



International
Labour
Organization

Marginalisation and child labour

Working paper

Federico Blanco Allais and Patrick Quinn

**International
Programme
on the Elimination
of Child Labour
(IPEC)**

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1. Child labour, ILO standards and global data

1.1 Introduction

This paper has been prepared as background document for the 2010 Education for All Global Monitoring Report, which will have a particular focus on marginalisation. The purpose of the paper is to show the way in which child labour and marginalisation are related, and why child labour should present a key area of attention for education policy makers and planners.

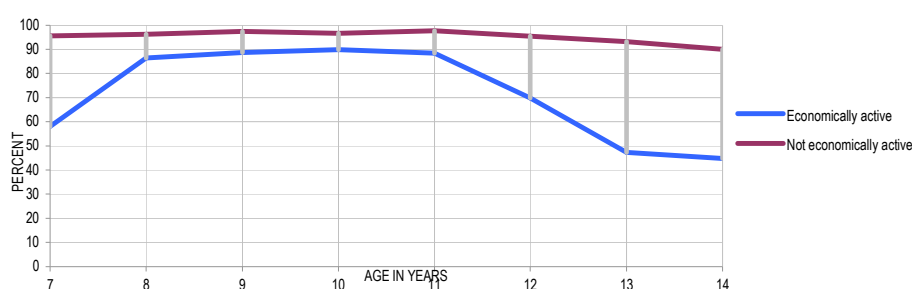
The ILO's most recent estimates indicated there are some 218 million child labourers in the world. Most of these children belong to the most marginalised groups in society. They come from families living in poverty. The majority live and work in rural areas. They come from indigenous groups and castes facing discrimination. And almost half of all child labourers are girls.¹

These children face varying degrees of disadvantage in relation to accessing education. Some have no access. Others may have access but struggle to combine work and school commitments, which very often results in early drop out from school.

The connection between tackling child labour and promoting Education for All has been increasingly recognised. On the one hand, education-and in particular free and compulsory education of good quality up to the minimum age of employment is a key element in preventing child labour. In turn child labour is one of the main obstacles to full time school attendance, and in the case of certain part time work, can prevent children from fully benefiting from their time at school.

An assessment of national child labour survey data from all world regions indicated that at the national level, a higher level of child labour is associated with lower values in the Education Development Index, which is a yardstick for measuring EFA achievements.² Late entrance and early leaving are two dominant characteristics of the educational path of working children. School attendance rates are systematically lower for working children all along the educational cycle. The following examples from Panama and Brazil illustrate the disadvantage faced by working children.

Figure 1: Panama - School attendance rate, by children's work status and age

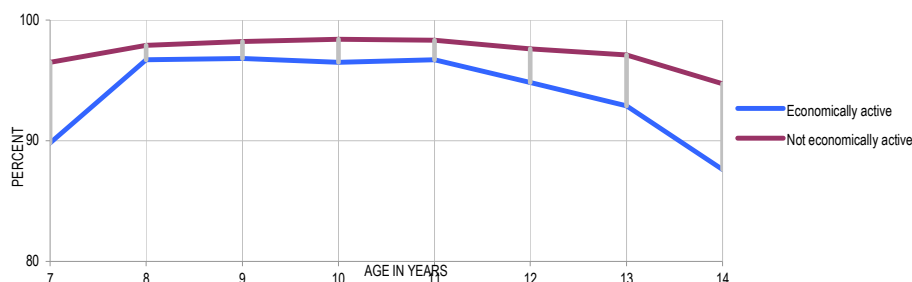


Source: Household-Labour Market Survey, Panama, 2000

¹ IPEC, *Give girls a chance - Tackling child labour, a key to the future*. (Geneva, ILO, 2009).

² IPEC, F. Blanco and F. Hagemann: *Child labour and education: Evidence from SIMPOC surveys*, working paper, IPEC Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) (Geneva, ILO, 2008).

Figure 2: Brazil - School attendance rate, by children's work status and age



Source: Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios, Brazil, 2004

Whilst there has been an acceptance of the link between tackling child labour and promoting EFA, the full nature of this link remains to be developed. There is a need to identify specific strategies aimed at targeting children in child labour in the context of EFA measures. To achieve this requires recognition of the scale and characteristics of child labour and full integration of concerns with child labour in education sector plans and programmes.

1.2 Child labour and the worst forms of child labour - what we mean

The term “child labour” does not encompass all economic activity of children. Age-appropriate tasks that are of low risk and do not interfere with a child’s schooling and leisure time, can be a normal part of growing up. Indeed, many types of work experience for children can be positive, providing them with practical and social skills.

Child labour refers in general to employment or work that is carried out by children that does not conform to standards established in the ILO child labour Conventions and national laws and regulations in line with them. The fundamental ILO Conventions on this issue are Convention No. 138 on the minimum age of employment, and Convention No 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

ILO Convention No. 138 requires States to establish a minimum working age, which should not be below the age for finishing compulsory schooling - generally 15. However this Convention includes different flexibility clauses to permit States to determine whether or not certain activities are appropriate for a child, taking into consideration age, and the national or local socio economic development context. For instance, a developing country has the option of initially specifying a minimum age of 14 years. The minimum age for hazardous work (likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of a child) has to be at least 18 years, while governments may allow children to carry out light work³ as from 13 years of age (or 12 if the general minimum age is set at 14).

The worst forms of child labour are defined in ILO Convention 182 to include;

- a. All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.
- b. The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances.
- c. The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs.

³ The concept of “light work” is defined as work that is a) not likely to be harmful to childrens health or development and b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received.

-
- d. Work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of a child.

Regarding the first three clauses, because serious harm is inherent in the nature of these activities, children under 18 must under no condition be admitted to them. In most countries these are generally recognised as criminal acts.

The fourth category, which is referred to as “hazardous work” is a relative term in that, in some cases, it may be possible to remove the hazardous conditions and allow for a child to continue to work, provided that the minimum age law is observed. The determination of what constitutes hazardous child labour is made at national level by governments, in consultation with employers and workers organisation. An ILO Recommendation (No.190, Paragraph 3), which accompanies the Convention 182, provides a list of elements on which consideration should be given when determining types of work to be considered as hazardous as follows:

- Work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse.
- Work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces.
- Work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads.
- Work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels or vibrations damaging to their health.
- Work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

The worst forms of child labour are so fundamentally at odds with children’s basic human rights and involve such a heightened degree of risk to children involved, that they must be addressed as a matter of urgency for effective abolition, even though the ultimate goal of eliminating all forms of child labour may require a longer term of action.

