

Summary of Activities

World Day Against Child Labour 2012, Jordan

Background

The World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL) for 2012 was organised under the theme: “Human Rights and Social Justice ... Let’s End Child Labour!”. Activities focused on the right of all children to be protected from child labour and from other violations of fundamental human rights, calling for:

- Universal ratification of the ILO’s Conventions on child labour and of all ILO core Conventions.
- National policies and programmes to ensure effective progress in the elimination of child labour.
- Action to build the worldwide movement against child labour.



In preparing for discussions on commemorating WDACL, the ILO-IPEC project team in Jordan submitted a mini-programme to ILO-IPEC HQ to ensure the translation and printing of awareness-raising resources into Arabic. The mini-programme was designed not only to assist these activities in Jordan, but in the wider Arab States region and PDF and printing computer files were sent to HQ and the Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS) for uploading on web sites and further dissemination for printing in different countries.

At the same time, the Technical Committee on Child Labour (TCCL) in Jordan discussed design and preparation of activities at the 5th and 6th meetings on 19 April and 10 May 2012 respectively. The Ministry of Labour expressed strong interest in ensuring high-profile activities in 2012 and indicated its desire for all activities to be organised under its auspices. A sub-group was established involving several members of the TCCL and several activities were agreed as follows:

- A March Against Child Labour on Friday 8 June 2012, particularly involving as many children as possible. Permission for the march had been requested and granted by the Ministry of Interior. This initiative came from the Secretary-General of the MOL, Mr Hamada Abu Nijjmeh.
- A panel discussion on “Human Rights and Social Justice: Let’s End Child Labour”, 12 June 2012 under the patronage of the MOL.
- An open day event on 28 June 2012 at the Social Support Centre (SSC), Marka, Amman, under the patronage of Princess Basma. The SSC is a partner of the child labour project of Save the Children International and provides education, health and other services for former child labourers and children at-risk in the impoverished area of Marka.

There had been a suggestion that the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) would also launch the research report on Child Labour in Agriculture that it had carried out for CHF International in 2011. However, this proposal was later withdrawn as the NCFA is hoping to ensure the presence of Queen Rania of Jordan at the launch. The new dates will be sometime after Ramadan from September 2012 onwards. Nevertheless, the significant level of interest and commitment by all members of the TCCL was both encouraging and further evidence of the growing level of national ownership and engagement in the fight against child labour in Jordan. This commitment was acknowledged through the inclusion of all the institutional logos of the TCCL members on all awareness-raising materials, from posters, to banners, to t-shirts, ensuring the promotion of the message of solidarity.

Additional resource mobilisation

One of the issues discussed during the sub-group meetings on WDACL was that of resource mobilisation to support the various activities, including, for example, printed t-shirts and refreshments for children participating in the march, sound systems and additional entertainment for the activity at the end of the march, the production of banners, buses to bring the children to and from the march, etc. In addition, costs for the panel discussion would include rental of a meeting room, interpretation and equipment, a coffee break for participants, etc.

The TCCL sub-group acknowledged the need to mobilise the funds locally, including from institutional funds, such as the MOL. A breakdown of the various costs and how these were covered by different sources is attached as annex 1. It is a further testament to the commitment of the national partners that many costs were covered by national sources.

ILO-IPEC Jordan opened discussions with UNICEF at a very early stage regarding the possibility of additional financial support for WDACL activities and was met with a very encouraging response. Initially, UNICEF agreed to make USD3,000 available to cover the costs of printed t-shirts for the children participating in the march. However, not only did UNICEF cover the costs of printing 2,000 t-shirts – 1,000 of which were for dissemination among Syrian children through activities on child labour in the border areas – the agency also covered all the costs related to the panel discussion on 12 June. In total, their contribution came to around USD6,000 and ensured the successful implementation of the WDACL 2012 activities.



Awareness-raising and media mobilisation

The media was mobilised at a very early stage in preparations for WDACL, primarily through the media network that was established under the CHF International CECLE project, and also through the media network of the MOL and communications from ILO-IPEC to a broad range of national and international partners, including UN agencies. Both the MOL and the child labour media network have Facebook pages and these were used to disseminate information on WDACL in general. The MOL also promoted the March Against Child Labour through its page and received a significant number of hits, including individuals who signed up to take part in the march virtually. The MOL's Facebook page also posted photographs of the march after the event.

