



# IPEC



International  
Labour  
Organization

ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

## ILO-IPEC's strategies and priorities for addressing child labour and its resource needs

### *Mission statement*

A world free from child of labour, with accelerated actions against its worst forms.

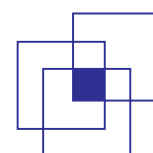
### *Institutional framework for action*

With the aim of equipping ILO constituents with the knowledge, expertise and capacity necessary to eliminate child labour, the ILO's strategy is anchored in the effective application of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), including follow-up to the comments and conclusions of the ILO supervisory bodies; as well as the ILO's constitutional instruments, including the 1998 and 2008 Declarations; and the 2012 International Labour Conference Resolution on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. More specifically, the strategy represents our response to the ILO Global Action Plan, incorporating The Hague Roadmap, 2010, and the Brasilia Declaration, 2013.

ILO-IPEC's pursuit of an integrated fundamental rights approach is enhanced by its position within the ILO's Governance and Tripartism Department, under the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work branch.

Actions on child labour also fully support a number of the ILO's Areas of Critical Importance (ACIs), namely,

- (1) **Protection of workers against unacceptable forms of work:** Child labour is an unacceptable form of work and all actions taken to reduce and eliminate it will contribute to the realization of this ACI.
- (2) **Decent work in the rural economy:** By protecting children from hazardous work in agriculture and in rural areas and facilitating their access to agricultural skills development and promoting better rural livelihoods, decent work in the rural economy will be addressed.
- (3) **Formalization of the informal economy:** ILO's child labour-focused work under this ACI will promote the move towards formalization of workplaces by promoting better and more productive work for adults and youth affected by child labour, by facilitating consultations on the transition to formality, and by supporting workers to exercise their rights through self-organisation.
- (4) **Jobs and skills for youth:** Making the link between keeping children out of hazardous work while promoting their access to appropriate skills development and decent work for youth above the relevant minimum age for work is the main approach under this ACI.



## Main elements of ILO strategy

The ILO has always considered child labour to be a multifaceted problem that requires multifaceted solutions. The recently published *Global Estimates and Trends on Child Labour* show that child labour has decreased by over 30 per cent over the last 12 years - a significant change over a short period of time.

The ILO's strategy, through its global IPEC programme supporting regional, national and local actions, consists of the following main elements.

### » **Actions underpinned by robust and reliable statistics and data**

Developing new methodologies and promoting globally the application of statistically reliable estimation methodologies to measure child labour and assisting member States to collect and analyse data is a fundamental element of the ILO's strategy on child labour. The ILO's strategy is to arm the tripartite constituents and others with accurate, reliable and comparable child labour statistics to raise awareness and understanding of the issue. Since 1998, the ILO has provided technical and/or financial support to almost 100 national child labour surveys in 67 countries, while building the national capacity to repeat such surveys. The focus on building national capacity has resulted in more and more countries collecting and analysing data with little or no external assistance.

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##### **Resources are needed to:**

- respond to constituents' requests for more and disaggregated statistics;
- further refine the statistical definition of child labour as it relates to other children's activities (such as household chores);
- collect and analyse child labour statistics from industrialized countries; and
- examine further existing data collections to identify subsectors and tasks linked to child labour.

### » **Understanding the economic and social causes of child labour**

Conducting research and evaluations is a key strategy used to ensure that technical support and advice provided to constituents is based on evidence rather than assumption. The ILO/UNICEF/World Bank inter-agency programme "Understanding Children's Work" has helped advance the global research agenda on child labour by conducting economic and social policy appraisals and other economic analyses that have helped in informing programming and policy efforts. ILO's child labour projects have also produced a wealth of research findings, helping to inform national, social partner and community level policies and action.

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##### **Resources are needed to:**

- conduct country-level policy appraisals;
- build the capacity of national research institutions to conduct child labour research;
- conduct impact assessments, impact evaluations, systematic reviews, and cross cutting or thematic evaluations on child labour interventions;
- conduct research on emerging new aspects of child labour.



Kenya, 2011.

