

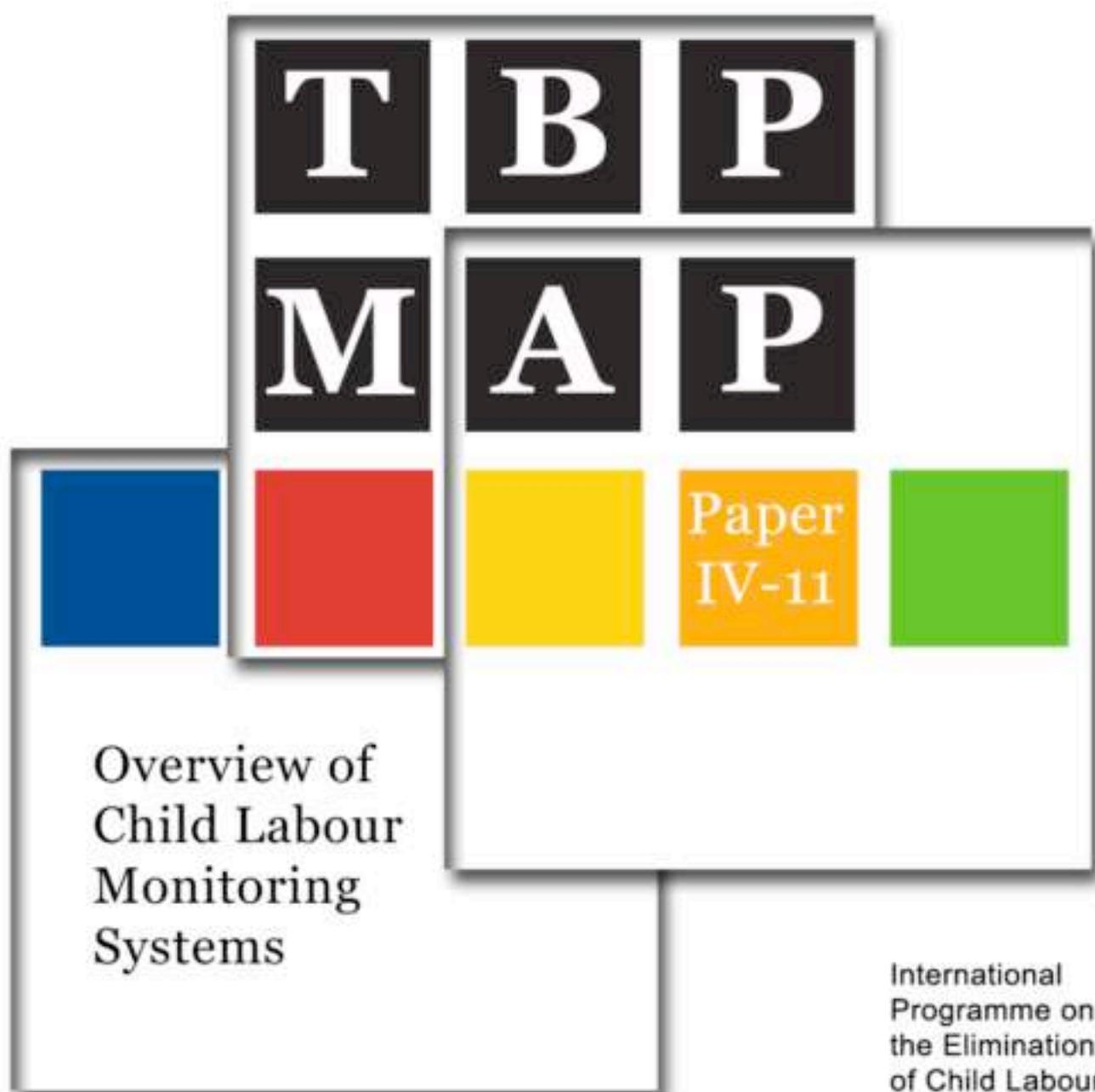
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International
Labour Office

Time-Bound Programme

Manual for Action Planning



Overview of Child Labour Monitoring Systems

Strategy and Tool against Child Labour

**Technical Unit on Hazardous Child Labour & Child
Labour Monitoring**

IPEC

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Overview of Child Labour Monitoring Systems

Introduction

One of the most potent means of addressing child labour is to regularly observe worksites. Child labour monitoring (CLM) is an active intervention strategy against child labour that operates at both upstream and downstream policy and programme levels. The basic function of CLM is surveillance, identification and referral of child labourer to appropriate services.