The letter and attachments sent out to partners and stakeholders are attached for further information in the annexes.

On 9 June 2012, the ILO and MOL were interviewed together by the Jordan National Broadcasting Station on a programme entitled "An Issue For Discussion". The programme (in Arabic) was from 21:30 to 23:00 and was broadcast live, including a phone-in session. The ILO was represented by Ms Rula Al-Dajani, National Programme Coordinator, and the MOL by Ms Shereen Al-Taeib, Head of the Child Labour Unit. In preparing for the interview, the radio presenter Ms Layla Jarrar was provided with ILO resource materials for WDACL 2012 as well as a FAQ sheet on child labour in Jordan. Based on these and on the radio station's own research, a series of question subjects were submitted to the ILO and MOL to assist them in preparing for the interview.

In commencing the programme, Ms Al-Taeib provided background information on labour legislation relating to child labour and what Jordan has achieved in terms of policy and strategy development to tackle the problem. This background was complemented by Ms Al-Dajani on the international context of the ILO conventions and definitions. The interview allowed the ILO and MOL to highlight the

importance of tackling child labour in the context of children's rights, particularly education and the right to a dignified childhood, reinforcing the point that if children are denied their fundamental rights, then their chances of having a decent life as an adult will be diminished. Discussion also took place around the WDACL itself, its adoption and purpose, and the focus on this year's theme of human rights and social justice.

In talking about WDACL 2012, details were given of the March Against Child Labour held on 8 June and a number of callers phoned into the programme to congratulate the MOL on the event. Reference was also made to the forthcoming panel discussion on 12 June and an open invitation was extended to listeners on the programme. The ILO and MOL described some of the main reasons why children work with specific reference to Jordan where the main cause is financial hardship combined with education challenges. Ms Al-Taieb added that some employers prefer to hire children because they pay them less and can control them more than adults. Referring to the problem of child labour among Syrian refugees, Ms Al-Dajani also noted that situations of civil conflict and natural disasters impact on the vulnerabilities of families, especially children and can push them into situations of child labour to respond to the needs generated by increased vulnerability.

The interview offered the opportunity to the ILO and MOL to highlight the collaboration between them through the child labour project funded by the US Department of Labor (USDOL), "Moving Towards a Child Labour Free Jordan". Reference was made to the key objective of creating an enabling environment for the elimination the worst forms of child labour by 2016, including through the development of an automated and web-based child labour monitoring system that would support data collection, documentation and reporting to support policies and strategies not only on child labour but also child and family protection. In closing, Ms Al-Taieb referred to the importance of targeting employers through awareness-raising and advocacy and Ms Al-Dajani provided a background on ILO's global statistics on child labour. It was interesting to note that all the calls into the programme condemned child labour and emphasised its negative impact on children as they grow into adulthood.

A copy of the recording of the radio interview (in Arabic) is available on request from ILO-IPEC Jordan.

March Against Child Labour

At around 17:00 on Friday 8 June 2012, hundreds of children from different programmes congregated in the Al-Weibdeh area of Amman to participate in the March Against Child Labour organised under the auspices of the MOL and TCCL. Children from the following programmes participated:

- Social Support Centre, Marka;
- Non-formal education centres, Ministry of Education;
- Non-formal education centres, Questscope;
- Social services centres, Greater Amman Municipality;
- Social services centres, Ministry of Social Development;
- Women's Union, Amman;
- People with Disabilities, Amman.



In addition, a number of families participated. There are no definitive numbers of participants, but estimates vary from over 500 to around 1,000. The route of the march was around 45 minutes long,

ending up in a park area in Al-Weibdeh where a number of activities were presented. The MOL had received permission from the Ministry of Interior for the march which was therefore accompanied by a police presence. Nearly all the children and a number of adults from partners and stakeholders were wearing WDACL printed t-shirts and specially prepared banners were either carried or erected in the start and end venues. The entire march was filmed and photographed and the video (in Arabic) and photographs are available on request from ILO-IPEC Jordan.

The main banner at the front of the march was carried by the Secretary General of the MOL, accompanied by various partners and children along the way, including ILO, UNICEF, Questscope and the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU). Other participating partners included CHF International, Save the Children International, National Council for Family Affairs, SSC and the Ministries of Education and Social Development.

