



III GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON CHILD LABOUR

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Base Document of the III Global Conference on Child Labour

Support



Ministry of
External Relations

Ministry of
Labor and Employment

Ministry of
Social Development
and Fight Against Hunger



Introduction

The 3rd Global Conference on Child Labour is an opportunity for reflection and joint dialogue between government, workers, employers, civil society and international organizations on the progress made in the process towards the elimination of child labour, especially its worst forms, as well as a space for presenting proposals of mechanisms to accelerate the elimination of this phenomenon.

The Conference aims to promote an ample and democratic debate of the efforts undertaken by the international community since 2010 on behalf of the elimination of child labour, especially its worst forms. It represents an opportunity for assessing the progress achieved since the adoption of International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions 138 and 182, through the exchange of experiences and also by acknowledging the most efficient measures that will allow us to meet the 2016 eradication targets.

The Global Conference, held in The Hague (Netherlands), in May 2010¹, has consolidated important proposals presented in the Road Map for Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour, which was later incorporated into the ILO Global Action Plan. It has guided countries and international organizations in their actions to address child labour, always foreseeing the ample participation of employers' and workers' representatives, as well as other partners.

The worst forms of child labour include not only hazardous occupations, such as defined by the legislation of each country, but also illicit activities that represent a violation of the fundamental rights and morality of children and adolescents, which lies beyond the traditional field of action of tripartism, as adopted by the ILO. It is also important to rely on the support of social organizations with experience in tackling trafficking in persons, drug trafficking, sexual exploitation and the recruitment of children and adolescents for engagement in armed conflicts. In order to accelerate the elimination of child labour and its worst forms, we will need to act in a coordinated way as we aim to expand the existing knowledge base on this reality.

The growing commitment of many countries with social protection and decent work agendas has provided visibility to child labour aspects related to extreme poverty, while calling attention to other determinants as well. Additionally, the impact of the global economic crisis from 2008 has brought to light the occurrence of the child labour phenomenon in regions where it had been considered eliminated². This context strengthens our belief that this problem is shared by all countries and hence should be addressed through a joint effort.

The 3rd Conference is expected to encourage the exchange of lessons learned so that the efforts made by several countries may allow the construction of more consistent policies and integrated strategies for addressing child labour. In that sense, the experiences accumulated by governments, workers, employers and civil society worldwide represent a rich mosaic of knowledge that can inspire the implementation of new projects and policies focused on the elimination of its worst forms.

The players involved in the elimination of child labour must take advantage of all kinds of

1 THE "2ND GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON CHILD LABOUR 2010: TOWARDS A WORLD WITHOUT CHILD LABOUR – MAPPING THE ROAD TO 2016" HAS GATHERED OVER 500 DELEGATES FROM 97 COUNTRIES. THEY DISCUSSED THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR AND THE OBSTACLES TO REACHING AGREEMENTS ON MEASURES TO BE UNDERTAKEN TO ACCELERATE THE PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ELIMINATION OF THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR. THE CONFERENCE HAS APPROVED A "ROAD MAP FOR ELIMINATING THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR", WITH GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ACTIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY GOVERNMENTS, SOCIAL PARTNERS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY PLAYERS, AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. THIS CONFERENCE MADE MAJOR PROGRESSES VIS-À-VIS THE FIRST GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON CHILD LABOUR, THE CHILD LABOUR CONFERENCE ON THE ELIMINATION OF THE MOST INTOLERABLE FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR, HELD IN AMSTERDAM, IN FEBRUARY 1997. THERE THE CENTRAL TOPIC HAD BEEN THE AWARENESS-RAISING OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WITH REGARDS TO THE REALITY OF MILLIONS OF CHILDREN WORKING UNDER UNACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS AND IN ACTIVITIES THAT ARE HARMFUL TO THEIR FULL DEVELOPMENT.

2 "COUNCIL OF EUROPE: CRISIS COULD LEAD TO CHILD LABOUR INCREASE" (AVAILABLE AT: [HTTP://WWW.PORTUGALDAILYVIEW.COM/WHATS-NEW/COUNCIL-OF-EUROPE-THREAT-OF-CHILD-LABOR-LOOMS-IN-CRISIS](http://www.portugaldailyview.com/whats-new/council-of-europe-threat-of-child-labour-looms-in-crisis)); "CHILD LABOUR RE-EMERGES IN NAPLES" (AVAILABLE AT: [HTTP://WWW.PRESSEUROP.EU/EN/CONTENT/ARTICLE/1722081-CHILD-LABOUR-RE-EMERGES-NAPLES](http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/article/1722081-child-labour-re-emerges-naples)).

efforts carried out by the international community, including awareness-raising campaigns, advocacy, studies on the efficiency of public policies, which will allow for an improved understanding of the peculiarities of each situation and for the design of actions that may establish a true dialogue with the different local contexts.

We summon all participants in this journey to join efforts to systematize the knowledge and the successful experiences, based on four threads of action:

- **Social protection for children and their families;**
- **Expansion of mandatory, full-time and high-quality education, trying to reach all adolescents under the minimum age for admission to employment and work;**
- **Specific legislation and inspection for addressing child labour;**
- **Labour and employment policies that provide additional protection for children and decent work opportunities for adult workers.**

We trust this Conference will become a major landmark in the process of eliminating the worst forms of child labour and we invite all participants to join us for an open dialogue on the challenges that remain to be faced in each country and each region in the world. To encourage the ample and democratic participation of all interested players and to create an international mobilization network, the Conference is promoting the virtual platform "Child Labour Dialogues" (www.childlabourdialogues.org). This will be the main space for the discussion of challenges associated to the fight against child labour, especially its worst forms.

Welcome to the 3rd Global Conference on Child Labour! We hope this document, which is not legally binding, may support the dialogues we are now initiating on the increasingly radical fight against this problem in our countries, thus guaranteeing a better future for all children.

To the Eradication of Child Labour!

The Executive Committee of the 3rd Global Conference on Child Labour

1. Child Labour

Child labour as described in ILO Conventions 138 and 182 refers any type of labour activity performed by children in disagreement with the age established by law as the minimum age for admission to the labour market. It is a form of exploitation that violates the fundamental rights of children and adolescents, whether it is remunerated or not, done for the market or not, habitual or sporadic.

Children must have responsibilities that are compatible with their age, as part of their socialization and development process as individuals. All activities that affect school performance, learning time, time for rest, family and community life, or that pose risk or cause harm to a child's physical, psycho-social, mental or moral development are considered child labour.

1.1 WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOUR WORLDWIDE?

There are many reasons why it is essential to eliminate child labour, particularly its worst forms. The rights-based approach relies on the basic principles and international commitments stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which remarks that child labour is a violation of the human rights of the child. The Convention, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20th 1989, states in its preamble:

"[...] that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community."

Article 19 of the Convention, in its first paragraph, establishes that:

"States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and

educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child."

Article 31, on the other hand, reminds us that the States Parties:

"[...] recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts."

Article 32 states that:

"States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development."

As a complement, the 1998 ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work reaffirms the commitment of States Parties to "respect, promote and to realize" the "effective abolition of child labour" (Article 2, item c). These commitments aim to guarantee that children and adolescents in each country may be considered as subjects of rights and may count with the support of their family and of society as a whole during their formative years.

Nevertheless, there are types of economic activities – as well as illicit activities – that deny such rights to children. In the specific case of the worst forms of child labour, there is consensus about the unequivocal harm caused to children by the manipulation of toxic substances, extreme temperatures, repetitive tasks, isolation from social interaction, threats and violence. Nevertheless, doubts persist about to what

extent labour activities aimed at the intergenerational transition of knowledge, and even the access to new worlds represented by technological innovations in our society, are harmful or not to a child's development.

The early engagement of children in work is harmful to their integral development, as the hours dedicated to labour activities hamper their access to education and to a more complete formation, and may even cause harm to their physical and mental health. The most striking impact is the restriction of access to education opportunities. Several studies have demonstrated that children that work are more likely to be out of school. Working children, even when they are not completely excluded from the educational system, perform worse than other students³. The lack of access to education restrains the development of children, harms their future and perpetuates the poverty they themselves and their families experience. Finally, generations without access to education and that have been harmed prematurely as consequence of labour activities represent a major obstacle to a country's economic and social development.