1.3 Global estimates on childrens work and child labour

The most recent ILO global report on child labour trends was produced in 2006.⁴ The estimates produced in the report were based on data from a range of sources including national child labour surveys supported by the ILO, the World Bank’s Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) surveys, and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) conducted by UNICEF. The estimates suggested that:

- There were about 317 economically active children aged 5-17 in 2004 (including older children legitimately at work).
- Of whom, 218 million could be regarded as child labourers (who should not be working).
- Among those child labourers, 126 million were involved in hazardous work.

Corresponding figures for the narrower age group of 5-14 year olds, i.e. the target group for basic education at primary and lower secondary level are :

- 191 million economically active children.
- 166 million child labourers.
- 74 million in hazardous work.

In absolute numbers Asia and the Pacific account for more than 122 million of the number of economically active children in the 5-14 age range, an activity rate of 18.8%. Sub Saharan Africa accounts for 49 million of the economically active children aged 5-14, an activity rate of 26.4%.

⁴ A new report on child labour trends will be available in 2010.

Figure 3: Global trends in children's economic activity by region, 2000-04 (5-14 years-old) (million)

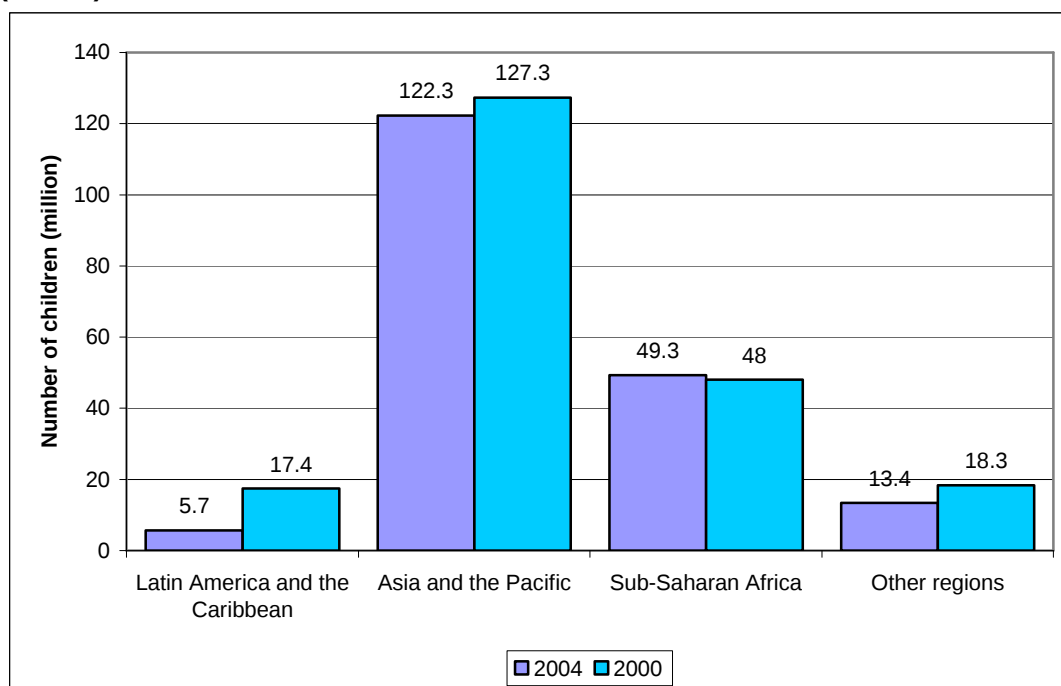
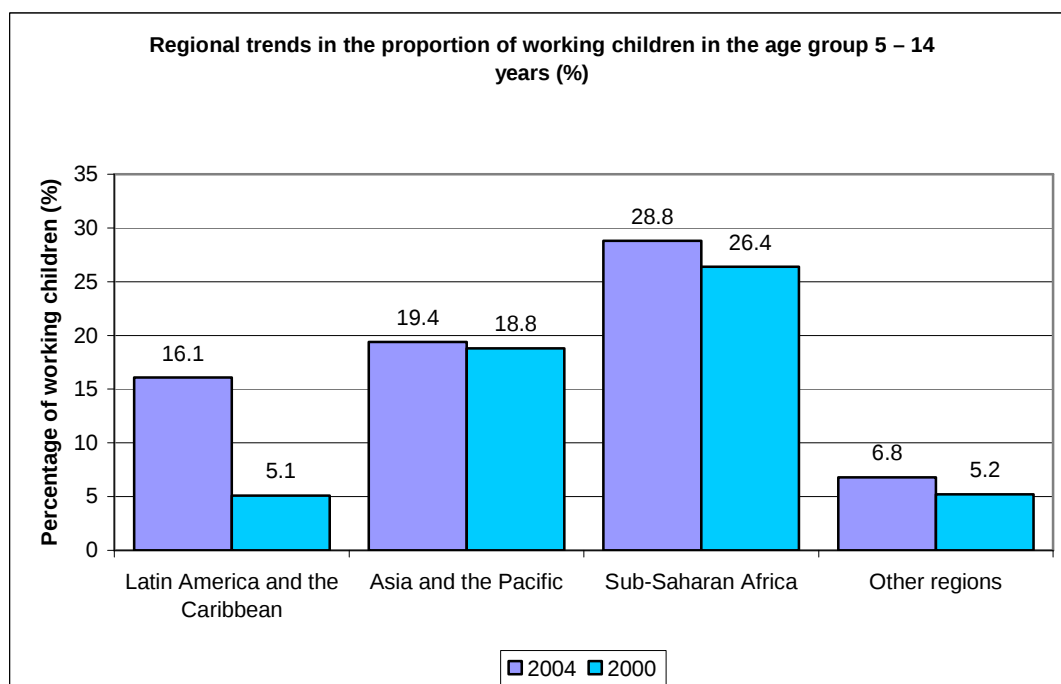


Figure 4: Regional trends in the proportion of working children in the age group 5 – 14 years (%)



To date the ILO has not included in estimates on child labour, children who do domestic chores in their own households.⁵ However following a resolution of the 2008 International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) a new international statistical standard on child labour has been agreed.⁶ The Resolution provides guidance as to

⁵ UNICEF has counted these children as child labourers if working hours exceed 28 hours per week.