Activities organised in the park venue included:

- Speeches by the MOL and CLU;
- Music, including a special rendition of the child labour song “Free the Children” (“Libérez les Enfants”) by a group of children from the SSC in Marka;
- A professional theatre sketch depicting a scenario of child labour and education specifically commissioned by the MOL for the WDACL 2012.

In addition, refreshments were provided for the child marchers by various organisations. The event ended around 19:30.

Panel Discussion – “Human Rights and Social Justice: Let’s End Child Labour”

In order to commemorate WDACL on 12 June 2012, a panel discussion was organised under the auspices of the MOL, with the support of ILO, UNICEF and GAM, on the theme “Human Rights and Social Justice: Let’s End Child Labour”. The event was hosted by GAM in the Hussein Cultural Centre in Amman from 12:00 to 15:00 and included an open invitation to a wide range of agencies, partners and stakeholders in Jordan. The audience also included students from the SSC in Marka and members of the Children’s Municipal Council of Amman.



The panel was moderated by a radio journalist Mr Hatem Al-Kiswani who is well-known to the MOL and a number of members of the TCCL for his interest in the issue of child labour, particularly as a media representative on the National Child Labour Committee (NCLC) established under the former ILO-IPEC Country Programme, 2002-2007. In preparing for this panel discussion, two meetings were organised with Mr Al-Kiswani to discuss content, possible questions and objectives.

The panel itself was made up of the following 10 participants from across the spectrum of partners and stakeholders:

- Mr Hamada Abu Nijjmeh, Secretary General, MOL;
- Mr Frank Hagemann, Deputy Director, ILO-ROAS;
- Ms Dominique Hyde, Representative, UNICEF Jordan;
- Ms Nancy Abu Hayyaneh, Director, Social Services Department, GAM;
- Mr Khaled Habahbeh, GFTU;
- Mr Adnan Abu Al-Ragheb, Jordan Chamber of Industry;

- Mr Atef Al-Majali, National Centre for Human Rights;
- Ms Nihayat Dabdub, Director, SSC;
- Mr Ahmed Hassan, Ministry of Education;
- Mr Ahmed Shareef, Children's Municipal Council.

The event was opened by Mr Nick Grisewood, CTA, ILO-IPEC Jordan, who set the context of the WDACL before handing over to Mr Al-Kiswani to set in motion the panel discussions. Rather than a series of presentations by different panellists, he sought to create a more interesting and dynamic environment by asking questions of panellists and then opening the floor to questions from the audience as well – an approach which worked effectively and ensured audience participation, particularly from children.

The initial questions were directed towards Mr Abu Nijmeh, Mr Hagemann and Ms Hyde, setting the scene in terms of where Jordan is today in terms of its commitments to international conventions on child labour and child rights and the challenges that remain. It was noted that there is a strong policy and legislative environment in place, including minimum age of employment and the new National Framework on Child Labour (NFCL). The MOL expressed its firm commitment through chairing the NCLC and more recently the TCCL. These committee structures ensure



the participation of all stakeholders in tackling child labour. Mr Hagemann echoed these positive comments, providing details of the global picture of child labour and pointing out that the incidence in Jordan was low enough to be manageable and to potentially the country to be among those that could eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2016. Ms Hyde commented that the issue of child labour among Syrian refugees was of concern to the TCCL and it would be important to focus more attention on enforcement of legislation and engaging employers more centrally. She emphasised the need for a holistic approach in targeting child labour, working with all partners and investing in opportunities for children, particularly encouraging their return to mainstream education. In this respect, UNICEF is supporting an out-of-school children survey looking at reasons why children drop out of school. Ms Hyde went to emphasise the need to focus on equity for all, eliminating worst forms of violence against children and to introduce greater access to conditional cash transfers with specific conditionalities.

The issue of education was raised a number of times by the moderator and through questions from the floor which criticised the MOE and spoke of violence in schools, poor teaching and a curriculum that did not address the needs of different students. Mr Hassan noted that although elementary education was compulsory, a number of children drop out and the MOE provides alternative forms of education to encourage their return. He also noted that programmes had been established to train teachers in using more modern pedagogical techniques, to eliminate corporal punishment and to introduce more extra-curricular activities in schools. However, these developments were questioned by a number of students who recounted their personal experiences in schools. Providing examples of alternative forms of education and their importance for vulnerable children, Ms Dabdub introduced the work of the SSC and also highlighted the need to address the issue of school drop-out as a matter of urgency.