Questions:

- **Are there other reasons for eliminating the worst forms of child labour?**

1.2 International Commitments

In the last decades, international labour norms on this topic have been adopted in order to raise awareness on child labour, as well as to promote the protection of children and adolescents and the prevention and elimination of child labour. ILO Convention⁴ No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, the main normative instrument for tackling Child Labour, was adopted in 1973. This international norm requires ratifying countries to establish a minimum legal age (not inferior to 15 years) for entering the labour market in all sectors, with the exception of developing countries that could, temporarily, establish 14 as the minimum age. The Convention text also establishes that this limit cannot be lower than the age for the completion of mandatory scho-

oling and recommends that it be gradually increased. Even though the Convention has already been ratified by a large number of countries, Convention 138 met limited adhesion from the international community until the late 1990s, when ILO started presenting concrete data on the scope of the problem.

In 1997, the International Conference on Child Labour, in Amsterdam, contributed to increasing global awareness about the child labour problem and about the need to search for strategies to address it. In 1998, the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work was adopted, pointing at child labour as one of the principles and rights to be respected by member states.

In 1999, these initiatives led to the adoption of a new norm: ILO Convention 182, on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, which determines that priority be given to urgently eradicating Child Labour in the following situations: trafficking of children; forced labour; involvement in pornography or sexual exploitation; illicit activities, such as the production and trafficking of narcotics; and activities that, due to their nature or the conditions under which they are carried out, pose risk to the health, safety or morality of children, defined by the Convention as any person under 18 years of age.

According to Recommendation 190, which accompanies Convention 182, each country must establish a list of hazardous activities, upon consultation with employers and workers organizations. As of June 2013, Convention 182 has been ratified by 177 of the 185 ILO Member States, becoming one of the two ILO Conventions with the highest ratification rate, along with Convention 29 on Forced Labour, of 1930.

³ WCM, 2012.

⁴ ILO CONVENTIONS ARE INTERNATIONAL TREATIES RELATED TO AN IMPORTANT TOPIC, ABOUT WHICH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS, EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS ESTABLISH A COMMON UNDERSTANDING. ONCE A CONVENTION IS APPROVED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE, COUNTRIES ARE INVITED TO RATIFY IT BY MEANS OF THEIR NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE MECHANISMS, AND SPECIFIC PROVISIONS – APPLICABLE TO THE PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF EACH COUNTRY – MAY BE INCLUDED AS WELL. ILO, ON ITS TURN, SUPERVISES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTIONS AND MAKES COUNTRIES ACCOUNTABLE FOR OBSERVING THEM.

1.3 Global Mobilization

The years following the adoption of Convention 182 have been marked by global efforts to mobilize and draft national plans and policies for fighting child labour. In 2002, June 12th was internationally honoured as the World Day Against Child Labour. In 2006, ILO launched the Global Action Plan, which led countries to implement urgent measures on behalf of the elimination of child labour (time-bound actions) until 2008. The Plan was based on three pillars: 1) support to national efforts aimed at fighting child labour; 2) strengthening of the international movement against child labour; 3) mainstreaming of child labour-related issues into ILO strategies for the universal promotion of decent work.

In 2010, representatives of governments, workers' and employers' organizations, civil society, regional and international organizations gathered at The Hague Conference to be informed about the progress achieved since the adoption of Convention 182. On that occasion, remaining obstacles were assessed so as to reach an agreement about measures for accelerating the progress towards the elimination of the worst forms of child labour until 2016.

The final product of the 2010 Conference was the Roadmap towards Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour until 2016 (a.k.a. Roadmap), which indicates a path to be followed, based on Conventions 138 and 182 (and their corresponding Recommendations 146 and 190) and presents specific actions for all the parties involved in the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. As the Roadmap is a continuation of the efforts initially proposed by the Global Action Plan, the document was attached to the Plan and currently represents a key instrument for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour worldwide. It is an essential input for the consultations to be held during the 3rd Global Conference on Child Labour.

Questions:

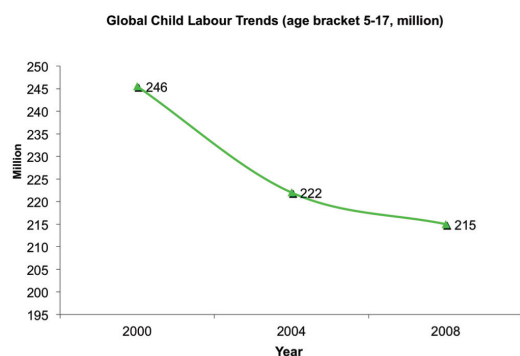
- **What strategies should be initiated so that the countries that have not yet ratified the ILO Conventions 138 and 182 may do so?**
- **Are there other commitments that have been undertaken by the international community that deserve to be mentioned?**
- **Are there other commitments that must be agreed at the international level?**

2. Recent Global Panorama

The number of children and adolescents in child labour worldwide has been decreasing in recent years, but at a slow pace. According to the ILO Global Reports published in 2006 and 2010, there was a 3% decrease between 2004-2008, much less than the 10% registered during the 2000-2004 period. Updated statistics on child labour, which are to be released in September 2013, will show whether this reduction has persisted and, if so, will allow us to understand its reasons.

In 2008, 215 million children and adolescents aged 5 to 17 were engaged in child labour worldwide, of which 115 million were involved in hazardous and unhealthy work (7.3% of all children in the world and 53% of all working children)⁵. In face of this picture, their elimination must be a priority for public policies and strategies for action developed by the international community.

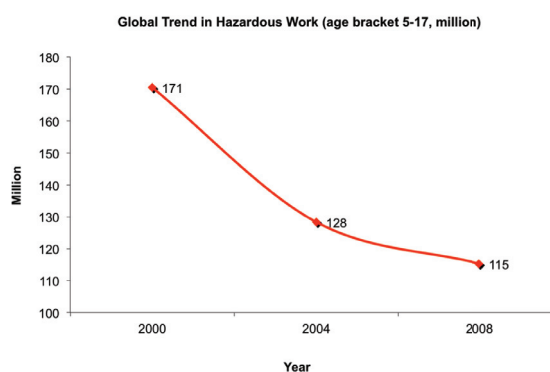
Diagram 1



SOURCE: OIT, 2010

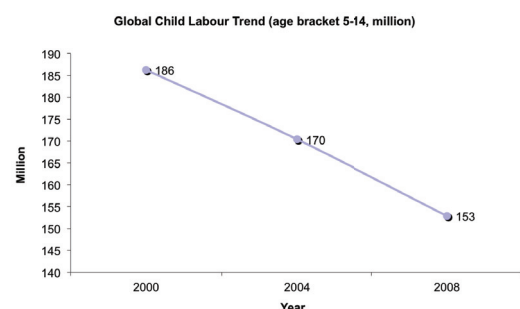
In analysing child labour numbers per age bracket, a downward trend in the number of children between 5 and 14 has been observed, from 170 million, in 2004, to 152 million, in 2008, which represents a 10% decrease. It must be underscored that there has been an even greater reduction (of 31%) with regard

Diagram 2



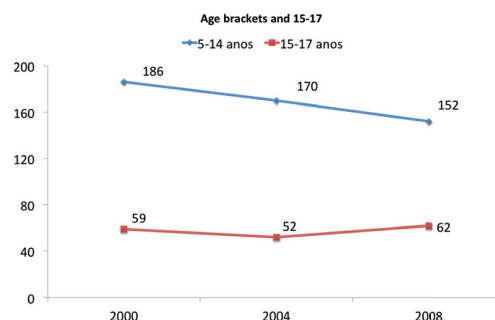
to hazardous work, defined by Article 3 of Convention 182 as one of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Nevertheless, the picture is not the same for the 15 to 17 age bracket, where an increase of 10 million (from 52 million to 62 million) working children was observed during the same period.

Diagram 3



SOURCE: OIT, 2010

Diagram 4



2.1 Current Regional Scenario

In analysing data on child labour incidence per region, between 2004 and 2008, a reduction in the Asia-Pacific area (from 18.8% to 14.8%) and Latin America-Caribbean (from 10.0% to 9.0%) has been observed. On the other hand, an increase has occurred in *Sub-Saharan Africa* (from 26.4% to 28.4%). Even though the Asia-Pacific region represents the largest contingent of children in absolute numbers, Sub-Saharan Africa presented a more alarming situation in relative terms.