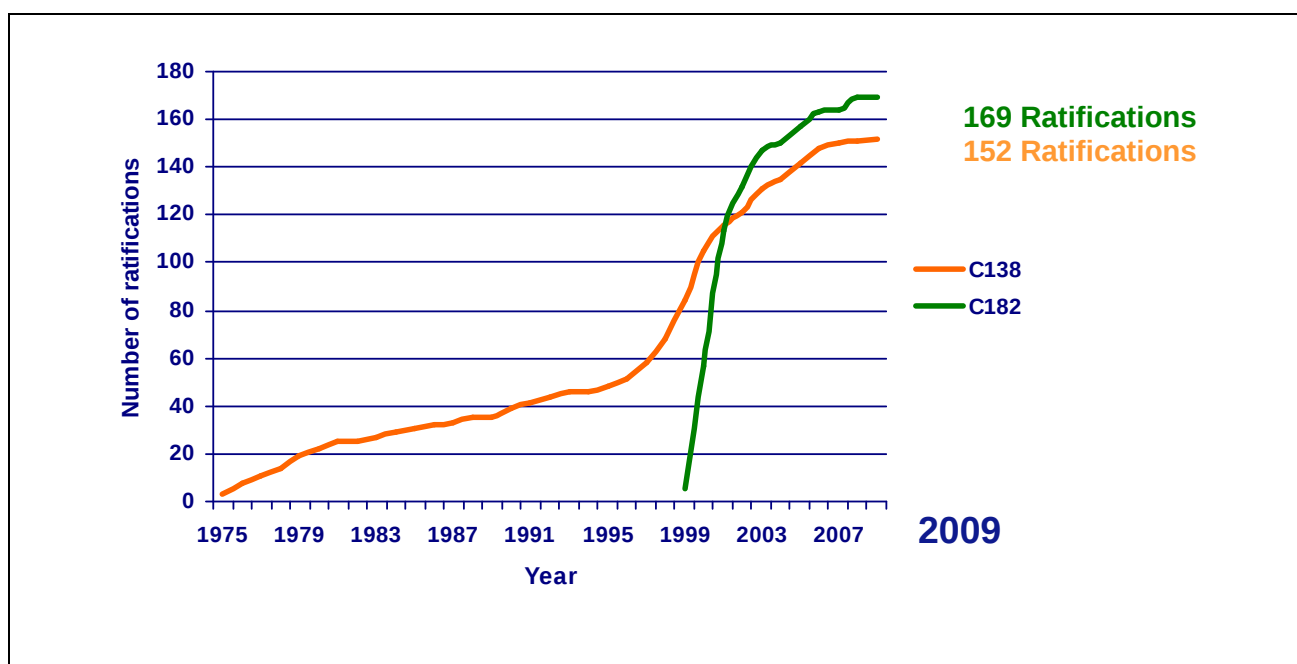
⁶ The Report of the ICLS is available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/---stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_101467.pdf.

which forms of children's activities could potentially constitute child labour, clarifies relevant concepts and definitions, and also discusses methodological and other issues for data collection. The Resolution establishes that the broadest concept related to the measurement of child labour is that of *children in productive activities* falling within the general production boundary as defined in the System of National Accounts (SNA).⁷ If a country chooses to use this as the basis for their statistics, this includes not only *children in employment* (formally called *economically active children*) but also *children in other productive activities*. The latter means children engaged, in their own household, in what is commonly called 'household chores'." The Resolution calls for further action, especially for the ILO to engage in conceptual and methodological development, on issues of age and hours thresholds and to report on these issues to the next ICLS.⁸

1.4 The growing international consensus on the ILO's child labour standards

It is important to note that the ILO's standards on child labour have achieved a very high level of support from member states. This support indicates the strength of the international consensus relating to the need to tackle child labour. Since being adopted unanimously on 17 June 1999 by the International Labour Conference, Convention No. 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour has been ratified at a pace unprecedented in the history of ILO Conventions. By May 2009 the Convention had received 169 ratifications. Also of significance is the recent rapid increase in the number of countries ratifying the ILO Minimum Age Convention, No. 138. After gaining some 40 ratifications in its first two decades, acceptance of this Convention took off during the past decade with ratifications reaching more than 152 in 2009.

Figure 5: Ratifications of ILO Conventions No.138 and Convention No. 182



The broad international support for the ILO Conventions was reflected in a resolution on the Rights of the Child adopted at the UN General Assembly in December 2008. The resolution:

⁷ The general production boundary also distinguishes between economic and non-economic production, understanding economic production to include any human-controlled activity resulting in outputs appropriate for exchange – i.e. the goods and services produced should be marketable. The latter criterion suggests that only basic human activities (e.g. eating and sleeping) are excluded, while services such as washing; preparing meals; and caring for children, the aged, and the ill fall within the general production boundary, since they can be exchanged between different units.

⁸ See paragraphs 61 to 64 of the Resolution.

- Urges states that have not yet done so to consider ratifying Convention No 138 and Convention No 182 as a matter of priority.
- Recognises that the prevention and eradication of child labour and action towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals mutually reinforce each other.
- Calls upon all States to elaborate and implement time bound strategies for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

2. Marginalisation, child labour and the worst forms of child labour

2.1 *The links between marginalization and child labour*

Marginalisation has a range of causes, often inter related. Among those groups often categorized as marginalized, the incidence of child labour is high. The fact that children become engaged in child labour exposes them to more risk factors, which in turn can increase marginalization. The effect of this can be that even if initiatives are taken to extend education access, children in child labour may find it difficult to benefit from such interventions.

In the following sections we look at the connection between marginalization and child labour. We look first at areas of marginalization and the prevalence of child labour among marginalized groups. Some children will of course be affected by more than one form of marginalization. We then look at how the experience of child labour can itself exacerbate marginalization and further reduce possibilities of children benefiting from education.

2.2 *Poverty and child labour*

Whilst not the only reason why children work, poverty is the single most important reason why children become child labourers. Poverty can impact on child labour and education in two main ways. Firstly, poverty means that many poor families cannot afford school costs. This may be the direct fees, or other costs associated with education (uniforms, books, transport, other fees). When a family cannot bear those costs a child may drop out of school. The child may immediately enter the labour force, or become “idle” for some time, lacking formal education and skills.

Secondly, poor families may decide that they need the contribution that a child’s work can make to the subsistence needs of the household, deciding that they place more value on that than on education. This may be because a child’s work brings much needed income to the household or because of the value of a child’s work within the household. If available education is of poor quality this may increase the chances of a family deciding a child is better off working than attending school, seeing little “dividend” in the education process.