Ms Abu Hayyaneh noted that GAM had not been a key player in national efforts to tackle child protection at the outset, but, with the support of UNICEF, had become more involved in this field, including through the launch of its Child Friendly City initiative and its child protection activities. GAM has established a committee for school drop-out which is an important contributing factor to child labour. In addition, GAM established a Children's Municipal Council that is now in its third year. Speaking on behalf of the Council, Mr Ahmed Shareef (12-years-old) explained that it represents children from all socio-economic sectors in Amman and focuses on protecting and

promoting the rights of children within GAM's structures and programmes. He spoke of the impact of child labour on children and the major contributing factor of poverty. He also challenged the reference by the MOE to non-curricular activities in schools and emphasised the problems of violence in schools and the non-participation of children in any decision-making processes. In addition, Mr Shareef called on the MOL to enforce minimum age legislation more rigorously and impose strong penalties on offending employers. He also called on the MOE to build playgrounds in schools as children need recreation and to play as part of their school day.

The issue of school drop-out continued to be emphasised by panellists and the audience alike. Mr Atef Al-Majali, NCHR, called for an education curriculum that was consistent with labour markets and also emphasised that child labour and school drop-out were problems of everyone in society, particularly parents, and not just one or two organisations or government ministries. "Child rights start with education," he said. In their interventions, the social partners pointed to different responses to tackle child labour. Mr Abu Al-Ragheb noted that child labour was prevalent within small workshops



as opposed to established factories, but acknowledged that these workshops also supplied established businesses and that there would be a need to focus on child labour in supply chains. He also emphasised the need for more workers to be covered by the social security law to enhance their income and reduce the need for children to work. From a trade union perspective, Mr Habahbeh highlighted the importance of awareness-raising within communities and among different groups. He also called for more coherence among partners and emphasised the need to promote decent work and increase the number of labour inspectors in the kingdom. In

addition, Mr Habahbeh pointed out that trade unions had not been given sufficient roles and responsibilities in national efforts to tackle child labour, including in the development of the NFCL.

Based on the panel interventions and discussions, some important comments were made from the audience, including:

- The need for more up-to-date knowledge on child labour trends since the 2007 National Child Labour Survey.
- The need to focus on issues regarding family protection as this is central to child labour incidence.
- The need to pay greater attention to the issue of child labour outside of Amman.
- The important contribution that social service centres, such as those of the SSC and GAM, can make in tackling the issue of child labour and school drop-out.

As part of the event, a special performance was given by children from GAM social programmes on their perspective on the problem of child labour and the impact this has on children.

In closing the panel discussion, Mr Al-Kiswani called on several panellists to indicate what they believe would be important next steps in tackling child labour in Jordan.

- ILO – Mr Hagemann noted that Jordan was at a tipping point in its efforts to tackle child labour. While the country had come a long way in this effort, it would need to be decisive in its next steps. Jordan could become an important role model for the region in successful efforts to tackle child labour, particularly its worst forms, and could also be a contributor to potential good practices at the 2013 Global Child Labour Conference planned in Brazil as a follow-up to Roadmap 2016. In order to achieve this goal, Mr Hagemann emphasised the importance of

revisiting and reviewing the child labour policy framework, tightening the monitoring framework at national level and strengthening advocacy.

- MOL – Mr Abu Nijmeh highlighted the importance of a collaborative effort to ensure the implementation of the NFCL as there is a gap between responsibilities and implementation. He also emphasised the clear importance of addressing school drop-out and more detailed knowledge on child labour trends.
- UNICEF – Ms Hyde called for more action, pointing out that legislation and policies are in place but need to be enforced and there needs to be more monitoring to support this. She also pointed to the important role of children in the panel discussion event and highlighted the need to listen to children more in developing responses.
- SSC – Ms Dabdub echoed the comments referring to shared responsibilities and underlined the need for strong political will to tackle child labour accompanied by adequate government resources to provide direct support to vulnerable children and their families.
- MOE – Mr Hassan admitted that the MOE should do more in building the capacities of teachers, but felt that the core issues need to be seen as a joint responsibility by all stakeholders requiring a joint response.