## » Strengthening legislative frameworks and enforcement

The ILO's strategy has been to assist countries to modify or enhance their laws on the minimum age for admission to employment, establish regulations on hazardous child labour lists, and draft legislation to prohibit the worst forms of child labour and punish the perpetrators. Child Labour Monitoring (CLM) systems offer potential to support labour inspectorates in the informal economy by mobilizing numerous relevant actors - school officials, social workers, local employers' and workers' representatives, agricultural extension officers, community leaders and law enforcement bodies - to work together with them to prevent and remediate child labour.

Investing in a future without child labour	<b>Resources are needed to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ support the development/revision of legislative frameworks that effectively address child labour;</li> <li>■ strengthen national enforcement systems, including labour inspection, police and the judiciary, through capacity building;</li> <li>■ establish or extend Child Labour Monitoring systems (at all levels), that are linked to formal monitoring systems, to enable the effective and regular monitoring of child labour in the informal economy and in hard-to-reach areas and sectors.</li> </ul>

## » Developing effective child labour action plans and policies

A key strategy for pursuing the goal of eliminating child labour is to have the ILO's constituents, along with other ministries and national stakeholders, develop their national action plan against child labour. The ILO encourages constituents to take the lead to develop the action plan based on relevant research and data. During this process, the constituents must consult with numerous parties that have a key role in addressing child labour and consider how best to leverage their support. ILO-IPEC provides guidance and advice throughout this process and shares its considerable knowledge and experience so as to assist the constituents to select the most effective way to move forward.

Investing in a future without child labour	<b>Resources are needed to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ assist Ministries of Labour to establish fully tripartite national steering committees to lead the development process;</li> <li>■ support the national action plan development process in numerous countries;</li> <li>■ assist national steering committees to develop appropriate list of hazardous occupations for children below the age of 18.</li> </ul>

## » Integrating child labour concerns into wider development agendas and policies

Experience has shown that integrating child labour specific concerns into the policies and programmes of other relevant areas such as education, vocational skills training or social protection schemes is effective. In many countries, other social areas are better funded than labour areas, meaning that resources under these other headings can be leveraged to produce a positive child labour impact.

Investing in a future without child labour	<b>Resources are needed to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ assist national authorities and social partners to better leverage strategic linkages;</li> <li>■ document the most effective means for integrating child labour into other policy areas;</li> <li>■ ensure that qualified technical expertise is available to national constituents during key stages of policy development.</li> </ul>



Pakistan, 2005.



## » *Building national and local capacities*

Building national capacity to put systems and procedures into place to implement the national action plans and to increase the presence of the rule of law and the capacity of employers' and workers' organizations is an essential element of the overall strategy. Enhancing national capacity to review and revise the legislative framework, to promote a conducive policy environment and to integrate child labour into other agenda areas such as labour market policy including youth employment and skills, labour relations agendas, education, social protection, rural development and informal economy policies, violence against children, child protection, and other policy areas has proven to be an effective means by which child labour is tackled.

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### *Resources are needed to:*

- train members of national and local steering committees, and others;
- build the capacity of authorities to respond to child labour and to provide remedial services if required;
- train labour inspectors, agricultural extension workers, education officers and others on how to recognize child labour and what to do about it.

## » *Strengthening social dialogue and supporting the social partners in the "real economy"*

Supporting national trade union centres and employers' organizations to engage in tripartite policy dialogue and supporting the capacity of enterprises and workplace and sectoral trade unions to integrate child labour concerns into their business and organizing and bargaining agendas is part of the child labour strategy. This support seeks to engage businesses and trade unions in a manner which reflects their roles and mandates in the workplace and includes advisory work with multinational enterprises and sectoral multi-stakeholder initiatives and practical and policy support for agricultural workers' and domestic workers' organizations and others in sectors in which child labour is prevalent. Promoting and strengthening social dialogue in the informal economy is a crucial vehicle for promoting recognized employment relationships, better and more productive workplaces and improved workplace monitoring of fundamental rights at work and other working conditions.

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### *Resources are needed to:*

- facilitate and build the capacity of employers' and workers' organizations to participate in policy development;
- build their capacity by providing training on child labour issues;
- establish a network of employer and trade union roving OSH representatives to reach out to informal economy and small rural enterprises;
- integrate child labour concerns into the business models of enterprises and into the organizing and bargaining agendas of workers' organizations.



