamed into formal schools, their attitudes have changed. The 'converted' parents and other adult workers are now also encouraged to become watchdogs in the factories to monitor the child labour situation.

Title:	Non formal education and awareness raising programme for children working in brick making and garment factories
Implementing Agency:	Cambodian Unions Federation (CUF)
Duration:	16 months, (ongoing)
Budget:	US\$ 33,000
Aim:	To prevent and remove hazardous child labour in construction work and work in the textile factories.
Type of interventions:	Training of trade union leaders, individual consultations with families and Employers, other awareness raising, develop watchdog system among workers, non formal education programme and public school reintegration for children, with Ministry of Labour.

3.4 India - Children are removed from hazardous work and gradually mainstreamed into the formal education system

Poverty, among other factors, contributes to the problem of bonded child labour in agriculture in several districts of Andhra Pradesh. Girls are especially affected. Living on the margins of society, these children and their families live in a state of ignorance and disempowerment. People have a defeatist attitude that child labour is inevitable. Most children are out of school and have no prospects for a better future. The M. Venkatarangaiya Foundation has developed an innovative and integrated response that radically changed their lives as well as their environment.

Through the programme 4,500 children were removed from work and provided with a well coached non formal education programme that enabled them to be mainstreamed into formal schools.

For those children who had more difficulty with mainstreaming, a special bridging programme was established. Shortly before the start of the academic year, these children were enrolled in a three-month camp course. The camps use an innovative style of teaching, provided by well-trained and motivated staff, and prepare the children academically and psychologically for enrolment in formal schools. The results have been very positive. Children love their camp experience and it has a strong impact on

their self esteem. The success rate for enrolment as well as retention is nearly 100 per cent. Assistance was also provided for administrative arrangements, and there is a regular follow-up system to prevent children from dropping out.

To sustain the programme results, people in the communities, including youth volunteers, are mobilized, and are encouraged to set up village committees to monitor the situation and ensure that removed children stay away from work and into the formal schools where they were enrolled.

At the start of the programme, the families, as well as employers, (landlords) were extremely reluctant to collaborate. Gradually, they became more convinced of the usefulness of the interventions. The results have been impressive. The ideas of work removal and school enrolment are now fully internalized and supported by the villagers, the schools and the employers, which is the best guarantee that activities will be sustained. Formal school teachers, public officials and landlords, after initial resistance, are now very supportive of the programme and voluntarily make their own contribution to the programme; for instance some schools have taken responsibility for finding admission to high schools. Some of the children are also admitted by government-run social welfare hostels.

Title:	Eliminating child labour, and especially girl child labour and bonded agricultural labour, through mainstreaming children into formal education in Ranga Reddy District, Andhra Pradesh
Implementing Agency:	M Vankatarangaiya Foundation (MVF), Secunderabad (NGO)
Duration:	48 months (completed)
Budget:	US\$ 85,800
Aim:	To remove children from hazardous work and mainstream them into the formal schooling system and to mobilize the communities to sustain the actions taken.
Type of interventions:	Awareness raising, sensitization and mobilization, individualized approaches, provision of appropriate package of non formal education, special interventions to bridge the gap with formal education, monitoring of results, children mainstreamed into the formal system, assist children in getting access to higher education.

3.5 Bangladesh – Economic empowerment to eliminate hazardous child labour in the informal sector

Thousands of children in Bangladesh work in hazardous occupations in the informal sector. They come from very poor, illiterate families and work from dawn to dusk, for very little money. They suffer severe health problems and many become victims of debilitating work accidents.

This programme targets 420 children working in stone crushing and brick making, and 60 children at risk of prostitution or other illicit activities. To address the situation, a combination of strategies is used.

The children withdrawn from work are provided with transitional, non formal education for 18 months. After this, they are enrolled into formal schools. The programme also includes awareness raising activities and health care services. To reduce the family's dependency on the child's earnings, mothers receive small credits and are assisted in starting up income generating activities in areas such as the door-to-door selling of clothes and vegetables, or to start their own small shops.

The results of the programme so far, have been positive. Children were withdrawn from work and successfully attended the non-formal education programme, and because of the economic empowerment, parents were able to sustain these results. So far, there have been no drop-outs and children are satisfied with the opportunities given to them. The linkages with local school authorities are good and about 10 per cent of the children have already been mainstreamed, while others are in the process. The activities for mobilization are instrumental for continued success, and social workers are paying regular home visits to the parents and visiting the employers to guarantee their support and collaboration. Income levels of parents have been raised. Fourteen groups were given a loan between US\$20 and 100 to run small business activities. Women's status and decision-making in the families improved, as they were able to contribute more finances.

Another target group of this programme are children of sex workers, who are, in consultation with their mothers, given access to vocational skill training, which would allow them to stay away from prostitution. The skill training component for children of sex workers has been only partly successful. Still living with their mothers, these children continue to be exposed to an unhealthy environment, which makes rehabilitation more difficult.