The event was brought to a conclusion by Ms Shereen Al-Taieb, CLU-MOL, who called on participants to continue to contribute to awareness-raising on the challenge of child labour within their own organisations and communities. These comments echoed a contribution from a UNICEF staff member during the panel discussion when she noted that child labour is a result of a decision-making process that does not only involve children but rather is also an outcome of supply and demand. She welcomed the panel discussion and called on the ILO and UNICEF to support more of these events in future to help stakeholders understand the causes and consequences of child labour and to realise that all of society is responsible for its existence and therefore in developing and implementing sustainable and effective responses.

Open Day, Social Support Centre, Marka

On 28 June 2012, the Social Support Centre (SSC) in Marka, East Amman, organised a special open day in commemoration of WDACL 2012 and also to mark the graduation of its students from the previous academic year, 2011-2012. The event was attended by JOHUD Royal Patron Her Majesty Princess Basma (sister of King Abdullah) and by H.E. Dr Atef Odibat, Minister of Labour, and a number of senior officials from the Ministry of Labour, JOHUD, Greater Amman Municipality and the Marka community. Officials from the ILO-IPEC and Save the Children International child labour projects were also invited and met with Princess Basma who expressed her gratitude to both organisations for their support for child labour elimination efforts in Jordan.

The event was very much an occasion for celebration for the students and staff of the SSC with interventions by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Labour, H.E. Mr Hamada Abu Nijmeh, the Director of the SSC, Ms Nihayat Dabdub, and several students and teachers. The event included pieces of theatre, dance and singing by all the students as well as speeches by officials.

World Day Against Child Labour 2012, Jordan Financial Contributions

Item	Sponsor
WDACL 2012 awareness-raising materials	ILO
Printed t-shirts	UNICEF
<u>March Against Child Labour, 8 June 2012</u>	
Refreshments for participating children, including drinks, snacks and meals	CHF International, MOL sponsor
Balloons	MOL
Transportation for children	Questscope, SSC, GAM, MOSD
Banners	MOL
Theatre sketch – Za'al and Khadra	Seagull Technology
Mugs	MOL
Invitation cards	MOL
Caricature	Emad Hajjaj
Music/entertainment and sound system	Sult Band
<u>Panel Discussion, 12 June 2012</u>	
Venue and sound system	GAM
Coffee break	UNICEF
Banners	ILO
Interpretation	UNICEF
<u>SSC celebration, 28 June 2012</u>	
Venue	SSC
Kites	Save the Children International
Refreshments for children	SSC
Meals	Kentucky Fried Chicken, Amman
Theatre sketch	GAM
Monetary contributions (JOD1,000)	GAM

Amman, 4 June 2012

World Day Against Child Labour 2012
“Human rights and social justice ... Let’s end child labour!”

Each year on 12 June, the International Labour Organization (ILO) calls on its member States and the international community to identify ways and means of putting the spotlight on global efforts to eliminate child labour. This year, the World Day Against Child Labour will focus on child labour elimination as an integral component of the broader human rights and social justice framework, specifically the protection of all children from all violations of their fundamental human rights.

As part of these global concerted efforts, the ILO child labour project office in Jordan is working closely with the Ministry of Labour, the Jordan Chamber of Industry, the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions and the members of the Technical Committee on Child Labour to highlight child labour in Jordan, steps being taken to address the issue and the need for improved protection of children’s rights. These efforts are being prepared within the framework of several activities and we hope that your agency/organisation will join with the Ministry of Labour, the ILO and the national partners by participating in these events as follows:

- Friday 8 June 2012, 17:30-19:30, March Against Child Labour (details enclosed);
- Tuesday 12 June 2012, 12:00-15:00, Panel Discussion “Human Rights and Social Justice: Let’s End Child Labour”, Hussein Cultural Centre, Amman (details enclosed);
- Thursday 28 June 2012, Open Day event at the Social Support Centre, Marka, Amman, under the patronage of Princess Basma. Further details on this event can be obtained by contacting Ms Nihayat Dabdub, Director of the SSC, on (077) 789 4202 or grace.dabdub@yahoo.com.