Bolivia, 2010.

## » Demonstrating to children and families life changing responses are within reach

Testing innovative approaches and demonstrating models for preventing, removing and protecting children from child labour and providing them with educational alternatives and supporting their family's livelihood opportunities has been among the best-known aspect of ILO's work against child labour. The ILO seeks to ensure that direct action has its proper place in project delivery as part of an integrated national and area-based approach. Direct action has greater value when it demonstrates good and replicable practices which are then mainstreamed and sustained in national efforts, especially in public services, which can continue to deliver services after donor-funded projects close. The transfer of knowledge about what does and does not work is also a key aspect of this strategy.

Investing in a future without child labour	<b>Resources are needed to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ demonstrate direct service models to provide public services to especially vulnerable children, their households and communities;</li> <li>■ develop targeted direct action models to address the specific situation of children above the minimum age while keeping them safe;</li> <li>■ document the models to enable scaling up and replication.</li> </ul>



Rwanda, 2007.



Dominican Republic, 2009.

## » Developing complementary and strategic external partnerships

The strategy calls for mobilising global initiatives,<sup>1</sup> participating in inter-agency groups<sup>2</sup> and working with a wide range of partners<sup>3</sup> to ensure a focus on child labour and the mainstreaming of child labour policies and strategies into broader national development frameworks. The ILO's work on business and human rights has increased significantly as its child labour programme has worked with business to support the effective elimination of child labour in supply chains through holistic approaches that promote decent work for adults and youth and strive to ensure that children do not move from one supply chain to another or into another form of child labour.

Investing in a future without child labour	<b>Resources are needed to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ support the ILO's capacity to participate and lead relevant external partnership programmes;</li> <li>■ leverage the knowledge, resources and interests of the external partners to invest further in child labour;</li> <li>■ explore new methods and technologies for increasing the impact of the knowledge generated from such partnerships.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> These include the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All (GTF) and the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture.

<sup>2</sup> These include the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT), the Working Group on Children on the Move, the Paris Principles Steering Group, and the Child Protection Working Group.

<sup>3</sup> Collaboration has ranged from work with global NGO/trade union alliances mobilizing former child labourers and advocating globally and nationally (the Global March), to other UN agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, UNDP and the OHCHR), international financial institutions (World Bank), regional development banks (Asian Development Bank), multilateral co-sponsored programmes (the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)), other multilateral organizations (the European Commission, the IOM, the OECD), international NGOs (the World Organization of the Scout Movement, Anti-Slavery International and the Global Campaign for Education), research and arts groups, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and multi-stakeholder initiatives in garment, cocoa, and tobacco production.



## » Advocating, raising awareness and mobilizing societies

Ensuring that child labour is an issue of discussion and concern in international and national fora has been a constant goal. Recent successes at the international level include the inclusion of child labour in the outcome documents of the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Summit* and the *UN General Assembly Resolution on the Rights of the Child*, both in 2010. The World Day Against Child Labour has become the most important regular advocacy opportunity and has gained significant support beyond the ILO, resulting in a shift in emphasis towards an international network or partnership of agencies and organizations each promoting the World Day and using the ILO's key materials and messages.

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### Resources are needed to:

- support the campaign for universal ratification of Conventions Nos. 138 and 182;
- reinforce and extend the *Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM)* programme;
- support the re-launched *Red Card to Child Labour* campaign and the *Music Against Child Labour Initiative*;
- ensure the annual observation of the *World Day Against Child Labour*.

## » Operationalizing the integrated decent work approach

IPEC will continue to frame its technical assistance and advisory services on child labour within an integrated decent work approach that recognises the mutual interdependence of all fundamental rights at work. Strategic links with policy and action on social exclusion, social protection, youth employment, livelihoods, the informal economy, the rural economy, education, law enforcement, social dialogue and decent work will be strengthened. The integrated approach will be supported at all levels including in national and sectoral policies and through further promoting of integrated area-based approaches seeking to establish child labour-free zones.

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### Resources are needed to:

- support country- or community-level child labour programmes that bring together different aspects of decent work into one holistic integrated programme that treats the root causes of child labour while offering increased opportunities for decent work.