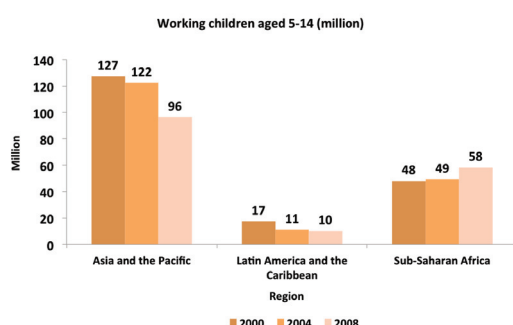
With regards to hazardous work, in 2008 Sub-Saharan Africa presented the largest propor-

tion of children involved in this type of work (15.1%), followed by Latin America-Caribbean (6.7%) and Asia-Pacific (5.6%) – all other regions would respond for 6.7% of global child labour estimative. However, it is worth noting that the lack of data on child labour incidence in developed countries compromise a more detailed comparative analysis.

The Global Action Plan points out that special efforts need to be made in Sub-Saharan Africa, considering that it was the only region in the world where child labour has grown in both absolute and relative terms in the last decade. Child labour determinants in this regions vary from country to country, but the great majority

of countries faces: 1) a high level of informal-employment and a prevalence of low productivity activities in both urban and rural areas – factors that, along with a lack of services and social protection, reduced schooling and a precarious infrastructure, contribute to increasing poverty; 2) high HIV/AIDS rates; 3) high migration rates due to work and conflicts, contributing to a growth in school absenteeism; 4) high levels of population growth; 5) socio-cultural factors (including gender inequality)⁶.

Diagram 5



SOURCE: OIT, 2010

2.2 Global Initiatives against Child Labour

While acknowledging the magnitude of the challenges faced by the African continent regarding the elimination of child labour, especially its worst forms, progress has been made and deserves to be highlighted. Under the Decent Work Agenda for Africa – DWAA⁷, many countries in the region⁸ have prepared their National Action Plans to ensure the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

It should be mentioned that South-South Cooperation⁹, by promoting the exchange of knowledge and the adaptation of best practices to the reality of each country, has been considered a relevant strategy for promoting the elimination of child labour, both in Africa and Latin America. Policies and programmes that have been considered successful in eliminating child labour have been the object of systematization and have been shared by countries in these regions.

Even though a more rigorous analysis is necessary to determine the factors that have led to

a reduction in child labour in the Asia-Pacific region, it can be inferred that initiatives related to the promotion of ample access to education have played an essential role. Countries such as India have accelerated their efforts to increase educational access for children under 15 years of age, by means of cash transfer programmes and food incentives targeting low income populations, in addition to promoting the participation of girls in education and cherishing constitutional rights. Other factors – such as an overall raise in living standards, increased urbanization and migration from rural to urban areas, greater awareness about the problem and policies for safety in the labour market – need to be evaluated in order to determine their impact on child labour reduction.

In Asia and the Pacific, the region with the largest absolute number of children engaged in child labour, twelve¹⁰ countries are still pending their ratification of either one or both conventions on the topic. The Global Action Plan emphasized the importance of the ratification of Convention 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Work and Convention 182 on the Prohibition of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by member countries, as well as the monitoring of the implementation of their corresponding National Action Plans.

Latin America and the Caribbean, on the other hand, feature the best results with regards to strategies and policies for reducing child labour. Despite the differences that exist between

6 ILO/IPEC 2012: "IPEC ACTION AGAINST CHILD LABOUR 2010-2011: PROGRESS AND FUTURE PRIORITIES." [HTTP://WWW.ILO.ORG/IPECINFO/PRODUCT/VIEWPRODUCT.DO?PRODUCTID=19735](http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=19735)

7 IBID.

8 BENIN, BOTSWANA, BURKINA FASO, BURUNDI, COMOROS, CAMEROON, IVORY COAST, ETHIOPIA, KENYA, LESOTHO, MADAGASCAR, MALAWI, MAURITANIA, MAURITIUS, MOZAMBIQUE, NAMIBIA, NIGER, SIERRA LEONE, SENEGAL, SEYCHELLES, SOUTH AFRICA, SWAZILAND, TANZANIA, TOGO, UGANDA, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE.

9 ACCORDING TO THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP), SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION REPRESENTS A MECHANISM OF JOINT DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN EMERGING COUNTRIES IN RESPONSE TO COMMON CHALLENGES. (AVAILABLE AT WWW.PNUD.ORG.BR/COOPERACAO/SULSUL.ASPX)

10 HAVE NOT RATIFIED CONVENTION 138: AUSTRALIA, BANGLADESH, INDIA, IRAN, MALAYSIA, MYANMAR, NEW ZEALAND, PALAU, SALOMON ISLANDS, EAST TIMOR, TUVALU AND VANUATU. INDIA, MALAYSIA, MYANMAR, PALAU AND TUVALU HAVE NOT RATIFIED CONVENTION 182.

en countries and sub-regions, analyses show that reductions in child labour can be linked to social protection policies, the promotion of labour and employment and improved education, associated to the economic and social development that is under way in different countries throughout the region.

It should be underscored that the Global Action Plan for the region also indicates a need to dedicate special attention to indigenous groups, because of their specificities. Several efforts have been undertaken on behalf of enhancing the knowledge base and the exchange of experiences on the development of public policies for fighting child labour among indigenous peoples.

2.3 Distribution of Child Labour by Major Economic Sectors

Data from the 2010 ILO Global Report have revealed that agriculture remains the economic sector with the largest number of children involved in child labour – 129 million, the equivalent to 60.0% of the total, in 2008 – followed by services (55 million or 25.6% of the total) and industry (15 million or 7.0%) sectors. Lastly, about 16 million children (7.4%) worked in undefined sectors.

The prevalence of children working in agriculture and service sectors highlights the need of greater investments in more and better education and labour inspection services, as well as labour accident prevention programmes. Children are much more exposed to risks at the work place than adults, due to the characteristics of their development process. The very nature and conditions under which these labour activities take place are frequently unhealthy and inappropriate from the ergonomic point of view. That makes it easier for accidents to occur, as well as bone and muscle diseases.

Table 5

CHILD LABOUR PER ECONOMIC SECTOR 5 TO 17 YEARS		
Economic Sector	No. of working children	% of working children
Agriculture	129 million	60.0%
Services	55 million	25.6%
Industry	15 million	7.0%
Not Identified	16 million	7.4%
TOTAL	215 million	100.0%

SOURCE: IOL, 2010

2.4 Child Labour and Gender

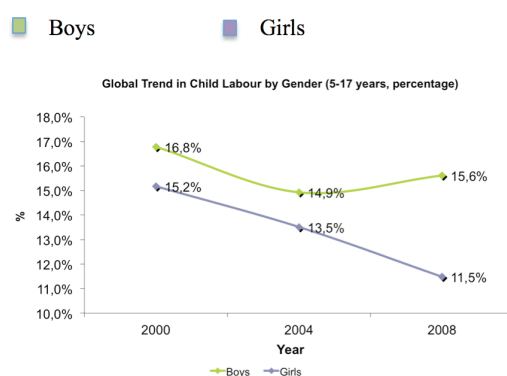
Data from 2008¹¹ point out that child labour has decreased among girls. Nevertheless, this information should be viewed with caution, as the work done by girls remains invisible as a result of the conjunction of several factors, such as gaps in the educational system, distribution of house chores, early motherhood and work. Nevertheless, based on these data, we can observe that 60% of children engaged in child labour are boys, evidence that becomes even stronger with age and the level or danger associated to the task: in the 15-17 age bracket, the number of working boys is twice as high as that of girls.

The majority of girls in child labour is concentrated in the 5-11 age bracket. The incidence of working girls, as well as their engagement in the worst forms of child labour, decreases as age increases, whereas the reality of boys engaged in child labour is exactly the opposite. Additionally, it has been observed that the number of working boys has grown again by 0.7% between 2004 and 2008.