At the local level this involves monitoring workplaces to identify children at work, the hazards they are exposed to, and to find meaningful alternatives such as school, non formal education or skills development programmes that they can be referred to. At the district or national level this involves monitoring child labour trends through analysis of information coming from the local level for purposes of policy improvement and social planning. CLM is thus both a strategy for national action and operational tool at the level of the workplace to reduce child labour.

The overall objective of CLM is to ensure that, as a consequence of the monitoring, children and young workers are safe from exploitation and hazards at work. CLM is a chain of action that promotes legal workforce, healthy work environment and schooling or other growth-enhancing activity for all children. CLM provides with a pro-active tool to use information on CL for immediate action and follow-up that action is taken. It is also a tool to strengthen constituents capacities at the “workplace” to understand and eliminate CL, to manage risks and to improve working conditions and the wellbeing of children and parents.

As much as possible CLM works through established system of labour inspection and workers representatives. In areas where the labour inspection system is weak or does not have stationary powers CLM system promotes creation of multi-sector teams that extend the scope of monitoring the workplace to traditionally hard to reach areas and sectors.

CLM is most effective if it operates as a system within a national framework. This framework enables monitoring at all levels of governance and facilitates the creation of broad-based alliances among government, Trade Unions, Employers’ organizations, communities and other development partners. A functional multi sector alliance is a potent tool toward transparency, accountability and sharing of information, which not only are key elements of the system but which also helps to cultivate a culture of “Good Governance”.

It is important that CLM be conceived of and developed as a system, wherein these different actors all play an important role. CLM system facilitates regular sharing of information across ministry lines and levels of administration and provides a platform of action for a wide range of partners. Most of all, it provides a long-term, sustainable mechanism through which child labour can be checked regularly.

Monitoring and observing child labour through an established system is, as much an act of prevention, as it is an act of enforcement. It is through this chain of action— identification of young workers, assessment of hazard, referral to school (or other

appropriate activity) – that CLM helps to ensure that children are actively removed especially from worst forms of child labour.

Through the act of observation, CLM also generates accurate information on child labour, which can be used for assessing levels, patterns and trends of various forms of CL. It can give an indication of the effectiveness of national measures that have been taken to eradicate CL by providing numbers that can be compared over time. This is especially valuable for reporting on international commitments such as on the implementation of ILO C.182 on hazardous forms of child labour. C.182, in fact, through its article 5, calls for the establishment of appropriate mechanisms for monitoring the provisions of the Convention.

The information that is generated through the direct, on-the-spot observations of CLM can be used to document child labour trends in specific sectors or areas, or aggregated at district and even national level. This information on working children—who they are, where they come from, what hazards they are exposed to—helps policy-makers at all levels know where the problem lies so they can take action accordingly.

1. Child labour Monitoring – Definition and Rationale

1.1 Child Labour Monitoring

CLM is based on repeated inspections of places where children might be working regardless if the work is conducted in a factory, field, or home. Because so much child labour is in the agricultural and informal sectors, monitoring cannot be done by the official inspectorate alone. To expand the number of inspectors or gain access to hidden work, monitoring functions can be delegated to community groups, NGOs or even police. CLM draws upon all existing child information systems, such as schools, social welfare bureaus, or drop-in centres; alternatively, monitoring can be done in conjunction with the inspectorate through joint monitoring teams.

Whatever the means, monitoring must not be done without follow-up action, whether awareness-raising of employers and parents, enforcement, or referral of child workers to school or other suitable alternatives.

The concept of CLM has been developed through sector-specific efforts to monitor child labour. These evolved as a result of specific industry requirements or were based on particular child labour projects.