Whilst endemic poverty leads towards child labour, periods of economic shock, such as the present global financial crisis can also generate pressures that increase poverty and significantly increase vulnerability to child labour.

2.3 *Location*

Rural areas

The most recent EFA GMR indicated that 82% of out of school primary aged children are in rural areas and the ILO has estimated that 69 % of working children are in agriculture. This gives a clear indication that living in a rural area is a key factor in marginalisation and that strategies to tackle child labour and promote education need a strong rural focus.

The rural sector is often characterised by lack of schools, schools of poor quality, problems of retaining teachers in remote rural areas, lack of accessible education for children, poor/variable rates of rural school attendance, and lower standards of educational performance and achievement. Children may also not see the education experience as relevant to their future lives.

Children around the world become farm labourers at an early age. In some countries, children under 10 are estimated to account for 20 per cent of child labour in rural areas. The work that children perform in agriculture is often invisible and unacknowledged because they assist their parents or relatives on the family farm or they undertake piecework or work under a quota system on larger farms or plantations.

Whilst most agricultural child labour is in some way linked to family involvement, there are also instances in which it has been reported that Governments remove children from school to work in the fields. In these cases principal beneficiaries of the labour are not families but large state owned companies.

The nature of rural existence can also increase the workload for children. Tasks such as fetching water and firewood can sometimes take considerable time and effort, limiting the time available for education or other activities.

It is evident that there are a number of factors – large numbers, girl child workers, hazardous nature of the work, lack of regulation, invisibility, lack of education and the effects of poverty – that should make tackling child labour in rural areas a priority.

Urban areas

Demographic trend information suggests that by 2050 two thirds of the population of the developing world will be based in towns and cities, compared to 44% today.⁹ Poverty in urban areas, particularly urban slums, is a significant factor behind high rates of child labour in these areas, and requires urgent attention and interventions. Children can be seen working on the streets of urban slums in many major cities, gathering garbage, scavenging, and working in street vending.

The movement of population from rural to urban areas raises important issues and movement of children can also be associated with vulnerability. Children moving with their families from rural areas to cities may have problems accessing education at the point of destination. Without access to education children can easily drift into the labour market. Older children may travel from rural to urban areas looking for work, but can often find themselves in exploitive situations.

International migration

The scale of international migration has increased in recent years, with important consequences for child labour. Migratory processes and flows are complex. Where families migrate irregularly and across borders, the child is at increased risk, and often loses out on all basic services, including education, health care and social protection – despite the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, which spells out that children's rights are not conditional on the legal status of their parents.

Migrant children can find themselves excluded from education for a variety of reasons. Child migrants may not attend school because of the costs of education, they may be denied a place owing to their nationality or because they do not make themselves known to authorities for fear of deportation. Language and cultural differences are frequently cited as a source of difficulty for migrant children if they access school.

A significant number of migrant children end up in child labour. The migrant child labour force has become an integral part of some economies– especially in sectors such as agriculture, fishing, manufacturing and domestic labour.

2.4 Ethnic minorities, indigenous and tribal groups

Groups within society already subject to discrimination and exclusion see high rates of child labour. Ethnic minorities and indigenous groups, such as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India can be subject to extreme discrimination and social exclusion.

Studies by the World Bank and the regional development banks, e.g. the Inter-American Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank reveal that indigenous people are overrepresented among the world's poor. While indigenous peoples make up 5 percent of the world population, they constitute approximately 15 per cent of the world's poorest.¹⁰

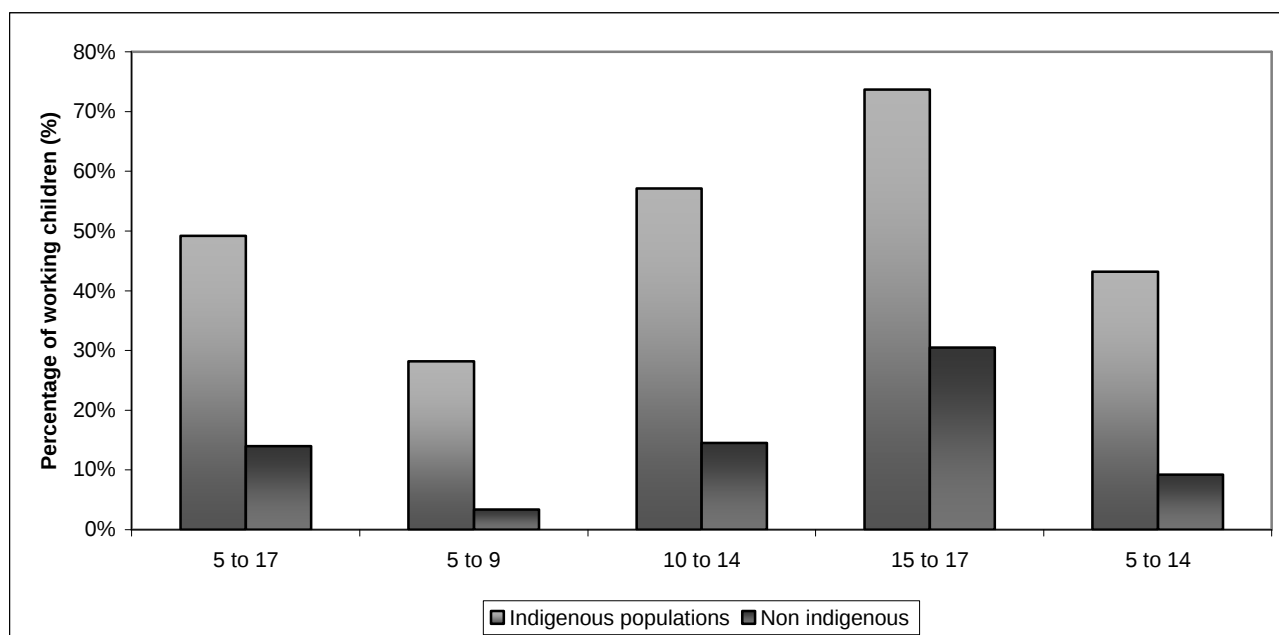
As more data becomes available it is confirmed that indigenous children are more likely to be economically active and are disproportionately affected by child labour. According to the Living Standards Measurement Survey of Guatemala –ENCOVI – 2000, 17.2 percent of all children aged 5-17 were economically active, as compared to 35.3

⁹ UNFPA: *World Population Monitoring Report* (New York, 2007).