Among the 87.5 million female children engaged in child labour, 47% are engaged in hazardous work. As for boys, of the almost 128 million, 58% are engaged in hazardous work. For the 5-17 years age group, it has been found that there is a higher percentage of boys

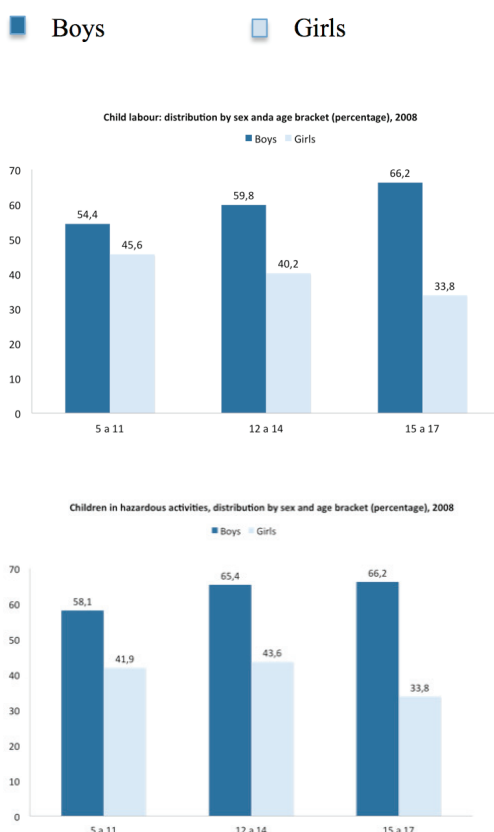
working in remunerated employment modalities if compared to girls, whereas this trend tends to reverse when we talk about non-remunerated family activities, where over 72% of all girls in child labour are. When it comes to gender issues, special attention should be paid to child labour in domestic work. According to the ILO report published on June 2013¹², an estimated 10.5 million children worldwide are working as domestic workers in people's homes, of which more than 71% are girls.

Diagram 6



SOURCE: OIT, 2010

Diagram 7



SOURCE: OIT, 2010

Boys are more present in agriculture and industry sectors, whereas girls prevail in services. Another activity that deserves special attention and is among the "worst forms of child labour" is commercial sexual exploitation, which also counts with a majoritarian participation of girls.

Considering that child labour among girls aged 5 to 11 is mostly concentrated in family activities, as well as the private nature of households, it must be highlighted that child labour in domestic work favours conditions of extreme vulnerability and may give way to sexual exploitation and isolation, as well as long and heavy working hours. In addition to domestic child labour in third party homes, the domestic work performed in their own household also leads to negative consequences for the development of children, who very often are put in charge of taking care of their younger siblings, cooking or ironing, which often affects their school attendance, their health and their integral development.

Hence, data disaggregated by gender and economic sector point at the existence of more fragile segments in the process of eliminating child labour. Therefore, actions for addressing this issue must contemplate the peculiarities of each one of these segments, so that they may reach all children and adolescents in child labour, guaranteeing that progress be made towards its complete elimination.

Questions:

- Are there recent trends in child labour that have not been captured by official statistics?
- Which challenges are associated with the reduction in the pace of child labour elimination?
- Has the difficulty to obtain information masked the problem? In which way?
- What can we do, nationally and internationally, to improve the collection and analysis of information on child labour in all countries, despite their level of development?

12 "ENDING CHILD LABOUR IN DOMESTIC WORK AND PROTECTING YOUNG WORKERS FROM ABUSIVE CONDITIONS", ILO, JUNE 2013. AVAILABLE AT: [HTTP://WWW.ILO.ORG/IPEC/INFORMATIONRESOURCES/WCMS_207656/LANG--EN/INDEX.HTM](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/informationresources/WCMS_207656/LANG--EN/INDEX.HTM)

3. Child Labour Determinants

3.1 Economic Determinants

Even though specialized literature indicates that the incidence of child labour is related to a country's economic development, this phenomenon can still be detected in productive chains and specific sectors of several countries, irrespective of their level of development. The growth model adopted is also a factor to be taken into account, as increases in a country's per capita GDP do not automatically lead to a reduction of poverty or child labour. Nevertheless, a positive impact on reducing child labour can be obtained by means of economic growth associated to a more equitable distribution of income¹³.

The structure of the labour market, on the other hand, does influence the incidence of child labour in different ways. Firstly, the existence of an informal economy means that often a significant part of the economic and labour relationships escapes regulation and inspection by competent authorities, opening the way for the use and exploitation of the work force of children. Additionally, markets with a strong demand for non-qualified labour and intensive activities may attract the work force of children and adolescents.

The lack of work opportunities for parents, due to economic stagnation or over periods of crisis, leads to a reduction in family income, also favouring the early inclusion of children in the labour market. Studies reveal that the volatility of income and the exposure to crises, associated to a lack of access to financial services, increases the chances of a head of family resorting to child labour in order to maintain the family's standard of living. This relationship becomes even more evident in rural areas, where crises generated by draughts, floods or failed harvests have a devastating effect on the family income and, as a consequence, on the incidence of child labour¹⁴. The vulnerability generated by reduced family income also can be expanded and associated to other elements, such as domestic and international migratory movements, and the lack of opportunities for the appropriate insertion of adolescents in the labour market.

The impact of the variables mentioned above on school evasion rates depends, to a great extent, on the analysis done by the head of the family regarding the best way for children to use their free time so as to maximize their well-being, both present and future. Even though the value given to education and to work may vary from one society to another, studies point out that child labour usually is perceived as an activity aimed at increasing current income, while education is understood as an investment in future income generation¹⁵. Therefore, the greater the value given by society and the market place to education and better skilled workers, the smaller the incentives for giving up school and for child labour.

3.2 Institutional determinants

A country's political stability has a great impact on its child labour rates, as contexts marked by institutional volatility may, in addition to negatively affecting the family income, also lead to forced displacement and alterations in the labour market and in the availability of goods and services, as well as to the strengthening of trafficking and smuggling networks. Wars, internal conflicts, generalized violence and the massive violation of human rights unleash a series of phenomena that directly and indirectly affect the vulnerability of children.

In addition, it will be easier to govern and, thus, to fight child labour for a State that is institutionally present throughout its territory. A country's stability and institutional capacity are key, not only for creating labour laws and norms that regulate the world of work, but also

13 GOULART, PEDRO (LISBOA, 2002): "AN OVERVIEW OF CHILD LABOUR DETERMINANTS – THE PORTUGUESE CASE". AVAILABLE AT: [HTTPS://WWW.REPOSITORY.UTL.PT/HANDLE/10400.5/2726](https://www.repositorio.utl.pt/handle/10400.5/2726)

14 ILO 2013: "WORLD REPORT ON CHILD LABOUR: ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD LABOUR."

15 ILO 2013: "WORLD REPORT ON CHILD LABOUR: ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD LABOUR."

for their implementation and inspection. Additionally, institutions must guarantee the appropriate functioning of the judicial system, which plays a key role against the exploitation of the child work force.

Likewise, the existence or not of support networks operating at both the institutional and family levels – is another determinant to be taken into account. Access to social protection and support to the protective capacity of families, in addition to public health care services (physicians, psychologists, family planning methods, etc.) has proven to be an important ally in the elimination of child labour. Schools and other learning spaces deserve to be highlighted in this regard, since education is key for the development of full citizenship and offers the skills required for the appropriate insertion in the labour market. Basic education is a crucial component of any effective effort to eliminate child labour, as studies indicate that it is associated with lower rates of school attendance, early school leaving and lower academic performance. In this sense, institutional capacity is pivotal for the implementation of a full-time educational system, as well as for the promotion of better quality schools.

3.3 Demographic determinants

Demographic aspects also have a direct influence on the life cycle and the maturing of individuals. If, on one hand, life expectancy in a country is determinant when defining the minimum age for admission to work, on the other hand, high mortality rates can favour the early entry of children in the labour market, as well as reduce the stimulus for a longer investment in formal education.

The number of economically active adults, of boys and girls, of individuals with chronic disease (such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria etc.) in a family influences a child's time of entry in the labour market. Specialized literature indicates that families with fewer children are in a better condition to keep children at school and avoid child labour.

Finally, other demographic elements that have an impact on child labour are migratory flows.

Families that migrate to new locations usually get inserted in the informal market and live in precarious districts, mainly due to rigid and restrictive migration regulation, thus increasing the degree of their vulnerability. Without counting on the social support networks they had before, they are likely to resort to child labour as a way of dealing with moments of crisis and complementing their family income. Such circumstances are aggravated in many regions facing war, draughts, floods or other natural disasters, which put families in situations they were not prepared for.