- Examples of different “monitoring” approaches relevant to CL:
- School inspection and monitoring (acting through teachers and parents groups)
- Workplace monitoring (acting through LI or/and independent monitoring teams)
- Health referrals (acting through health workers)
- Community based monitoring (acting through Local Government, peoples organizations local action groups i.e. anti trafficking efforts)

- Social auditing and industry-specific labelling and certification schemes (voluntary self-monitoring, codes of conduct and specialized verification and ISO standards)

Child Labour Monitoring (CLM)

CLM is an active tool for stopping child labour. It involves direct observations, repeated regularly, to *identify* child labourers and to determine risks to which they are exposed, to *verify* that they have been removed (or that risks have been reduced to an acceptable level) and to *track* them to ensure that they have satisfactory alternatives.

Information generated through CLM can be used to document child labour trends in specific sectors or areas.

These different sector- and area-specific interventions have developed procedures and tools that serve them well in a limited sense. However, they neither tend to work independently of each other and neither share information nor are extensive enough to cover large areas adequately. An additional problem is that they also tend to be very expensive, and therefore are not sustainable over the long-term. In order for these different CLM systems to be relevant at the national level, there is a need for an overall framework that will facilitate sharing of information and ensure clear links to national policies.

1.2 Three Stages of CLM

Three stages of CLM have been identified (Pre-/Monitoring/Follow-up), which have a corresponding set of practical activities that are intended to ensure that basic requirements at all three stages of monitoring are met before setting up a CLMS.

Figure 1. Three Stages of Child Labour Monitoring

Stages		
<u>Pre-monitoring</u>	<u>Monitoring</u>	<u>Follow-up</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partnerships ➤ Policies and laws ➤ Services and tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Workplaces and schools monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Follow-up action taken

Activities		
Preparation	Monitoring/Inspection	Follow-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Situation analysis and baseline information ➤ Review of legal framework ➤ Information management and data collection review ➤ System design, adaptation and testing ➤ Basic training ➤ Awareness-raising ➤ Alliance and capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Operation and management training ➤ Area mapping/profiling ➤ System set-up, consolidation and system scaling ➤ Observation and tracking ➤ Documentation and reporting ➤ Referral and advising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rehabilitation and Direct services ➤ Enforcement ➤ Verification ➤ Information analysis ➤ Policy improvement ➤ Statistical cross-checking/review ➤ Reporting

1.3 Child Labour Monitoring System

To perform all intended functions CLM should be nation-wide and based on a set of agreements about the information to be collected and how the system will be managed. It should also be based a collective partnership using methods and tools from different sectors and traditions of inspection work.

Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS)

As a System, CLM is an integrated effort of several parties, taking place at different levels and different stages. The system incorporates and assigns a place in the monitoring system to these parties based on their differing capacities to access, to assess, and to act on child labour