Brazil, 2012.

## Priority areas of focus

To keep its position as global leader in the fight against child labour, the ILO must continue to build on its knowledge and experience while adapting to new challenges and realities. The information from the most recent *Global Estimates and Trends on Child Labour* highlights two lessons. Firstly, the movement to eliminate child labour is on the right path. And secondly, even more needs to be done to sustain and accelerate the decline. The ILO must re-double its resource mobilization efforts; at the same time, harnessing and supporting the increased political will to eliminate child labour at the international, sub-regional, national, sectoral and community levels, and recognizing the primacy of nationally determined policies, which are essential to ensure national ownership in the struggle against child labour.

Looking forward, ILO-IPEC seeks to strengthen work in the following priority areas.

### » Leveraging impact from social protection programmes

There has been increasing recognition of social protection as a strategy and important safeguard against child labour, especially in times of crisis. The ILO Global Action Plan on the elimination of child labour included an emphasis on the importance of promoting public policies to tackle child labour, including social protection. In 2013, IPEC published its first World Report on Child Labour, which had a thematic focus on social protection, and IPEC continues to analyse how child labour concerns can be effectively mainstreamed into social security systems, through both research and practice.

Investing in a future without child labour	<b>Resources are needed to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ conduct further research to examine what programmes and schemes are having the most positive impact and what measures have been taken that target the child labour populations,</li> <li>■ estimate the cost of extending schemes and programmes to child labour vulnerable populations and questions of this nature;</li> <li>■ develop methodologies and guidelines on how to target child labour in social protection programmes.</li> </ul>

### » Pursuing education as the most meaningful alternative to child labour

Child labourers face varying degrees of disadvantage in accessing education. Some have no access, while others struggle to combine work and school, often resulting in dropping out completely or poor educational performance. Child labour affects school enrolment, attendance, grade repetition, and literacy rates. ILO-IPEC continues to build awareness of the linkages between child labour and quality education for all, to promote the mainstreaming of child labour concerns into national education sector plans and policies, and to strengthen collaboration with partners.

Investing in a future without child labour	<b>Resources are needed to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ expand efforts to reach out-of-school children;</li> <li>■ continue support for interventions providing educational opportunities for children at risk of or in child labour through formal and non-formal education;</li> <li>■ enhance capacity to provide vocational and skills training for out-of-school adolescents with linkages to the labour market;</li> <li>■ support improvements in teacher training, qualifications and conditions.</li> </ul>



Mali, 2010.



Cuba, 2000.



## » *Supporting families through better livelihoods*

ILO-IPEC continues to emphasise improved income generation and decent employment opportunities and social protection in communities as essential elements of an integrated approach to eliminate child labour. This includes support for improved productivity, access to credit, support for community and cooperative organizations and micro-enterprises, as well as income generating activities. Work is carried out in close cooperation with the ILO Youth Employment Programme to ensure that youth of legal working age have opportunities for quality and safe employment.

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#### ***Resources are needed to:***

- conduct value chain analysis in communities and areas most vulnerable to child labour;
- assist trade unions and employers' organizations to organize these vulnerable populations ;
- test innovative income generating activities and programmes for wider replication.

## » *Targeting actions to meet the needs of vulnerable and hard-to-reach children*

Children who are out of school, stateless, unregistered, indigenous, in child labour in isolated locations, and from population groups suffering extreme social exclusion, and children who are victims of worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work are just some of those that make up this group. These types of work are often criminal nature and, therefore, hidden from view. Children involved in such activities need to be protected and prevented from re-victimization into the same or worse forms of abuse; and must be regarded and treated as victims, and supported through appropriate rehabilitation.

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#### ***Resources for migration and child labour are needed to:***

- support governments to ensure their national policies and action plans provide migrant children with better protections against child labour;
- create more viable socio-economic opportunities in traditional 'sending' areas;
- systematically build migration into child labour surveys and qualitative research.

#### ***Resources for child labour in domestic work are needed to:***

- undertake research and data collection and analysis on child domestic work to enhance the basis for policy making;
- support domestic workers' organizations to further integrate child labour concerns into their organizing strategies and campaigns;
- develop and test intervention models to improve prevention, withdrawal, rehabilitation and protection strategies.