3.4 Cultural and social determinants

Whereas public policies can address institutional, economic and demographic determinants more objectively, cultural aspects have subjective dimensions and, therefore, need to be looked at by decision makers and public policy managers in a distinctive way. The relevance of cultural factors lies, on one hand, in the incidence of child labour even in countries with high levels of economic development and, on the other hand, in the fact that cash transfer and social protection policies have proven to be insufficient for fully eliminating child labour in developing countries.

The cultural dimension of this phenomenon is partially rooted in social values that perceive work as an essential element of a child's socialization process, which is important for the development of their personality, the acceptance of roles and the internalization of social norms. In that sense, work is perceived as a tool for discipline and education that fosters responsibility and prevents children from staying on the streets and getting involved in illicit activities.

Child labour also is strongly connected to a society's dominant gender representations, which determines the type of activities considered appropriate for men and women, the age at which they can start performing them, as well as a child's permanence or not at school. It is also linked to patterns of patriarchy, class rules, social exclusion and discrimination.

Globalization and the intensification of communication often seem to reinforce the desire

of children for autonomy, emancipation and access to consumption goods. These factors have been acting as catalysing agents for the early entry of this audience in both the formal and informal labour market, often leading to a reduction in the use made of educational tools and formal learning. This scenario is not exclusive to more developed countries and presents new challenges to experts and decision makers, as they require appropriate public policies that dialogue with the expectations of children and favour the construction of rights to education and to labour protection against the exploitation of their work force.

The influence of cultural factor on the persistence of child labour is also an issue among indigenous people and traditional communities and in family farming. In these realities, work can mean a form of transmission of traditional knowledge and practices that ensure the survival of their culture. The challenge here is how to deal with the issue of child labour while respecting the rights of children and adolescents as well as the right to traditions.

Hence, the reality of indigenous peoples and traditional communities underscores the need to include these groups in the process of building public policies in a participatory way. Only an inclusive process of dialogue and listening can capture the subjectivity that lies behind the dynamics of child labour and allow for the

corresponding adaptation of interventions and policies on behalf of children and their families, so as to contribute to the elimination of child labour worldwide, especially its worst forms.

In closing, the elimination of child labour and its worst forms requires the international community to undertake comprehensive interventions that take into account their multiple causes. Even though literature and debates among experts stress economic determinants, it is urgent to rethink strategies that may take into account the ways a culture may contribute to the persistence of this phenomenon. Additionally, it is necessary to understand that the elements that enable child labour to exist are present in all countries, despite being stronger in developing countries and manifesting themselves in a more punctual manner in developed ones.

Questions:

- **Are there other determinants of child labour that must be mentioned? If so, how relevant are they and how should they be addressed?**
- **Some countries have been identifying a shift in child labour determinants. Is this true for your region? What are the implications for the definition of strategies?**
- **Is it possible to develop international strategies for dealing with cultural/social aspects related to child labour?**

4. The Main Strategies Adopted in the Fight Against the Worst Forms of Child Labour

Since child labour is a very complex phenomenon, with multiple causes, addressing it requires multisectoral and coordinated interventions. Successful experiences point at the need for a participatory, rights-based approach, sensitive to the needs of children, especially those of the most vulnerable groups (such as girls, migrants, indigenous groups and other ethnic, religious and racial minorities).

In order to reach the eradication target proposed by the international community, it is necessary to know more about the most efficient initiatives and develop our capacity to duplicate them in different institutional, social and cultural contexts. In that sense, it will be pointed here a set of results that seem to be promising for improving the four main threads currently being debated. There are differences

in the way these strategies are implemented that still need further study, but that we hope will be better understood during the 3rd Global Conference, through the dialogue between the countries.

In the last twenty years, countries from all continents have been designing and implementing public policies and programmes, employing national and international funds so that a set of goods and services may be available and guarantee the alleviation of poverty and a reduced use of child labour. So far, the majority of programmes put in practice share a focus on withdrawing poor children from child labour and have evolved towards actions involving income generation for the families. For that end, social protection, notably in the form of transfer of State funds to families and individuals, has been recognized as a key instrument.

The positive results of these programmes show that the palette of public and private services available to the family needs to be expanded, so that the elimination of child labour may be-

come a lasting reality. Studies carried out¹⁶ in several countries suggest that the social protection of the family, despite being essential, is not sufficient for guaranteeing that children will remain out of the labour market, especially among the most fragile and stigmatized social groups; thus, it needs to be combined with education and learning programmes, in addition to a monitoring of actions backed by the formalization of the informal economy as well as by specific legislation, addressing the accountability businesses.

In the regions that have been most successful in fighting child labour, social protection has been accompanied by access to integrated protection services (health, social assistance), education, housing, in addition to judicial, communication and banking. Access to this set of services is a key aspect of fighting the worst forms of child labour, since it is the ongoing and integral action of States and Governments in providing opportunities, goods and knowledge that allows a change in values and grants rights to a full citizenship to every segment of the population.

Figure A

Factors that influence the occurrence of the worst forms of child labour and public policies to fight it

Factors that influence the worst forms of child labour	Existence of a national legislation	< >	Legislation and inspection	Pillars for public policy interventions
	Access to quality education as an alternative	< >	Education and training	
	Exposure to risks/access to social protection mechanisms and basic services	< >	Social protection	
	Opportunities of decent work in the labour market	< >	Labour and employment policies	
	Level of awareness, socio-cultural norms and attitudes, social dialogue	< >	Communication and advocacy	

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM 2010 UCW¹⁷

It is important to underscore that, even though more detailed analyses on the allocation of budgetary funds for child labour eradication actions are required, this issue will not be addressed in depth in this paper, and only mention that, like for any priority government programme, child labour elimination actions also need to be included in national budgets,

which is an essential element for the effective implementation of these actions.

¹⁶ ILO AND UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S WORK (UCW), GENEVA MAY 2010: "JOINING FORCES AGAINST CHILD LABOUR: INTER-AGENCY REPORT FOR THE HAGUE GLOBAL CHILD LABOUR CONFERENCE OF 2010."

¹⁷ IBID.

With regards to the awareness raising actions on fighting child labour, we also must say that these are considered an essential part of a broader strategy, so that an early entry in the labour market may be increasingly perceived as a violation of rights.

4.1 Social protection

As explained in the Road Map for Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour, governments perform a key role in the design and implementation of strategies for protection¹⁸. Which means: to try to reach all social groups, providing them with visibility and a voice in the design of these programmes.

Since the definition of the ILO Global Action Plan, in 2006, significant progress has been made towards guaranteeing integral social protection to the economically and socially most vulnerable populations, as established by Recommendation 202¹⁹ of 2012, including the strong debate over the common guidelines for the common social protection floor²⁰.

The main strategies are related to the different cash transfer experiences (with our without conditionalities) and to policies that support the generation of opportunities and of income for families engaged in the informal economy.

4.1.1 Cash Transfer Programmes

Starting 2010, cash transfer programmes have become known for their ability to reach grand targets of poverty alleviation and reduce social inequalities, having a major positive impact on people's consumption capacity, thus contributing for greater social cohesion and inclusion²¹. These programmes also have proven to have a positive impact on reducing child labour, even though results may vary from country to country²².

Among the most recurring direct impacts are the postponement of entry into the world of labour and the reduction in the number of hours worked, but more comprehensive studies still have to be carried out in order to evaluate the impact of conditionalities, especially school attendance and its coordination with other capacity-building and income-generating programmes for families.

The majority of programmes have shown that the monitoring of occasional work is very complex. It is worth remembering that, in some regions that are more dynamic with regards to generating employment, as consequence of a more intense economic growth, the lack of labour force can encourage the early entry of children in the labour market, even if only for a relatively small number of hours and during non-school hours.

Lessons learned from cash transfer programmes:

- **Child labour reduction is higher among children facing greater scarcity of resources and/or where child labour prevalence is higher;**
- **Interventions are more successful when they are not isolated, but combined with other measures, such as social assistance, health and education;**

18 WHICH INCLUDE ACCESS TO AND PROVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND HEALTH SERVICES TO VULNERABLE AND SOCIALLY EXCLUDED FAMILIES, TO CHILDREN IN LOCATIONS WITH DIFFICULT ACCESS AND CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, WHENEVER POSSIBLE, INCLUDING A SOCIAL PROTECTION BASELINE.