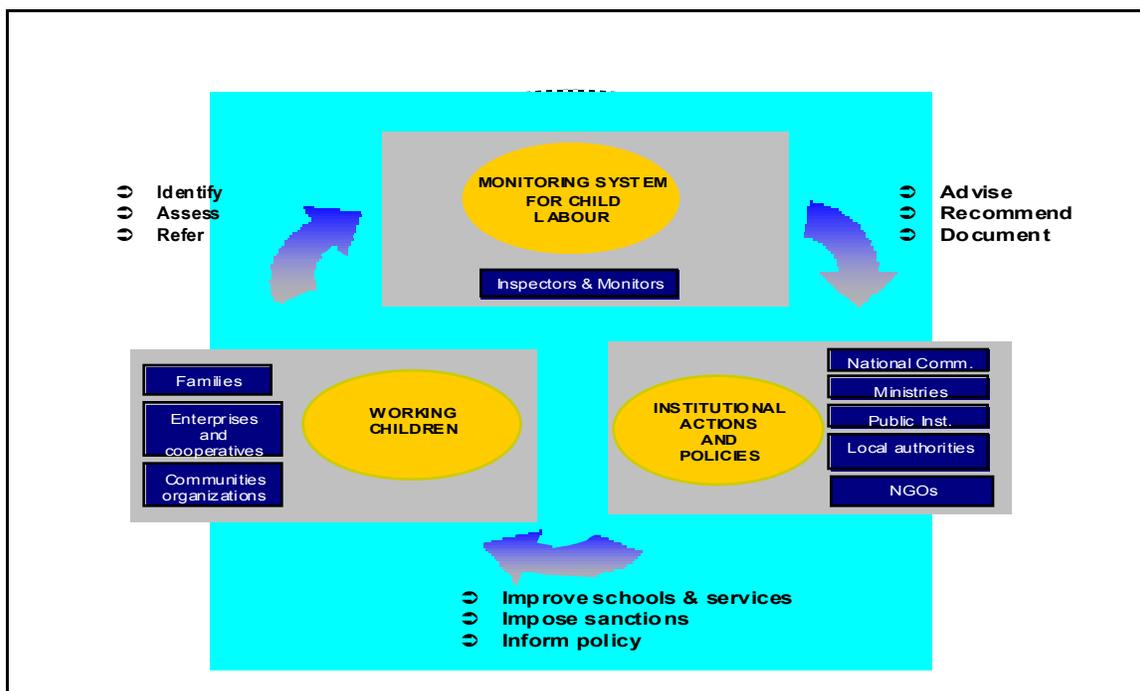
It is important to understand the difference between comprehensive CLMS and “project” monitoring, which is done to evaluate impact of a particular project or other short-term initiative. CLM is intended to be part of “Governance” and thus outlive any particular CL projects or programmes

As much as possible, a CLMS should be base upon existing inspection and referral systems. This makes the system cost-effective, sustainable and avoids creation of parallel structures. CLMS should rely on information produced by government agencies and from community-based resources such as “community watch” groups and NGO’s. In addition to this “routine” process of monitoring, it is important for CLMS to have an established process of independent verification and cross-checking of data to ensure credibility. Consequently, setting up of a CLMS will require political commitment and may

necessitate procedural changes in existing information management system. Core elements of CLMS are that it:

- Operates within a single integrated data collection and referral framework
- Has internal monitoring procedures and tools
- Has an external means of verification

Figure 2. CLM as a circular system



It is important to understand that CLMS is not a “ready-made fits all” type of a system but an overall framework, the parts of which can be assembled from different starting points. A general prototype can provide direction and guidance but the system will need to be fitted to the particular development context of a given country.

When CLMS are designed as part of particular project or programmes such as - ILO-IPEC Time Bound Programmes - it is important from the very to conceive the system as operating within a wider nationwide child labour and labour inspection framework.

CLMS needs to:

- be applicable to all types of child labour (formal and informal sectors, agriculture, illicit work etc.)
- cover worksites and service sites (e.g. education)
- be applicable to all child labour work of the government, employers, NGOs, and other development partners
- be linked to national CL policy and action
- to be limited to the monitoring part of the work, i.e. linked to but not encompassing other types of action (e.g. research, law reform, direct services, enforcement)

- be sustainable in terms of technical complexity, human resource requirements and cost

CLMS can be used as a programming strategy around which a set of direct service activities can be built. CLM can be used as an information base for national action plans against CL through which different services (education, health, advocacy etc) can be provided. The operational parameters of the system need to be decided by the stakeholders at the very beginning of the system development. How the system will be developed and put in place will depend on the intended coverage and scope of the system, as well as if the system will be developed through different phases. For purposes of sustainability CLM needs to be in-built in national and local structures of governance.

Comprehensive CLMS would incorporate national Government structures, such as the inspectorates (labour, health/safety, and school), and take direction from a multi-sector national policy body. CLMS should be developed in view of national development priorities and commitments of all main stakeholders vis-à-vis working against child labour. It should capitalize on the work done on monitoring and innovatively build new operational bridges across agencies, among different information collectors and to various repositories of information.