#### ***Resources for safe work for youth (aged 15 to 18) are needed to:***

- undertake action research and pilot programmes that effectively target the work situation of children above the minimum age for employment but below the age of 18;
- address this age group in order to reduce the level of hazardous work while simultaneously addressing their learning and skills development needs.



India, 2009.



» **Targeting actions to eliminate the worst forms of child labour in hazardous work, especially in agriculture**

Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 require the determination and then periodic review of an enforceable list of hazardous work prohibited to children under the age of 18. Following tripartite consultation, and with the technical support of ILO-IPEC, many governments are taking action in this regard. The list constitutes a central part of legal frameworks for the prohibition of worst forms of child labour.

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**Resources are needed to address child labour in agriculture to:**

- maintain and enhance the momentum built under the Agriculture Partnership under which collaboration between ILO, FAO, IFAD, CGIAR and IUF is organized. Funding is urgently needed to assure that the ILO can serve as the secretariat of this partnership;
- conduct sub-sector specific research and data collection;
- pilot actions designed to address child labour in these often informal and hard-to-reach rural areas.



Mali, 2010.

» **Targeting actions to meet the needs of child soldiers and children affected by conflict**

The use of children in armed conflict is a gross violation of human rights. ILO Convention No.182 defines forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict as a worst form of child labour. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict prohibits all recruitment of children under 18 by armed forces and groups. Children affected by conflict are among the most difficult to reach, least visible and suffer extreme atrocities. ILO-IPEC's work on child soldiers and children affected by conflict and on their rehabilitation and reintegration targets not only child combatants, but also many others, including girls, used in related activities, including mineral extraction in conflict zones. The labour dimension and ILO constituents' contribution is crucially important in rehabilitation and economic reintegration.



Democratic Republic of Congo, 2008.

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**Resources are urgently needed to:**

- enable continuing technical advice guidance to inter-agency bodies on the economic reintegration of children affected by conflict;
- provide economic reintegration services to children at the national level.

## » *Business and Human Rights*

ILO-IPEC and the Global Compact have created a business-led, multi-stakeholder forum, the Child Labour Platform (CLP), for the frank exchange of experience about what does and does not work in tackling child labour in supply chains. It identifies obstacles to businesses implementing the ILO and Global Compact child labour principles and advises companies on practical ways of overcoming them. The CLP provides tailored and sector-specific training on topics such as child labour monitoring and age verification, and seeks to catalyze collective action. The CLP is a work-stream of the UN Global Compact Human Rights and Labour Working Group, co-chaired by the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). IPEC provides its secretariat.

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### *Resources are needed to:*

- support the Child Labour Platform to allow ILO-IPEC to continue to serve as its secretariat;
- commission business centred research and pilot programmes.

## » *Response to ILO's Supervisory mechanisms*

The ILO is being called upon to assist countries to apply their obligations as members of the Organization under the ILO's supervisory mechanisms. The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendation raises points of concern that require assistance from the Office. ILO-IPEC through its resource mobilization efforts seeks to help countries to take actions to address legislative and application shortfalls.

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### *Resources are urgently needed to:*

- support the ILO's constituents in Myanmar and Uzbekistan to conform with the requirements of Conventions Nos. 138 and 182, and other fundamental Conventions, especially in response to complaint mechanisms.



Pakistan, 2005.





Kenya, 2011.

## » Re-Focus on Africa

With one in five children aged 5-17 in child labour, there is an urgent need to consolidate, improve and expand ILO support to country constituents and partners. Particular attention needs to be paid to critical issues such as tripartite national ownership, institutional and technical capacity, effective mainstreaming of child labour matters into the programmes and budgets of concerned departments, and effective social mobilization.

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#### **Resources are urgently needed to:**

- provide technical support for the development of national action plans and mainstreaming child labour into relevant development programmes;
- reinforce policy interventions and establish or extend systems for direct action interventions to ensure greater impact and sustainability;
- facilitate and support national ownership, commitment and institutional capacity including with the social partners;
- strengthen strategic partnerships and networks to create a critical movement against child labour;
- support tripartite constituents to mobilize resources to scale up actions.



Ghana, 2010.





India, 2010.

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