19 COMPLEMENTARY ACTION TO CONVENTION 102 (MINIMUM STANDARDS OF SOCIAL SECURITY, 1951), APPROVED ALMOST UNANIMOUSLY BY THE 183 COUNTRIES (WITH ONE SINGLE ABSTENTION). RECOMMENDATION 202 IS A HISTORICAL LANDMARK IN GLOBAL SOCIAL POLICIES. THE NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS MAY BE THE MAIN TOOL FOR REACHING THE UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, SINCE THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARD ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE PROMOTES ESSENTIAL HEALTH CARE AND A REGIME OF BENEFITS, AS WELL AS THE RIGHT TO INCOME SECURITY, FOR ALL CHILDREN, PEOPLE IN APPROPRIATE AGE FOR ADMISSION TO WORK AND THE ELDERLY. SUCH MEASURES COMPRISE "THE NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS", WHICH MUST BE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION OF COMPLETE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEMS.

20 ILO DEFINES SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS AS A SET OF BASIC SOCIAL SECURITY GUARANTEES DEFINED AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL, THAT AIM TO GUARANTEE MINIMUM LEVELS OF INCOME SECURITY AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES AND OTHER UNIVERSAL SERVICES. SUCH MEASURES MUST GUARANTEE PROTECTION WITH THE AIM OF PREVENTING AND ALLEVIATING POVERTY, VULNERABILITY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND ALLOWING FOR A DIGNIFIED LIFE. AT [HTTP://WWW.OITBRASIL.ORG.BR/NODE/848](http://www.oitbrasil.org.br/node/848), 04/05/2013.

21 ILO 2013: "WORLD REPORT ON CHILD LABOUR: ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD LABOUR".

22 UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S WORK (2013): "CASH TRANSFERS AND CHILD LABOUR;" UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S WORK (2013): "THE COMPLEX EFFECTS OF CHILD LABOUR IN PUBLIC POLICY" AND ILO 2013: "WORLD REPORT ON CHILD LABOUR: ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD LABOUR".

- Whenever combined with a microcredit investment scheme or another type of financial support for productive activities, such as agriculture or microenterprises, the effect is smaller as these investments tend to increase the engagement of children in work done within the family environment;
- Even though that is not true for the majority of countries, studies in some countries have pointed at a tendency towards change in the type of child labour when cash transfers are not conditioned, leading children to work in family enterprises;
- Reduction in child labour does not necessarily lead to a greater participation at school nor is it directly proportional to the volume of resources transferred to individuals or families;
- Reduction in economic activities tends to be higher among boys; therefore, it remains a challenge to properly capture the domestic work of girls.

More recent studies indicate that these programmes have demonstrated good results, especially in Asia (Indonesia and Pakistan) and in Latin America and the Caribbean (Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Jamaica and Honduras). According to ILO²³, all countries with good results are located in these regions – whereas the programmes with the greatest impact in reducing child labour are the CESSP programme in Cambodia²⁴, the Bolsa Família/PETI programme in Brazil and the Red de Protección Social in Nicaragua.

4.1.2 Health Care Protection Programmes

To address certain chronic diseases, public health programmes must include a series of mandatory measures, such as immunizations, prenatal and neonatal testing programmes, including during periods of crisis and epidemic outbreaks. Reproductive health education must also be contemplated within public health protection programmes.

Such actions, in addition to granting the right to health, contribute to reducing child labour as they make sure that adult family members are capable of generating income for the family's survival. People with disabilities and the elderly deserve special attention in the approach gi-

ven to health protection programmes, as both groups are vulnerable to health complications and can have a direct impact on the incidence of child labour.

It is worth mentioning that conditionalities of some cash transfer programmes (Brazil) include the performance of prenatal tests for pregnant women and immunizations for children, and may include the follow-up of children with regards to personal and dental hygiene habits, in addition to eye examinations during actions carried out in association with the educational system. Other interesting experiences (Guatemala and Kenya) have shown that providing health insurance and access to public health services can have a positive impact on reducing child labour.

4.1.3. Social Assistance and Social Security

The higher the social protection offered to citizens, the greater the chances that families will not depend on child labour for their livelihood. It is essential to ensure the access of families to social policies on the occasion of the birth of the child (through paid maternity leave), as in times of illness or accidents that prevent people from working or even during old age, when the individual's productive capacity is compromised. It is worth noting that there is still a lot to be done to ensure that the poorest people in rural and urban areas or those working in the informal economy receive social security benefits, even if they have not made contributions for an extended period, allowing them to cope without the work of children and adolescents.

As to the elderly that have not contributed to social security, especially those living in rural and isolated areas, a social security benefit can grant them greater independence and even make them the only family member with a regular income, which tends to increase the protection for children and grandchildren. In this sense,

23 ILO 2013: "WORLD REPORT ON CHILD LABOUR: ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD LABOUR".

24 FILMER, DEON & SCHADY, NOBERT 2009: SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, SELECTION AND TEST SCORES. THE WORLD BANK DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH GROUP HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICES TEAM. IN POLICY RESEARCH WORKING PAPER No. 4998, IMPACT EVALUATION SERIES No. 34.

the experiences of some countries indicate that granting a social protection floor for the elderly, as expressed in ILO Recommendation 202, can contribute to reducing child labour.

The same can be said of the conditions faced by the disabled, who face several difficulties in having access to the labour market, thus being often prevented from contributing to the family budget. Therefore, other family members, including children and adolescents, start working in order to contribute to the expenditures deriving from the health care required by the disabled person, which makes their inclusion in the social security system an equally important aspect of the fight against child labour.

The services offered by social assistance, on the other hand, require the identification of situations of vulnerability and social risk that can lead children into early labour, in addition to activities for the inclusion of families in social protection networks and in monitoring and follow-up so as to avoid fall backs. By rescuing the family unit as the basic nucleus for the everyday protection of the individual, social assistance contributes to the expansion of the family's protection capacity, as well as to the socialization and integral development of its members.

4.2 Education

Basic education is a crucial component in any efficient effort to eliminate child labour. The lack of a policy that may grant universal access to school or the inefficiency of such type of policy for the most vulnerable families significantly influence the existence and the persistence of the child labour phenomenon.

Social protection policies involving cash transfers to families living in extreme poverty, especially those who have conditionalities associated to the schooling of children, have generated a significant growth in the number of children throughout the world who have started to attend basic education²⁵, including in Sub-Saharan Africa and in Southeast Asia. Even more remarkable is the accelerated growth in the number of children that complete basic education, who thus become individuals who are better prepared for their future insertion in the labour market.

Special attention must be given to gender issues²⁶, as policies must grant children an attractive and friendly school environment that respects the local environmental and cultural context, that includes the participation of the community and that protects them against abuse, violence and discrimination.

Successful experiences show that children engaged in the worst forms of child labour need concrete mechanisms that meet their needs and support their inclusion and transition into an appropriate education or professional training. Within this context, some basic elements of the fight against the worst forms of child labour must be highlighted:

- **the integration of the child labour issue into the planning of the education sector and into the discussions regarding educational programmes and policies, in a participatory way, with social partners and families;**
- **the strengthening of skills of public managers and education professionals, as well as the working conditions and the number of teachers, so as to raise their awareness and lead them to actively commit themselves to the goal of eradicating child labour through education.**

Nevertheless, education as a form of fighting the worst forms of child labour must be perceived as reaching beyond the guarantee to basic formal education. This means to support formal and extra-curricular development, as well as informal and transitional educational activities, developed with the support of social assistance networks, that may serve children withdrawn from the worst forms of child labour, offering a second chance to all those who have not completed basic education, due to different reasons, such as marriage or the birth of children²⁷.

25 MDG REPORT. UNCP 2013. IT DESERVES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED THAT THE NUMBER OF YEARS OF BASIC EDUCATION IN EACH COUNTRY MAY VARY BETWEEN 7 AND 12 YEARS.