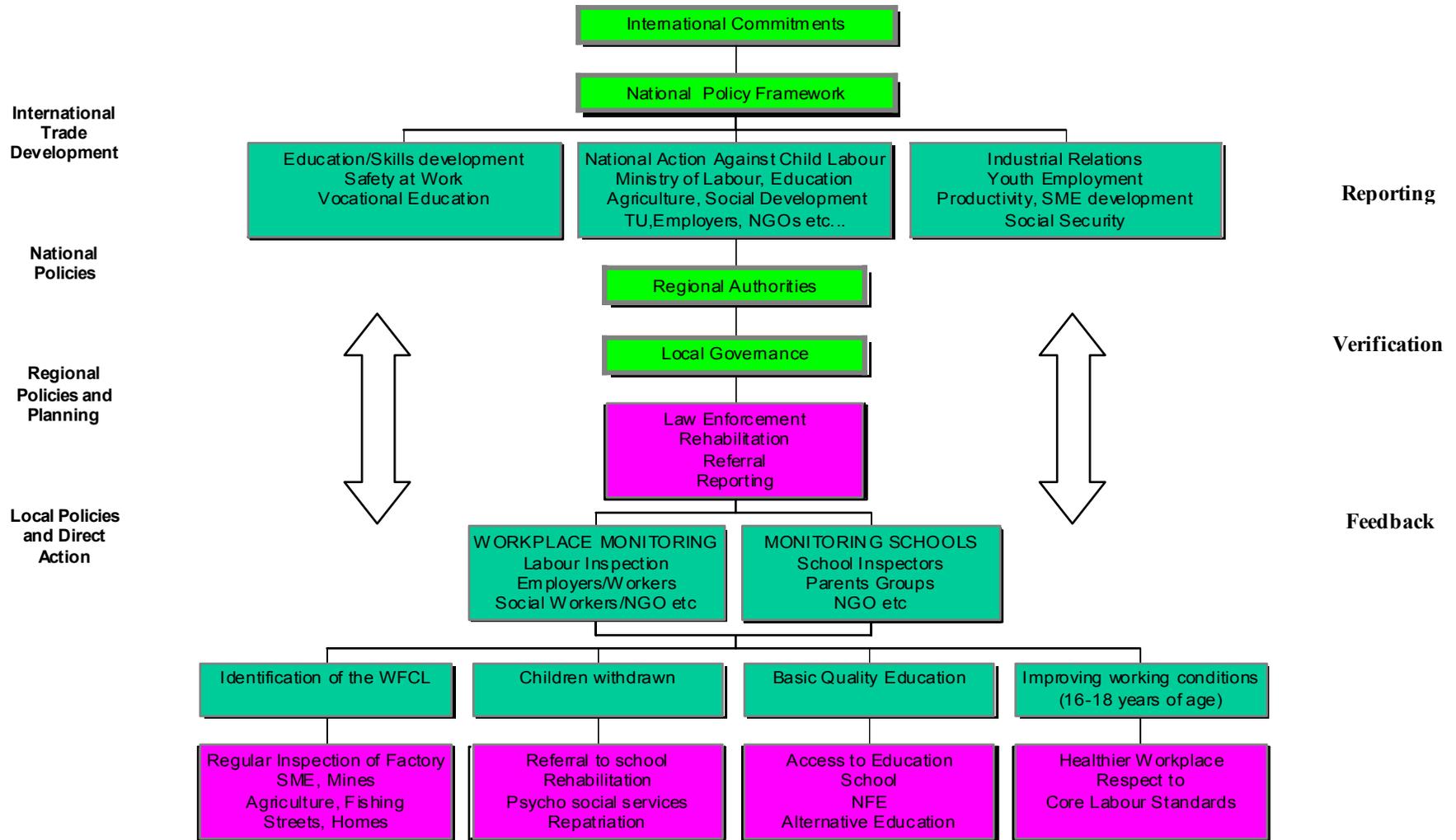
1.4 CLM as an active tool to eliminate CL

As an active tool CLM does not merely collect information for statistical purposes but incorporates an immediate follow up mechanism to act upon on the information recovered through monitoring. “Situation Reports” of unacceptable working conditions or of children at risk must be immediately dealt with through referring cases to pre-identified service providers for help, treatment or advice. Cooperation between government and non-government parties and communities is essential in this. As a direct action strategy CLM uses:

- **Observation** through established monitoring procedures, using a common set of tools, and designated and/or mandated monitoring teams
- **Prevention** through advocacy, sensitizing employers to children’s rights and labour laws, and information-sharing with parents and young workers on work hazards
- **Reporting** to partners and to government agencies with appropriate mandates to enforce laws and ordinances as appropriate
- **Referral** to services corresponding to the needs of the child workers via a network of service providers

Figure 3. CLM as information sharing system

CLMS SYSTEM STRUCTURE



Information generated by CLMS feeds directly into upstream policy work through policy reviews, legislation, and social and education planning. At the same time it provides “on-line” information for local actors to work against child labour in everyday situations through established chain of action.

It is important that the system set up is able to follow up and verify that the services provided to the CL indeed are improving the situation of the targeted children and that they do not instead transfer to another sector of work with equal or worse conditions. Every CLMS should have a tracking mechanism in-built into its structure to ensure that this happens.

1.5 CLM as a form of prevention

Repeated act of monitoring prevents child labour. As part of the process of setting up CLM and of monitoring workplaces, partners are re-oriented and sensitised on issues pertaining to child labour and when possible on occupational safety and health at work and basic risk management methods. CLM aims to promote a new “culture” of prevention at workplace that aims at tackling the risk of CL before it starts.

It focuses on creating an active partnership of labour inspectors, trade unions, and employers and encourages the evolution of a multi-sector alliance to reduce risks and hazards in the workplace. Through advocacy and active partnerships CLM aims to halt the entrance of children into work of different kinds. In the formal sector, it also works towards changing public institutions’ often regulatory frame of mind of “enforcement” and replacing it with one of compliance, joint action and prevention.

In informal sector and in rural areas, preventive work can be embedded in monitoring as part of the overall process of community organizing, advocacy, awareness-raising and alliance-building. CLM can be the means for keeping partners focused on the issue of CL. When monitoring is built into the regular service systems of the government (education, social welfare, health) CL work will be carried on in a sustainable and cost effective way. Involvement of non-government organizations will enhance this process and in areas where government structures are not widely available it is through social partners, such as trade unions, cooperatives, people’s organizations, workers groups and village committees etc, through which effective monitoring and social service networks can be built and sustained.

1.6 Child labour Monitoring and Education

Much of the action against child labour includes education and training. Teachers not only have an important role to play in educating children, but they also help to ensure that education is valued, that schools are child-friendly and that children remain in school throughout the years of compulsory education. “School Inspection” has been used by many countries to ensure that national education policies are applied equally for all and that children have access to schools and stay in school to complete their basic education cycle.

When designed as part of the comprehensive CLMS, school inspection can monitor school entry, attendance and completion of children who have been referred from

work. It is important to link education initiatives and the existing school inspection and monitoring system together with workplace monitoring under the CLM framework. This needs to be done in order to help identify children who may be working, to ensure that child workers are not “lost” after being removed from work, as well as to provide adequate services to CL.

2. Setting up Child Labour Monitoring System for TBP

2.1 Starting point

In order for a CLMS to be set up, a set of key questions need to be answered. These questions include:

- Are the key principles of CLM relevant and adoptable to our country situation?
- What monitoring systems and information collection system currently exist and what has been our experience (strengths, weaknesses) with these different systems?
- Who are the key institutions and partners that should be involved?
- What is the existing and potential capacity of each?
- What level of CLMS do we start with?
- What needs to be put in place (e.g. revision of legislation enabling monitoring of the informal or agricultural sectors) in order for a CLMS to be set up?
- How do we adapt the prototypes (concepts, procedures, tools, materials) in order to best reflect our needs and capacities?
- Is there willingness among different parties to collaborate and work within a single framework?

This set of basic questions is important to appraise the start-up situation and to assess the scope and requirement of CLMS that suits best the needs of integrated monitoring framework. It is important that the system design takes into account the capacities of the partners and the political and cultural environment and conditions of the country.