The World Day Against Child Labour promotes awareness and action to tackle child labour and support has been growing each year and, in 2012, the ILO is looking forward to a World Day that will again be widely supported. We therefore kindly ask you to be part of the 2012 World Day programme in whatever way possible, including statements of support, press releases, participation in the organised activities indicated above, distribution of posters and materials, etc.

To assist in participation and provide further information, please find enclosed the following:

- ILO World Day 2012 poster, information brochure and statement;
- Child Labour in Jordan, FAQ sheet.

We deeply appreciate your anticipated presence.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Grisewood
Chief Technical Adviser, ILO, Jordan

World Day Against Child Labour

March Against Child Labour

Amman, 8 June 2012

On 8 June 2012, the Ministry of Labour is organising a March to commemorate the 2012 World Day Against Child Labour and to raise awareness on the continued existence of child labour in Jordan and the need to take urgent action to address the causes and consequences of child labour.

The event is open to all those who wish to take part and march children and adults alike to show solidarity and adding more voices to the call for urgent action to be taken. Child labour is of growing concern in Jordan at a time of significant socio-economic challenges not only in the country, but also at regional and global levels. The most vulnerable in society suffer most during these difficult times and the lives and futures of vulnerable children are most at risk.

The March will commence at around **17:30 on Friday 8 June 2012**.

Marchers will assemble at the **Paris Circle, Al-Weibdeh, from 17:00 onwards**, and those wishing to take part should meet there.

The March will last around 45 minutes and participants will walk towards Al-Weibdeh Park near the National Museum for Fine Arts.

A number of events are planned in the Park itself, including:

- A theatre sketch developed for the occasion by Za'al and Khadra, a well-known theatre group;
- Music by various local artistes.

Refreshments will also be available. The event is expected to finish around 19:30.

The Ministry of Labour and the co-organisers look forward to as much participation as possible!

World Day Against Child Labour
Panel Discussion – Human Rights and Social Justice: Let's End Child Labour
Hussein Cultural Centre, Amman, 12 June 2012

Concept

The World Day against Child Labour for 2012 is focused on Human Rights and Social Justice. One of the key events to commemorate the occasion in Jordan will be a panel discussion on “Human Rights and Social Justice: Let's End Child Labour”, inviting panellists from different national stakeholders to consider local and national initiatives in place to address the issue, gaps and challenges remaining and what the next steps should be.

The event is under the patronage of the Minister of Labour, H.E. Dr Atef Odeibat, and is being organised in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and will be hosted by the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) in the **Hussein Cultural Centre, Ras Al-Ain, Amman, on 12 June 2012 from 12:00-15:00**. The panel discussion will be moderated by a journalist who has been involved in child labour issues since 2002, Mr Hatem Al-Kiswani. The list of panellists will include: Ministries of Labour and Education, ILO Regional Office for the Arab States, UNICEF, GAM, National Centre for Human Rights, Jordan Chamber of Industry, General Federation of Trade Unions, Children's Municipal Council of GAM and the Social Support Centre in Marka.

Programme Outline

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| 12:00-12:15 | Short video on child labour |
| 12:15-12:30 | Opening of the panel discussion by Mr Hatem Al-Kiswani |
| | Introduction of the panellists and presentation of key objectives |
| | Presentation of subject for opening discussion and initiation of panel exchange |
| 12:30-13:15 | Moderated discussion involving audience, comments, questions to panellists |
| 13:15-13:30 | Coffee break |
| 13:30-13:45 | Theatre presentation by children's group from GAM programme |
| 13:45-14:30 | Continued moderated discussion with audience and panellists focusing on key next steps to addressing child labour in Jordan |
| 14:30-15:00 | Closing comments and recommendations |

The audience will include students from the Social Support Centre in Marka and representatives of the GAM Children's Municipal Council.

World Day Against Child Labour 2012

“Human rights and social justice ... Let’s end child labour!”

This year, the World Day Against Child Labour will provide a spotlight on the right of all children to be protected from child labour and from other violations of fundamental human rights. In 2010 the international community adopted a *Roadmap for achieving the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016*,¹ which stressed that child labour is an impediment to children’s rights and a barrier to development. World Day 2012 will highlight the work that needs to be done to make the roadmap a reality.