26 THE 2011 EDUCATION FOR ALL GLOBAL MONITORING REPORT (EFA) INDICATED THAT, IN 2008, ABOUT 67 MILLION CHILDREN, OF WHICH 53% ARE GIRLS, WERE NOT ENROLLED IN FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION. THE REPORT HAS WARNED THAT THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS HAS INCREASED THE PRESSURE ON NATIONAL BUDGETS AND MULTILATERAL DONATIONS, UNDERMINING THE EFFORTS OF MANY OF THE POORER COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD TO FINANCE EDUCATION PLANS.

27 OECD. STUDIES ABOUT YOUTH. ILO, 2013

It is essential that school curricula be structured so as to incorporate the endless innovations provided by technology so that schools may act as the main means for the acquisition of cognitive and behavioural skills that will be relevant for the contemporary world of labour. We might add that curricula must be flexible, so as to allow for the promotion of multiple skills – intellectual, cognitive, practical and manual – as well as the inclusion of more specific topics related to the local reality, thus valuing the traditional knowledge of peoples and communities. In addition to allowing new generations of children to know the values of their ancestors, this allows them to develop the ability be critical towards other cultural viewpoints.

To be able to act as a network and have communication strategies in place is key for the process, thus providing for an environment that may allow the exchange and evaluation of experiences and the social control of actions. Furthermore, virtual, participatory and transparent communication can allow the ample and swift diffusion of knowledge to different audiences.

4.3 LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

In addition to the social protection and basic and professional education policies, labour, employment and income generation policies also deserve to be highlighted as they establish rules for the functioning of the labour market, expand opportunities for insertion in the labour market and support the productive activities of the most vulnerable families.

Several strategies are adopted in order to guarantee decent work for the working population in countries in different development stages. Usually, the evaluation of these actions is rather complex as it involves discussions about which market characteristics should be regulated by public authorities and which are the most efficient instruments for achieving the expected results.

Agreements related to the promotion of decent work, built through a negotiation between the representatives of workers and employers in different countries, have led to a common un-

derstanding about hazardous situations, about measures for preserving life and health at work and about minimum wages. These labour market regulation actions have improved the living conditions of the adults in the family and, thus, have reduced the engagement of children in income generation activities.

These measures are especially important in countries where there is a great number of workers engaged in non-formal activities, realities in which more general policies – such as the one that establishes the minimum wage – guide the definition of the value of the products and services provided.

The definition of which activities involve hardship and hazards in child labour and that, according to ILO Convention 182, should be prohibited until 18 years of age, also represents an important aspect to be debated by labour policies, since – especially due to the inexistence of homogenous technical standards in the production of goods – the levels of danger of different activities can vary between one country and another. It's also worth highlighting that cultural and social factors must be considered in order to avoid the inclusion of children and adolescents in activities usually discriminated by society or that expose them to situations of moral harassment or degradation.

Beyond the measures that foster labour and income generation at times of greater economic stability, other strategies should be considered at times of crisis. Public works schemes managed by the public sector represent a form of granting work to people without any income at times when income generating opportunities are scarce.

Even though its effects are only indirect for children, by allowing adults to acquire skills to generate income for their families, they directly contribute to retarding the children's entry into the marketplace, especially its worst forms. Work fronts have been used in Asia, Africa and Latin America in the 1990s to address unexpected situations such as draughts and floods that have affected the population's capacity to maintain traditional activities, while contributing to the renovation and expansion of the country's infrastructure.

Another aspect of labour, employment and income generation policies is protection against involuntary unemployment, which is also associated with child labour. Evidence from Argentina, Brazil, Tanzania and Togo²⁸ suggests that the existence of unemployment protection policies prevents families in which an adult loses his job to be forced to rely on child labour as a source of income.

Therefore, protection against unemployment has an important role to play in the efforts against child labour, by providing a partial substitution of income and allowing the beneficiary to maintain a certain standard of living until his/her reinsertion in the labour market.

The Global Action Plan and the Road Map for Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour have established the following priority government actions related to labour, employment and income generation policies:

- **Facilitate the school – labour market transition of youngsters in appropriate age for admission to employment in conditions of decent and protected work;**
- **Provide for the regulation and formalization of the informal economy, in which the majority of worst forms of child labour takes place;**
- **Together with social partners, create an environment for fighting child labour in supply chains.**

4.4 Legislation and the experiences of judicial and labour inspection systems

The construction of a national legislative baseline on child labour requires a systemic and integrated approach to public policies, while focusing on some elements, especially the institutional capacity required by law enforcement and for making governments and enterprises accountable. There remains a lot to be done, especially with regards to the formalization of informal economy by governmental authorities and the production knowledge about hazardous activities in different technological and productive contexts²⁹.

The topic has been the object of debate due to the transformations experienced by the la-

bour market in recent years and a concern that legislations may be accused of having a negative impact on the countries' competitiveness in attracting new international investments. Nevertheless, in countries where national legislations have been implemented, a greater benefit to the national production has been witnessed, as they guarantee compliance to international standards and also because they grant sustainability to negotiations carried out between employers and workers. Within this context, the adoption of a specific national legislation has been increasing in several regions since 2006³⁰.

Experiences shared by several countries show that labour monitoring and inspection combine relevant aspects, especially for addressing highly unwanted situations, as is the case of the worst forms of child labour. Furthermore, practices such as the Brazilian one show that the engagement of several different players in these actions – such as inspection officials, employer and worker organizations and the judicial system – favours the implementation of legislations as it facilitates access to areas that were hardly reached by public authorities, notably in rural regions.

4.4.1 The role of inspection

Inspection officials, in addition to carrying out their specific role, are the most important link of inter-institutional cooperation. Global data show the success of initiatives where inspection officials (labour inspectors, police forces and immigration officials) receive special capacity building trainings on strategies for identification and prevention, about social protection networks and the legislation in force with regards to children's rights, on social assistance and reinsertion procedures and processes for victims and on conducting investigation processes while being sensitive to a child's needs³¹.

28 IBID.

29 ILO 2013: "WORLD REPORT ON CHILD LABOUR: ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD LABOUR."

30 BETWEEN 2006 AND 2009, OVER 90 NATIONAL PLANS WERE ADOPTED BY COUNTRIES TO FIGHT THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR AND UNTIL 2011, 108 COUNTRIES HAD COMPLETED THEIR LIST OF THE WORST FORMS. (ILO 2012: TACKLING CHILD LABOUR – FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION). IN 2011, 50 MEMBER STATES ACCOMPLISHED THAT RESULT, 17 IN AFRICA.

31 ILO 2012: "GIVING GLOBALIZATION A HUMAN FACE".

Furthermore, it is key that inspection officials receive capacity building that may prepare them for a paradigm shift vis-à-vis children engaged in the worst forms of child labour –which are no longer considered offenders, but rather as victims that need care and protection.

The engagement of professionals in inspection activities increasingly reinforces the role of the planning of actions, with the aim of detecting recurring situations and geographic areas or sectors that require action. In that sense, the drafting of diagnoses facilitates the inspection activities, as they provide a baseline for defining lines of action, strategies and priority regions. It is important to establish standards for the collection and analysis of data, taking into account the different population groups affected by child labour (gender, race ethnicity and migration status)³².

4.4.2 The role of Employers' and Workers' Organizations

Employers' and workers' organizations play an essential role in the elimination of the worst forms of child labour and are key protagonists at the international, national and local levels³³. Their importance is related to the fact that child labour takes place, predominantly, in regions where adult workers are not duly organized – in rural areas and in the informal economy. Therefore, its key to keep the issue of child labour in the negotiation agenda of employers and workers, as they will be able to outreach various sectors (including those mainly informal) and raise awareness about the importance of eliminating this phenomenon.

At the international level, workers' and employers' organizations are a part of the ILO supervising system³⁴, and do exert their influence in order to guarantee that Conventions 138 and 182 are duly applied in their countries. At the national level, workers' and employers' associations work together with the national government in the drafting and updating of the list of the worst forms of child labour, and contribute to the construction of concepts, practices and priority strategies, as well as to the identification of the existing types of work and their predominant geographic location.

At the local level, employers' and workers' organizations contribute to inspection and to impro-

ving appropriate practices at the workplace, also acting as ambassadors that promote awareness raising on the prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labour in their communities, as part of the collective bargaining agenda.

4.5 The role of International Cooperation

International cooperation, defined by the exchange of experience and by the strengthening of human, technical and financial resources, has always played a fundamental role in promoting development policies as well as the ratification and implementation of the ILO Conventions.