Title:	Education and awareness raising programme providing alternatives for child Workers
Implementing Agency:	Bangladesh Mohila Sangha (BMS)
Duration:	20 months (ongoing)
Budget:	US\$ 22,000
Aim:	To withdraw 420 children from hazardous work in brick-making industry, economically empower their families, and prevent 60 children from entering prostitution
Type of interventions:	Awareness raising and mobilization, provision of non formal education and mainstreaming into formal schools, credit facilities for parents, especially mothers, and support to set up income generating activities; children of prostitutes are provided with skill training and they and their mothers are

	sensitized against the risks of child prostitution
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4. LESSONS LEARNED FOR POLICY-MAKING

Action is needed on various fronts but sequencing and co-ordination are important. The valuable experience gained from numerous small scale projects should be integrated in a strategically-planned national policy and time-bound plan of action to combat the worst forms of child labour on a priority basis. Governments alone cannot solve the problem. The existence of a broad alliance, including workers' and employers' organizations and non governmental organizations, as well as the public at large, is a precondition for success. Given the specific characteristics of the worst forms of child labour (e.g. invisible, illegal, difficult access and few partner agencies to service them), new modes of cooperation are needed.

The implementation of the time-bound plan of action should be monitored by a national committee set up by the Government, with participation of employers and workers organization and other groups, as appropriate. Decentralized mechanisms which can monitor the situation at the community and informal sector level, should also be provided.

These efforts need to be supported by an appropriate legal framework that also includes provisions for effective enforcement. The Conventions No 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, and No 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and their accompanying Recommendations (No 190, and No 146) provide an appropriate framework for this. Depending on the situation, labour inspectorates as well as other appropriate groups such as police, trade unions and vigilance committees will have to be mobilized for effective monitoring.

Prevention, removal and rehabilitation are the cornerstones of a multi pronged strategy. The removal of children from work and the subsequent rehabilitation and provision of alternatives are important tasks. Important as these interventions are, they are often very difficult and costly measures. An integrated approach that gives emphasis to prevention of the worst forms, is more cost effective than one that merely rescues and rehabilitates children at work. Affordable and accessible education of good quality, relevant to the needs of children and their families, and programmes addressing social exclusion, should be the centrepiece of any preventive strategy.

Reliable data on the characteristics of the worst forms of child labour and on where they are concentrated are essential. Situation analysis should be at the basis of all policy making and concrete action. In addition to standard data collection methods, innovative methodologies that take into account the often illegal, hidden and sensitive aspects related to the worst forms of child labour must be developed. They are a vital tool for: establishing priorities; determining who and where the target groups for immediate action are; fixing clear objectives; drawing up realistic programmes that correspond to the needs of the vulnerable groups; and for measuring progress. These can be done under the form of rapid, participatory assessments and must be an integral part of the planning, monitoring and evaluation process.

Certain groups of children are particularly vulnerable to hazards and abuse. They include the very young girls and children from socially excluded groups. Special attention must be given to these groups. All policy plans should include a gender and social analysis, and programmes of action should have appropriate gender and social components.

Awareness raising should be an integral part of all efforts. Once parents, the children themselves, their employers and communities are convinced that children should not be involved in hazardous or exploitative work, the most important condition for finding long-lasting solutions has been fulfilled. A wide dissemination of information combined with individualized approaches can be very effective for mobilizing people. If the problem is to be eradicated effectively, parents and the community must be convinced of the benefits of education and the damaging effects of the work. After that they can set up vigilance committees or the like, which will be a valuable tool for monitoring the situation.

People's participation is a guarantee for success. This ensures that solutions identified are responsive to the needs. There must be mechanisms that allow for active participation of all stakeholders and at all stages of the process, including planning, implementation and monitoring of intervention programmes. Where possible, programme planning and implementation should be decentralized to the community or village level.

Children can not be withdrawn successfully from work without being given a relevant alternative. Otherwise, these children can end up in situations which are even worse. Educational and training opportunities must be given which are considered relevant and that will contribute to their and their families' empowerment. Flexible interventions must be available which will differ depending on the characteristics of the target group. They must come in a package, that, as appropriate, includes personalized counseling and other rehabilitation measures. Non formal education programmes should, to the extent possible, be a transitional measure; the strategy being to mainstream children into formal schools. Integration of such education programmes into wider Governmental efforts to assist vulnerable groups, such as scholarship schemes or social safety nets for the poor, should be sought.

Economic incentives are important but they must be sustainable and part of a larger strategy. Many interventions provide economic incentives to compensate children and their parents for the loss of income once the children have been removed from work. Instead of simply handing out benefits, incentive schemes can be combined with employment and income generation activities for the parents, with a goal of reducing the parents dependence on their children's contributions to the household income. Child labour programmes which are embedded in larger development programmes to uplift the socio-economic position of marginalized groups stand a higher chance of success.