The ILO’s Conventions seek to protect children from exposure to child labour. Together with other international instruments relating to children’s, workers’ and human rights they provide an important framework for legislation established by national governments. However, the ILO’s most recent global estimate is that 215 million children worldwide are involved in child labour, with more than half this number involved in its worst forms.² The children concerned should be at school being educated and acquiring skills that prepare them for decent work as adults. By entering the labour market prematurely, they are deprived of this critical education and training that can help to lift them, their families and communities out of a cycle of poverty. In its worst forms, child labourers may also be exposed to physical, psychological or moral suffering that can cause long term damage to their lives.

On this World Day, the ILO calls for:

- Universal ratification of the ILO’s Conventions on child labour and of all ILO core Conventions.
- National policies and programmes to ensure effective progress in the elimination of child labour.
- Action to build the worldwide movement against child labour.

ILO Standards on Rights at Work

The principles and rights established in eight ILO core Conventions are also regarded as human rights which all ILO Member States are required to respect, promote and realise. The “fundamental principles and rights at work” concern freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. The four categories of rights are mutually reinforcing: the elimination of child labour will be achieved much more quickly and efficiently when the other rights are also respected.

Concerning child labour, the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) requires States to specify in law a minimum age for admission to employment not less than the age of finishing compulsory education, and which in any case, should not be less than 15 years. A member country whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed may under certain conditions initially specify a minimum age of 14 years.³ In Jordan, the minimum age of employment is 16.

¹ A copy of the Roadmap adopted by unanimous acclamation can be downloaded from the ILO web site: www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=13453

² The most recent estimates suggest 127 million boys and 88 million girls are involved in child labour with 74 million boys and 41 million girls in the worst forms.

³ National laws or regulations may permit the employment of 13-15 year olds in light work which is neither prejudicial to school attendance, nor harmful to a child’s health or development. The ages 12-14 can apply for light work in countries that specify a minimum age of 14.

The ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) calls for “immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency”. The worst forms are defined as:

- All forms of slavery, or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, as well as forced labour, including forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.
- The use, procurement or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances.
- The use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties.
- Work which, by its nature or circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children, such harmful work to be determined by national authorities.

Other Key International Standards and Declarations

Over the years, growing awareness of the need to ensure that children receive education and protection has spurred the development of a body of international standards to help guide governments in enacting domestic legislation. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights features the right to education prominently stating that “Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available...”

There is near universal ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention states that children have the right to be protected 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. It also states that primary education should be compulsory and available free to all and encourages the development of different forms of secondary education available and accessible to every child. The United Nations General Assembly has also adopted two Optional Protocols to the Convention to increase the protection of children from involvement in armed conflicts and from sexual exploitation.⁴

The importance of protecting fundamental principles and rights at work during the ongoing global financial and jobs crisis was reflected in the communiqué of the G20 Summit held in November 2011 which encouraged the ILO to continue promoting ratification and implementation of the core Conventions ensuring fundamental principles and rights at work.

Ratification and Implementation of ILO Conventions on Child Labour

Although the ILO’s child labour Conventions are among the most widely ratified of ILO Conventions there is a need for countries that have not yet ratified the Conventions to do so, and to ensure their effective implementation. While Jordan has ratified both Conventions, the ILO on the occasion of World Day 2012 is calling on all governments that have not already done so to ratify and implement the Conventions.

National Policies and Programmes

The ILO’s Convention No. 182 requires that each Member which ratifies the Convention shall design and implement programmes of action to eliminate as a priority the worst forms of child labour. Many countries have now established National Action Plans that provide a framework for such efforts. Jordan is leading the way among the Arab States having formally adopted the National Framework on Child Labour in August 2011. However, many other countries have yet to do so and countries that

⁴ The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

have established plans need to monitor and review their effectiveness. If the challenging target of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 is to be achieved, urgent action along these lines is required now.

The Worldwide Movement Against Child Labour

Although governments must take the lead role in tackling child labour, the ILO standards stress the important role that employers and workers organizations should play in setting and implementing action programmes. Many civil society organisations are also closely involved in efforts to tackle child labour. Building the worldwide movement against child labour at global, national and local level remains a priority.

Join us on 12 June!

The World Day Against Child Labour promotes awareness and action to tackle child labour. Support for the World Day has been growing each year and in 2012 the ILO is looking forward to a World Day that will again be widely supported.