In the specific context of combating child labour, special attention should be given to the actions taken by the International Labour Organization, through the International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), which is currently present in 88 countries. The initiative began worldwide in 1992 in order to support the progressive elimination of child labour through the strengthening of the capacities of countries as well as through the promotion of a global movement for the elimination of child labour.

In the current scenario of international cooperation, there is a growing demand for sharing knowledge and successful experiences on combating this phenomenon, particularly on the area of social policies. In this sense, a new form of collaboration – the South-South Cooperation –has gained increasing prominence and adherence by developing countries, which is based both on the exchange of good practices and on the principle of solidarity among peoples.

This new type of exchange has also attracted the interest of developed countries that seek to increase the effectiveness of their development

32 ILO 2011: LABOUR ADMINISTRATION AND LABOUR INSPECTION.

33 BUREAU FOR EMPLOYERS' ACTIVITIES (ACT/EMP), BUREAU FOR WORKERS' ACTIVITIES (ACTRAV), INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE (2011): "EMPLOYERS' AND WORKERS' HANDBOOK ON HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR".

34 ARTICLE 23, PARAGRAPH 2 OF THE ILO CONSTITUTION FORESEES THAT INFORMATION AND REPORTS SUBMITTED BY MEMBER STATES BE PREPARED IN CONSULTATION AND WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF EMPLOYERS' AND WORKERS' ORGANIZATIONS.

cooperation projects through the adherence to mechanisms of triangular cooperation involving developing countries and international organizations. Among the most prominent experiences are those related to policies of conditional cash transfer, labour inspection, protection policies for adolescent workers and public health policies aimed at fighting child labour.

Initiatives in different regions in the world point at the importance of international collaboration and mutual assistance between countries in order to improve labour inspection processes. In the European Union, several joint inspections are carried out by States, especially by bordering countries, in order to address the worst forms of child labour³⁵. In West Africa, a sub-regional initiative aims to mobilize policymakers and increase cooperation between the members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour³⁷. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has adopted the Programme for Ministers of Labour, which underscores the importance of increasing the capacity of inspection agents and reiterates the importance of the Regional Conference of that continent on Labour Inspection. This commitment is a complementary effort to the work that is being carried out in the fields of occupational health and safety through the ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network³⁷.

The action of MERCOSUR countries must also be highlighted: since 2007, they have been

working together in different ways: through the Plan for the Eradication of Child Labour³⁸, a proposal for specific inspection activities on the worst forms of child labour (such as illicit activities, commercial sexual exploitation, sawmills, etc.) and the establishment of a regional *modus operandi* through the drafting of instruments such as the “Minimum Conditions for Labour Inspection Procedures” and the “Minimum Requirements for Labour Inspector Profiles”.

International NGOs specialized in the fight against child labour, together with international organizations such as ILO, in all regions of the world act in partnership with national NGOs, national and local governments, the private sector and representatives of workers, creating strategies for effective compliance to and social control of the national legislation for fighting this phenomenon.

Questions:

- What other strategies can be mentioned?
- Have some strategies advanced more than others? Why?
- What can we do to better integrate the different strategies at the national level? And at the international level?
- How to include the judicial system of each country in the fight against the worst forms of child labour?
- How to differentiate training activities from those that are harmful to the full development of children and adolescents?

5. The Main Challenges to the Elimination of Child Labour and its worst forms

Despite all the progress achieved in the last decades and the international community’s growing commitment to the elimination of child labour, especially its worst forms, major challenges remain to be overcome in order to reach the 2016 targets. The efforts carried out so far have allowed countries to address the most visible aspect of this phenomenon, but changes still have to

35 ILO (2011): LABOUR ADMINISTRATION AND LABOUR INSPECTION.

36 ILO 2012: TACKLING CHILD LABOUR – FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION.

37 ILO (2011): LABOUR ADMINISTRATION AND LABOUR INSPECTION.

38 SIGNED IN 2010 BY ALL MEMBER STATES.

take place in areas that, even though they are less patent, are essential for the eradication of child labour.

Strategies that allow for the creation of the necessary conditions for ensuring the basic needs of families have become increasingly well-known, especially due to the valorisation of social public policies (cash transfers, capacity building for adults, expanded access to credit, support to solidary economy and to the formalization of small businesses; and the improvement of small-scale agricultural production), as well as of economic policies (programmes for the expansion of infrastructure, of access to water and electricity).

Nevertheless, the impact of the 2008 economic crisis on the global market, on increased unemployment and on public finances tends to reverse the consolidated positive trend of the previous period, causing some countries to slow down and others, to recede in their pace towards the elimination of child labour.

Therefore, eliminating the worst forms until 2016 will require renewed commitment to this target and its consequent insertion in the political agenda of governments and of the international community, with the implementation of short, medium and long-term initiatives that must be coordinated among themselves and in harmony with the actions of other social partners. It is also necessary to allocate budgetary funds at the local level and in support to international aid actions.

The availability of reliable information and statistics with segregation by gender, age, ethnicity and social class are essential in this process as they allow a better understanding of child labour, as well as the design of public policies and awareness raising campaigns targeted at groups with distinctive levels of vulnerability and cultural approaches. The expansion and consolidation of this knowledge baseline is even more relevant when referring to the worst forms of child labour, which involve illicit activities that are difficult to identify. In that case, administrative records are the main resource that allows to precisely identify the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the problem. Hence, it is necessary to expand investments in transforming such records into statistical data and information for analysis.

Overcoming this challenge calls for a process of knowledge-updating by public and private agents acting on child labour so that their actions may be in sync with the new realities that must be face and marked by a greater knowledge about the public policies that are being implemented in their countries and by the overall international community. It also calls for the harmonization, revision and coordinated enforcement of norms and legislation within the international community.

The supply of mandatory, free and high quality education, as well as the improvement of professional training processes must be a priority for the international community and for decision-makers, since it is through quality education that children will obtain the appropriate tools for entering the formal labour market once the time is right. It also is necessary to improve mechanisms for the school-work transition, as well as professional training courses, so that the training offered may provide in-depth content and meet the demands of the labour market. Governments and other social partners also must invest more in distance learning and in the dissemination of knowledge through virtual methods, in order to expand and democratize access to information.

Another relevant challenge is to expand the focus of policies beyond those child labour situations in which poverty is the most visible determinant. Child labour associated to cultural aspects of knowledge transmission and integration of children in society is one of them, as well as the idea – shared by many cultures – that work is a tool for discipline that develops responsibility and keeps children on the right path. In order to address these challenges properly, it is key that countries dialogue with communities, with parents, and listen to children during the process of drafting public policies.

As we all know, the elimination of child labour and its worst forms cannot be achieved by itself. All efforts on behalf of their elimination must be connected with broader policies, in consonance with the promotion of the decent work agenda implemented by the countries. Capacity building programmes for the labour market and employment strategies that ensure that adult family members (both men and women), as well as youngsters above the minimum

age for admission to work, have an opportunity for decent work – these are key factors for eliminating child labour and its worst forms. Progress also is necessary in order to improve the national system of occupational safety and health and inspection services and to develop actions aimed at encouraging and strengthening the role of the judicial system in the fight against child labour.

It is essential to ensure the sustainability of actions for preventing and eliminating child labour, since – as we have seen – in times of political or economic frailty or natural disaster situations, the problem may return. On the other hand, reducing child labour in a sustainable manner requires a multisectoral political response, focused on prevention and aimed at vulnerable and at-risk children, as well as those already affected by child labour.

In this sense, the 3rd Global Conference fulfils its role of promoting the debate and the exchange of experiences between the participating countries on the different actions undertaken for the elimination of child labour and of encouraging the adoption of strategies for

addressing it through a multisectoral and sustainable approach, capable of responding to the challenges posed by new social, economic and cultural aspects that impact on the incidence of child labour worldwide.

Questions:

- How do we promote the acceleration of the elimination of child labour and its worst forms of child labour in an environment of global economic crisis?
- What other challenges do the four policy threads mentioned above face in order to eliminate the worst forms of child labour?
- What are the specific challenges of governments, workers, employers and civil society in eliminating child labour? How can these challenges be addressed to achieve the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016?
- Given the specific challenges in combating child labour faced by different regions of the world, how to promote a better regional and inter-regional collaboration?

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