¹⁰ IPEC, *Handbook on Combating Child Labour among indigenous and tribal peoples* (Geneva, ILO, 2006).

percent of indigenous children.¹¹ In Honduras, the Continuous Multiple Purpose Household Survey conducted in 2002 revealed that approximately 20.6 percent of indigenous children aged 5 to 17 were working as compared to 15.0 percent of their non-indigenous counterparts.¹² In Ecuador, incidence of childrens work among indigenous communities is substantially higher than among the non indigenous population, as indicated in the graph below. This holds for all age groups considered. In Latin America many indigenous adults and children are also exposed to extreme forms of exploitation such as debt bondage and forced labour such as the Peruvian *enganche* system in mining or logging camps where children are expected to provide free labour.¹³

Figure 6: Children in employment by age group. (%)



Source: Ecuador, ENEMDUR, 2006.

If indigenous children are much more likely to work their presence at schools is also less common. School attendance rates are lower among indigenous children and schools in the areas of indigenous communities are often of poor quality. Few teachers want to teach there. Neglect and rejection of indigenous cultures by the education system, particularly of languages, has had a devastating effect. The lack of birth registration and citizenship rights compound social exclusion.¹⁴

2.5 Girls

ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 1999 and its companion Recommendation No.190. Convention No. 182 explicitly states that “the special situation of girls” must be taken into account when designing responses to the worst forms of child labour.

¹¹ IPEC: *Trabajo infantil y pueblos indígenas - El caso de Guatemala* (San Jose, ILO, 2006). Includes SIMPOC calculations based on the ENCOVI, 2000 survey. Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfor/product/viewProduct.do?productId=7092>

¹² IPEC: *Trabajo infantil y pueblos indígenas - El caso de Honduras* (San Jose, ILO, 2007). Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfor/product/download.do?type=document&id=10432>

¹³ ILO: *Global alliance against forced labour: 2005 global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, pp. 40-41 (Geneva, 2005).

¹⁴ IPEC, INDISCO: *Indigenous and tribal children: assessing child labour and education challenges*, Working paper. (Geneva, ILO, 2003).

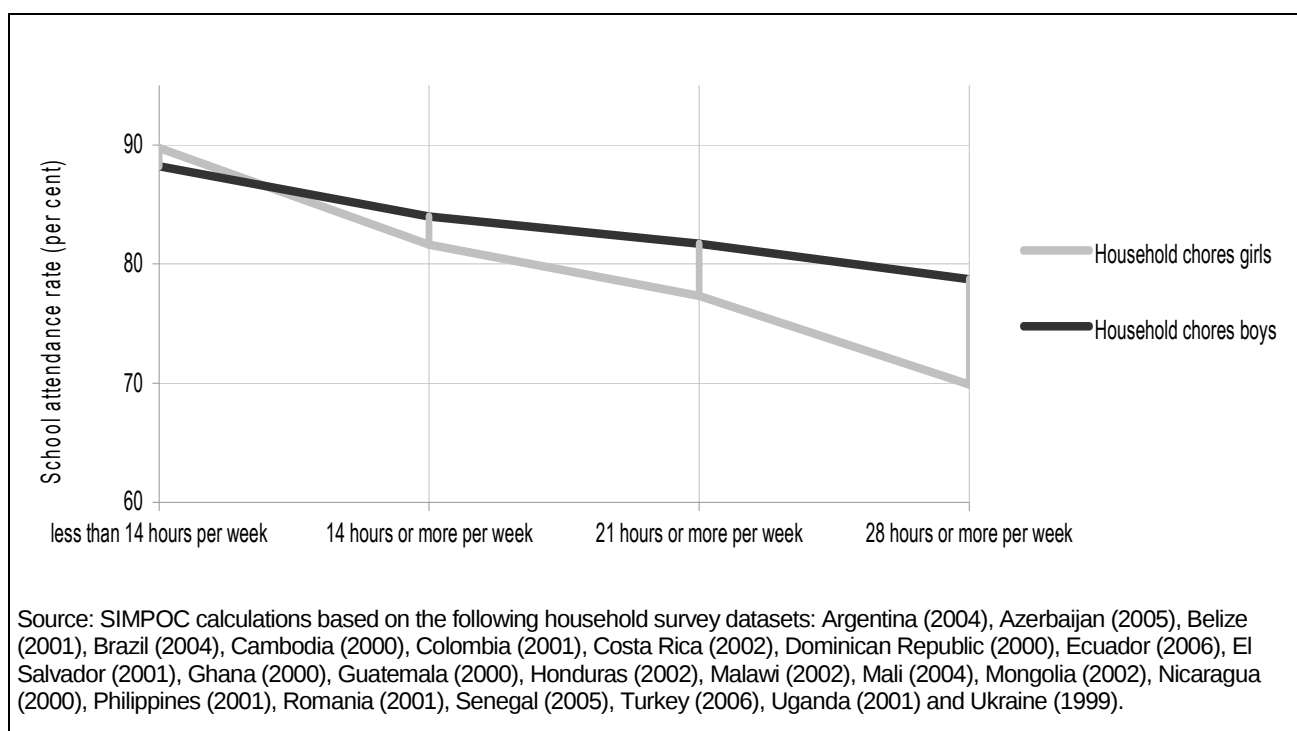
Sometimes the extent of child labour among girls may not be as apparent as that among boys, but latest ILO estimates indicate that there are more than 100 million girls involved in child labour and girls make up some 46% of all child labourers. This does not include girls working in domestic work in their own households, many of whom spend long hours at work, often not attending school.

In many cultures girls are more susceptible to exploitation because of their subordinate and marginal status. Of particular concern is the fact that girls often constitute a large proportion of the children involved in the most extreme worst forms of child labour, such as bonded labour and prostitution.

Most child labour of girls is undertaken in sectors where they can be as exposed as are boys to long hours, and dangerous conditions. The main concentration of girls work is in the agriculture sector where girls often work alongside boys. At the same time girls often endure a “double burden” due to the fact that they are more involved in domestic work than are boys. In many societies, it is common for girls to take on a great deal of unpaid household work for their families, including care-giving, cooking, cleaning, laundry, and gathering water and fuel. Boys also help in household chores, but spend fewer hours on them than do girls.

The table below tells a story of missed opportunities for both boys and girls, but especially girls. It shows that school attendance declines for both girls and boys as the time spent on household chores increases from under 14 hours to over 28 hours per week. But girls’ school attendance drops off at lower levels of household chores, and increasingly more than for boys at each measure of time dedicated to household chores.

Figure 7 : School attendance rate according to number of hours of household chores for girls and boys.