The ILO child labour office in Jordan therefore calls on all concerned organisations and individuals to be part of the 2012 World Day in whatever way possible, including statements of support, press releases, participation in organised activities, distribution of posters and materials, etc. Please let the ILO know of your support activities by contacting the officials below. Materials are also available from the ILO.

Join us and add your voice to the worldwide movement against child labour!

For more information and for promotional materials on World Day Against Child Labour 2012 contact:

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Stepping Up the Fight Against Child Labour

Joint ILO/UNICEF Press Release, 11 June 2012

GENEVA (ILO News) and AMMAN ILO/UNICEF Jordan – A large gap remains between the ratification of Conventions on child labour and the actions countries take to deal with the problem, the International Labour Organization (ILO) said in a report marking the tenth anniversary of the annual World Day Against Child Labour (12 June 2012).

“There is no room for complacency when 215 million children are still labouring to survive and more than half of these are exposed to the worst forms of child labour, including slavery and involvement in armed conflict. We cannot allow the eradication of child labour to slip down the development agenda – all countries should be striving to achieve this target, individually and collectively,” said ILO Director-General Juan Somavia.

New estimates released on 1 June showed that some 5 million children are caught in forced labour, which includes conditions such as commercial sexual exploitation and debt bondage – and this is thought to be an underestimate.

“Combining the words ‘child’ and ‘labour’ in one sentence is at the heart of the problem. Child labour deprives children from their childhood, potential and dignity and is harmful to children’s mental and physical development,” said UNICEF Representative in Jordan Ms Dominique Hyde. She added: “We need to work together to reduce and end all forms of child labour.”

The ILO’s child labour Conventions 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour are among the most widely ratified of all the ILO Conventions, including by Jordan. Of the ILO’s 185 member States, 88 per cent have ratified the first and 95.1 per cent the latter. The goal is universal ratification by 2015. Likewise, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child enjoys near universal ratification.

However, according to a new ILO report entitled, “Tackling child labour: From commitment to action”, progress in reducing child labour has often been outweighed by a failure to translate commitments into practice. The largest gap between commitment and action is in the informal economy, where the majority of violations of fundamental labour rights occur, the report says. Children in rural and agricultural areas, as well as children of migrant workers and indigenous peoples, are most vulnerable to being caught in child labour.

The ILO also indicates that relatively few cases against child labour reach national courts of law. Sanctions for violations are often too weak to be effective deterrents against the exploitation of children. This means national judicial and law enforcement institutions along with victim protection programmes need to be strengthened. While much more needs to be done, the ILO paper recognizes the important progress being made in a number of countries to improve law and practice. This includes:

- A growing list of countries establishing national plans to tackle child labour. In the case of Jordan, the government adopted a National Framework on Child Labour in August 2011 which is being led by the Ministry of Labour and also includes the Ministries of Education and Social Development to support its implementation.
- Many new legislative prohibitions that aim identify and prevent hazardous work by children. Jordan adopted a Revised List of Hazardous Work for Juveniles in June 2011.
- More legislation being adopted against child prostitution and child pornography.

- A marked increase in international cooperation and mutual assistance among member States, particularly on issues concerning trafficking.

“We should also build on national policies and programmes that are in place and learn from them to ensure effective action against child labour in all parts of the world,” said the ILO Director-General. He added: “Decent work for parents, and education for children are indispensable elements of strategies for the elimination of child labour. Let us redouble our efforts and move forward with the Roadmap adopted in The Hague in 2010 to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2016.”

The ILO’s Conventions seek to protect children from exposure to child labour. Together with other international instruments relating to children’s, workers’ and human rights, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, they provide an important framework for legislation, policies and actions against child labour.

Note to Editors:

The World Day against Child Labour, marked each year on 12 June, is the major annual advocacy event focussing on child labour. In 2012 the theme is “Human Rights and Social Justice: Let’s end child labour”. In Jordan, a Panel Discussion on this theme is being held under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour, ILO and UNICEF in the Hussein Cultural Centre on 12 June 2012, 12:00 to 15:00. The event is being hosted by the Great Amman Municipality.

For more information or for interviews, please contact the ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour in Jordan and/or UNICEF Jordan:

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