Building up CLMS is a partnership and requires a set of committed actors that are willing to use their existing structures for monitoring CL. They must be willing to work with other partners in an open and transparent manner. The design and the timeline in which CLMS can be implemented would depend on the nature of the partnership that is envisioned and the capacities of the stakeholders to run, manage and maintain the system in the long run.

Requirements for setting up of a CLM system will depend on the intended coverage and scope of the system. Work required to design and start the system depends: a) if the system is built upon existing government or NGO processes and mandates; b) uses existing CL programmes and projects with defined geographic areas and target; c) is conceived as part of a new comprehensive government- or civil society-led initiative.

Mandates and agency relationships between and among government agencies may, in some cases, dictate how to proceed in building up a CLM system. If there is a strong culture of “enforcement” and central control in place then there may be a need to emphasize “preventive” mechanisms embedded in the CLM concept as a way of creating new partnerships. Where there is a culture of partnership between government and non-government organizations and mechanisms of cooperation are already in place, then stakeholders can operate from the same institutional footing and design CLM system based on a spirit of complementarities and respective advantages.

2.2 Steps in Setting up the System

There are a number of activities which need to be considered before starting the system, before monitoring and after the act of monitoring. The success of the overall CLMS depends on all of these steps being considered or being in place. These stages are called “Preparatory” stage and the “Follow-up” stage.

Figure 4: The Basic System Steps

Pre-Monitoring	Step 1.	Defining The Problem
	Step 2.	Preparing the Ground and Building the Monitoring Strategy
	Step 3.	Building Partnership and the Structure of the Monitoring System
	Step 4.	Creating an information base
Monitoring	Step 5.	Planning the Monitoring Operation
	Step 6.	Training and Technical Assistance
	Step 7.	Conduct Inspection & verification of target areas (workplaces and schools)
Follow-up	Step 8.	Ensure Appropriate Action and Reporting

In the preparatory stage, the basic legal and informational base is checked to see that it will provide the necessary support for the monitoring which follows. Revision of child labour laws is an example of a preparatory activity; the laws need to allow the monitors or inspectors the right of entry to the worksite for child labour monitoring, regardless of how many persons are employed or whether it is located within a home. During the Preparatory Stage an alliance is also built to carry out the actual monitoring and to put in place the referral and follow-up system. This involves local level dialogue to determine who can get access, who has the experience to assess the situation for risk, and who can best press for change and from these, creating a monitoring team.

The monitoring stage itself consists of two main parts: inspection of the workplace and inspection of the school (or other appropriate alternative) to which the child workers will be referred. The monitoring stage also documents what has been found and shares that information with partners involved in the follow-up stage.

The crucial post-monitoring follow-up stage is devoted to rehabilitating child workers at the local level, and to using the information routinely gathered by the monitoring

system to effect or revise national policies that will promote schooling and address underlying causes of child labour. Non-formal education is an example of a follow-up action.

Conclusion

For many years, monitoring - although not necessarily known by that name - has been part of the routine tasks of government labour, factory, school, and health inspectors. Both trade unions and employers have paid attention to underage workers as part of their regular management and oversight activities. Above all, parents, teachers, and community members have kept a watchful eye on the children of their area to ensure that they stay in school or do not undertake activities that are dangerous for them.

The simple act of observance and reporting is used as an active tool for eliminating child labour. CLM is thus more than just inspection, it sets in place a system for documenting and following up abuses that will carry on long after particular CL programmes and projects have been completed. When incorporated in the overall system of "Governance" CLM extends beyond specific targets groups of children to eventually include all those at risk.

The act of scrutiny repeated time and time again reduces child labour. Along with compulsory education, it thus can become the main means that society and government ensures that children are protected from exploitative work over the long term. Although it may begin within national action plans against CL (such as Time Bound Programmes), CLMS is designed, from the outset, to extend beyond it. A comprehensive system monitors not only the formal and informal sector workplaces, including the community and family, but also the educational system to ensure that children do not simply disappear into something worse.