2.6 HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has added a new and tragic dimension to the problem of child labour in many countries of the world. UNAIDS has estimated about 12 million children under 18 years of age have lost one or both parents as a result of AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁵ Whilst many of these orphans may find security in the households of

¹⁵ UNAIDS: *Report on the global HIV/AIDS epidemic 2008* (Geneva, 2008).

relatives, others may drop out of school and look for work to survive. Such children are especially vulnerable, often finding work in situations that leaves them open to exploitation.

An especially heavy burden is placed on girls, who often have to provide care and assume other household responsibilities when a parent becomes ill or dies. Communities affected by HIV/AIDS see high rates of child labour with the loss of breadwinners forcing children into the workforce.

2.7 Areas affected by conflict

There are estimated to be more than 18 million displaced and refugee children.¹⁶ Many of these children are in areas affected by armed conflict. Conflict deprives children of parents, care-givers, basic social services, health care and education. Systems of birth registration and juvenile justice collapse.

The girls and boys who are recruited to fight or accompany combatants are only a small proportion of the vastly larger number of children whose lives are affected directly by conflict. Among them, millions of girls and boys are trapped in various forms of economic exploitation. Armed conflicts are characterised to varying degrees by one or more of the following:

- High insecurity, human rights abuse, death, injuries and trauma.
- Children become orphans as a result of war.
- increase of acts of violence and illicit activities.
- movement of population inside and outside the country.
- destruction of infrastructure and absence of service providers (public and private) including schools and vocational training structures.
- poor legislative framework, weak law enforcement, and culture of impunity,
- weakness (or absence) of local and central authorities.
- communities dismantled, loss of traditional systems and values.
- economic shocks increase poverty and lead to various coping mechanisms.

A combination of these elements will create an environment which can directly or indirectly favour the surge of worst forms of child labour. As an example, in conflict areas in the DRC, children have been reported to be involved in forced labour in mining (diamond, gold and coltan mines across the country) and agricultural sectors. Child refugees and war orphans are engaged in street work, including begging and commercial sexual exploitation.

2.8 Disabilities

While the evidence base on the link between disability and child labour is limited, anecdotal evidence suggests that there would appear to be a number of links. Because of the barriers to education facing children with disabilities many are excluded from education. In this situation some will drift into the labour market. Their lack of basic education can leave them particularly vulnerable. At the most extreme level, there are reports from many parts of the world that children with visible disabilities are being sent out to earn a living as beggars, often suffering violence if they fail to earn money.¹⁷ Other children with disabilities may not immediately enter the workforce, but remain idle, lacking basic education or skills.¹⁸

¹⁶ See <http://www.un.org/children/conflict/english/internallydisplaced.html>.

¹⁷ United Nations, P.S. Pinheiro: *World report on violence against children*, p. 251, United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence Against Children (Geneva, UN, 2006).

¹⁸ UCW, M. Biggeri, et al.: *The puzzle of "idle" children: neither in school nor performing economic activity. Evidence from six countries*, Working paper (Rome, UCW, 2003).

3. How child labour exacerbates marginalization

Whilst the prevalence of child labour is linked to groups marginalised with society, the process of child labour can itself further increase marginalisation. Child labour, and particularly the worst forms of child labour makes it less likely that children will be able to benefit from policy interventions aimed at promoting access to education. Some of the particular characteristics of the work process that can limit the ability of a child to participate effectively in schooling are detailed below.

3.1 Working hours of children

Long hours of work significantly increase the likelihood that children do not attend school. A recent ILO paper looking at evidence from child labour surveys found that as the number of hours of work in economic activities or household chores increases, school attendance possibilities are compromised.¹⁹ As an example average school attendance rates of children working for 28 hours or more per week, represent only 52 % of that corresponding to economically active children working for less than 14 hours per week.

3.2 Working under situations that can threaten a child's health and safety

Child labourers are susceptible to all the dangers faced by adult workers when placed in the same situation. However the work hazards and risks that affect adult workers can affect children more strongly. It is known that a range of biological factors mean that children are more vulnerable than adults. Among the risk factors facing children are

- Fatigue- As a result of being asked to do tasks beyond their physical strength.
- Temperature- children have increased sensitivity to heat and cold and are more prone to dehydration.
- Exposure to chemicals, including pesticides-children are affected at lower exposure levels than adults.
- Exposure to various workplace hazards- lack of experience makes children more vulnerable.
- Sleep requirements – children need more sleep than adults.

There are of course special hazards associated with particular forms of child labour. In many developing countries large numbers of under age children work on garbage dumps as scavengers. In the Philippines, thousands of children and their families make a living from dumpsites and live in satellite communities. In 2000 one of the garbage mountains collapsed under torrential rain killing many adults and children who were buried in the trash.²⁰

If children suffer work related fatigue, workplace accidents or work related illnesses, it can often affect education participation. Teachers in some contexts are very familiar with children arriving at school tired, or having frequent absences, resulting from work related fatigue.

3.3 Working in situations of servitude or confinement

Children in forced and bonded labour represent two thirds of the children in the worst forms of child labour other than hazardous child labour. Forced and bonded labour are classified as slavery according to the 1956 Supplementary Convention on Slavery.

A bonded child works in conditions of servitude to pay off debts, which may have been passed down through generations. In areas where the practice is common, workers are usually from socially inferior groups or castes and their families are among the poorest in society. In South Asia, sector specific studies have found bonded child labour in small scale mining, brick making, fish processing, gem cutting, carpet weaving, tanneries and fireworks production.

¹⁹ IPEC: *Child labour and education: Evidence from SIMPOC surveys*, op.cit.

²⁰ United Nations: *World Report on Violence Against Children*, op.cit., p. 252.

Many groups of children are working in situations where the nature of their work places restrictions on their physical movement. Child domestic workers are an example. The taking in of children from other households to perform domestic duties has a history in many societies. Today such practices have become increasingly commercialised with children often moving or being trafficked, to areas far from their homes. At the point of destination, the closed nature of the household, the child's isolation and the "invisible" nature of the employment can put a child at risk".²¹ Few children in such work situations are able to continue their education.

3.4 Workplace violence

The UN World Report on Violence against Children²² contained a comprehensive overview of forms of violence against children at the workplace. The most frequent harm to working children's well-being appears to be the low self-esteem resulting from verbal abuse, humiliation and bullying. However the report also drew attention to the physical violence against children in a range of areas. The report said that the most common forms of violence against children are:

- Psychological (emotional) violence including shouting, scolding, insults, threats, obscene language, bullying, isolation and marginalization.
- Physical violence, including beatings, kicking, slapping, whipping, scalding.
- Sexual violence and harassment.

A more recent study on violence against children considered preliminary evidence from Colombia, El Salvador, Cambodia and Ecuador.²³ The results indicated that abuse in the workplace is common for children. Agriculture and manufacturing were two sectors in which abuse was reported to be common. The report suggests that children mistreated at work are less likely to attend school, more likely to work long hours and the implications of work for their health seem to be more serious.

It could be assumed that certain forms of work may leave children more exposed to violence than others. In particular children working in high risk situations (eg on the streets) or in situations resembling confinement (eg certain forms of domestic labour) could be particularly exposed.

The impact on self-esteem, and on a child's confidence and trust in adults resulting from mistreatment at the workplace could well have a negative impact on a child's willingness to attend school.

3.5 Children in illicit activities

Many of the children involved in the most extreme forms of child labour, eg prostitution and work in the drugs trade, can find themselves "criminalised" at an early age and excluded from the school system. Even if they are able to participate in education, the attitudes and habits gained from such work may constitute barriers to learning and their relationships with peers.

3.6 Summary of factors increasing marginalization of child labourers

This chapter has considered how the nature of child labour can itself increase the marginalization of children, presenting children with barriers that can constrain their ability to participate in or to benefit from education. The table below summarises some of the key points.

²¹ United Nations: *World Report on Violence Against Children*, op.cit., p. 245.

²² United Nations: *World Report on Violence Against Children*, op.cit.

²³ UCW, F. Blanco et al.: *Violence against children: preliminary evidence from Colombia, El Salvador, Cambodia and Ecuador*. (Rome, UCW, 2008). Available at: http://www.ucw-project.org/pdf/publications/st_Violence_children_17march09.pdf.

Factors which can affect working childrens education participation	Education challenge
Hours of work	As hours increase attendance falls Increases risk of drop out Increases grade repetition Taking children out of school for protracted period (eg to help with harvest) reduces learning and can lead to early drop out
Working under physically demanding and dangerous conditions	Fatigue can lead to reduced attendance, and children unable to concentrate in class. Work related accidents and illness can cause children to miss school
Working in physical isolation	Restricts access to education environment
Violence against children	Leads to low self esteem, can result in absence
Working in situations which resemble confinement	Restricts access to education environment
Children working in illicit activities	Schools may not accept children who have been involved in illicit activities.
Working following migration of parents or child	Schools may not want to accept children May be language barriers May be frequent movement of child
Impact on learning level of child	Work may delay entry into school, or cause children to miss significant periods of schooling Child may need to enter grade below age level Entrance restrictions that prevent children above certain age enrolling
Children who remain at work but may also be able to participate in limited non formal education	Access to non formal education Challenge of quality in non formal education
Habits and attitudes	Children in work may acquire habits and attitudes which do not fit easily with school discipline requirements. This can pose a challenge for teachers.
May bring in an income to family	The threat of family income being lost if a child leaves work to go to school may result in families trying to balance a child's school and work. This may lead to erratic attendance affecting performance or may lead to drop out
Children of working age but involved in worst forms of child labour	Need pathways to decent work for 14-17 year olds, literacy, nfe, skills training

4. The response: Education and the challenge of child labour

4.1 The national policy response

The causes of child labour are multi dimensional, and not all can be tackled by the education sector. Indeed a coordinated policy approach which tackles poverty, boosts economic development and employment, and also extends education access, is likely to be the most effective strategy. However securing childrens access to education is perhaps the single most important step towards tackling child labour.

The ILO has argued that it is policy choices made by governments, rather than poverty levels alone, that explain why certain countries have managed to reach a critical threshold in achieving universal education and with it child labour elimination. Positive policy choices can help target marginalized groups, ensuring that children in such groups have appropriate access to quality education. Laws can also be introduced, and enforced to support compulsory education and against child labour. The most recent ILO global report gave examples of countries where political commitment to reducing poverty and expanding education, have had an important bearing on child labour elimination.

Putting in place a policy framework aimed at tackling poverty and discrimination in society is vital. Education policies that tackle exclusion should be a key component of this. This should include removing school fees and addressing other user costs which may prohibit poor families from sending children to school.

In recent years the perceived success of conditional cash transfer programmes in Latin America has created substantial interest in such programmes, although there is still a debate as to the replicability of the model in other parts of the world. Such social assistance programmes provide a certain amount of cash to poor households on a regular basis on condition that beneficiaries fulfil certain obligations, such as sending children to school or participating in health programmes.

Whilst the reduction of child labour has only rarely been an explicit objective in CCTs, various evaluations have shown that CCT programmes have indeed been effective in reducing child labour. The main strength of the CCT approach from the standpoint of tackling child labour is that it can address the roots of the problem, including chronic poverty, vulnerability to economic shocks and absence of schooling alternatives. Reducing worst forms of child labour has been an explicit objective of Brazil's *Programme for the Eradication of Child Labour (PETI)*. The programme has been found to increase time in school and improve academic success, whilst also reducing labour force participation and hazardous work.²⁴

Whilst seeking to establish a positive policy framework for tackling exclusion from education, countries need also to look in detail at who the excluded children are, and what is required to bring them into education. A "broad brush" approach may not necessarily reach many excluded children, including those involved in child labour, who constitute a large part of the hardest to reach children.

4.2 Education sector plans and strategies

To ensure that education policies can help in addressing the needs of children in child labour, education sector plans need to recognize the child labour problem and measures are required to help to address the specific challenges facing children who work. This is an important starting point to ensure that education policy makers and planners "open their eyes" to the constraints facing child labourers. The following checklist of points identifies some of issues that should be considered in education planning and which could help to reach those children in child labour:

- The education sector plan should incorporate a summary of any data on child labour produced through surveys such as the UNICEF MICS, ILO supported National Child labour surveys or World Bank surveys. The plan should also assess the implications of that data for education strategy. For example, if there are particular geographical areas in which it is known that there are large concentrations of children working, does the education strategy address this?

²⁴ IPEC, H. Tabatabai: *Eliminating child labour: the promise of conditional cash transfers*, p. 10, IPEC Technical Product Lines and Network (TPN) (Geneva, ILO, 2006).

- If a government has established a National Action Plan to tackle child labour, the education sector plan should show a link between education strategies and the National Action Plan on Child Labour. For example, if the government has a plan to tackle child labour in certain geographical areas, can this be reinforced by additional education interventions in the same areas? If certain at risk groups have been identified does the education sector strategy respond to this?
- Access to education in areas of deprivation, rural areas and urban slums should be prioritised with education interventions supported by awareness raising campaigns in the communities.
- Flexible schooling arrangements can sometimes help in providing access. However care needs to be taken to ensure that flexible schooling patterns do not legitimise child labour practices.
- Where it is known that girls of school age are working in large numbers, education interventions should target such girls. Specific interventions targeting girls in domestic work, both in third party households and their own, should be considered.
- Returning to school those children who have been out of school for some time may need special support. Such children may not be used to classroom discipline and may lag behind their peers in their educational level. In particular, children exposed to some of the worst forms of child labour may require special support to ensure that they remain in school and are able to learn effectively and progress within the system.
- “Transitional education” can provide a bridge from being out of school or in non formal education, back into formal schooling. In areas in which child labour is a problem, there could be a case for adding a “transition” class to existing schools, designed to cater for children returning to school and to ease their transition back into formal schooling.
- Education planners should also consider if there any school entrance restrictions that would create obstacles to out of school children returning to school. For example in some countries age restrictions place age limits which prevent a child above a certain age from entering school. Such restrictions can be a barrier to former child labourers re entering school.
- Preventing children entering child labour is easier than trying to return children to education after they have left. Proper monitoring of school attendance and follow up can provide important information both on individual children and groups/categories of children at risk of dropping out and entering child labour. For example they can indicate if girls are dropping out before boys or if children stop attending at certain times of the year. This information can be used to help identify strategies which keep children in school and out of child labour. Do management systems provide clear and properly observed procedures for school attendance monitoring? If a child stops attending school before completion of compulsory education is there a system for checking on where the child is and what the child is doing?
- Assisting children in the school to work transition process, with advice, information and support can also help avoid children going into the world of work unprepared and being exposed to dangerous work situations.

4.3 Non formal education

Non formal education approaches can be important for reaching out to children who ordinarily may have little or no access to formal education. The use of non formal education approaches has been used extensively in programmes aimed at reaching children in child labour, including in the worst forms of child labour. In many countries the Ministry of Education itself manages some form of non formal education programme aimed at out of school children, but non governmental organisations and other civil society groups have also developed a significant role.

Given the contexts of educational exclusion and the need for urgency in removing children from the worst forms of child labour there is a case for using NFE as part of a strategy aimed at tackling child labour. Provision of NFE can be particularly relevant in contexts where there are a lack of schools, where certain groups are subject to systemic exclusion from the education system, in countries witnessing armed conflicts and emergencies, and where children cannot be immediately withdrawn from the workplace. However it is important to guard against systems which become potentially competitive to the formal education system.

4.4 Skills and livelihoods for youths of 14 to 17 year olds

Skills training initiatives can also be very important for efforts to tackle some of the worst forms of child labour. Children in the 14-17 age range engaged in worst forms of child labour may have no desire or possibility to return to school, but may value the option of learning a skill which can assist them earn a living. ILO - IPEC has been supporting many programmes aimed at those in exploitative labour situations who have reached the minimum age of employment (usually 14 or 15) to access skills training. ILO-IPEC is also working with partners to try to strengthen systems to deliver such skills training. Some of the components of successful programmes are:

- A local labour market survey to assess what skills are needed and can be absorbed. Often this will mean skills for self-employment.
- As far as possible, training should be conducted locally where students live.
- An effective infrastructure must be in place to ensure quality control.
- Where necessary, training should include functional literacy and numeric skills.
- Training should include awareness of occupational safety and health hazards.
- Special attention needs to be given to facilitating the access of girls.
- Employers' organizations and local entrepreneurs should be actively involved, for example, in providing opportunities for apprenticeships and employment.
- In respect of self-employment, students also require assistance in learning how and where to access business support services.

5. Conclusion and next steps

5.1 Key conclusions

This paper has argued that not only is child labour closely related to the position of marginalized groups, but that the process of child labour can itself reinforce marginalization.

If the Education for All goals are to be met, ways need to be found of reaching the most difficult to reach children. In addition to establishing a positive policy framework for tackling barriers to participation in education, countries need also to look in detail at who the excluded children are, and what is required to bring them into education. The paper has argued that a “broad brush” approach may not necessarily reach many excluded children, including those involved in child labour. A number of steps could help in moving forward efforts to reach children in child labour.

5.2 Engagement on child labour and education at international level

To advance the work on developing linkages between work on child labour and education for all, it is important to strengthen and build on the structures and partnerships which have emerged over recent years.

The formation of the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All was endorsed at the EFA high Level Group meeting in Beijing in 2005. The group brings together ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, UNDP, Education International and the Global March against Child Labour, along with the governments of Norway and Brazil. The group has been meeting on a regular basis, exchanging information, providing inputs to EFA Working Groups and other meetings, and seeking to take forward plans for greater inter agency cooperation on child labour and education at the country level. In order to make most effective use of the role of the GTF it is important that the focus on national level work is developed, with agencies and national partners working to forge concrete initiatives aimed at extending access to working children.

The inter agency Understanding Children’s Work project (UCW), involving ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank, has taken a leading role in developing research on child labour, including linkages between child labour and education. There are a number of aspects of the research agenda which require further work and it is important that the analytical work being undertaken by UCW is fed into EFA discussions, with a view to influencing the policy and programme agenda.

5.3 Engagement on child labour and education at the national level

It is necessary to move beyond the existing international level support concerning coordination of work on child labour and education, to develop a more specific focus on country level work. In this regard the following could assist:

- Discussions of country education sector plans should include an effort to draw on latest data and research to identify the nature and location of child labour problems and consider how targeted education interventions can assist in tackling child labour.
- In development of EFA plans, those responsible for child labour (usually led by the Ministry of Labour) should be invited to present information on child labour and plans to tackle child labour, in order to explore coordination of work on child labour and education.
- Other country level activities to bring together “stakeholders” on child labour and education, looking at knowledge on child labour and the policy and programme implications for the education sector.
- Education sector donor groups should periodically review information on child labour and other aspects of exclusion with a view to identifying how efforts to tackle child labour and other forms of exclusion are addressed in education sector plans.

The awareness on the linkage between work and programmes on education and child labour is undoubtedly greater than it was some years ago. Continuing to develop knowledge, cooperation and work at both at global and country level can provide a realistic and practical way of helping to reach the hardest to reach children.