

A photograph of several young children, likely in a classroom or play area. In the foreground, a young girl with dark hair is smiling and looking towards the camera. Behind her, other children are visible, some slightly out of focus. The image is partially obscured by a white diagonal shape that contains the title text.

Situation and Strategic Challenges of Child Labour Elimination in the Asia-Pacific Region

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The Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

1. **Freedom of Association** and the effective recognition of the right to **Collective Bargaining**
2. The Abolition of all forms of **Forced or Compulsory Labour**
3. **The Elimination of Child Labour**
4. The Elimination of **Discrimination** in respect of Employment and Occupation
5. **A safe and healthy working environment (OSH)**

Child Labour

- Defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development

Refers to work that is

- **mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children;** and/or
 - **interferes with their schooling** by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work
- Whether or not particular forms of “work” can be called “child labour” depends on the
- child’s age, including minimum age for work
 - the type and hours of work performed
 - the conditions under which it is performed

What is Child Labour?

- Work that children (people under 18) do that is to be eliminated because:
 - ✓ they are **too young** to work (below national minimum age for work or for light work)
 - ✓ or, if they are old enough to work, because it is **dangerous** or **otherwise unsuitable**

BUT not all economic activity of children under 18 is child labour



Convention 138, Minimum Age Convention, 1973

A minimum age for employment not less than the age of finishing compulsory education

In any case not less than 15 years; countries may set it at 14 years if “...economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed..”

- Minimum age of 18 for hazardous work
- Employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of children
- Determined by national law after tripartite consultation: “Hazardous Work Lists”

National policy to abolish child labour and progressively raise the minimum age for employment to a level consistent with the « fullest physical and mental development » of young persons;

Convention 182, Worst Form of Child Labour, 1999

- Child: boy or girl under the age of 18
- Worst forms of child labour:
 - Slavery or similar practices (trafficking, debt bondage, forced labour, recruitment for use in armed conflict)
 - Prostitution and pornography
 - Illicit activities (eg. drug trafficking)
 - Hazardous work

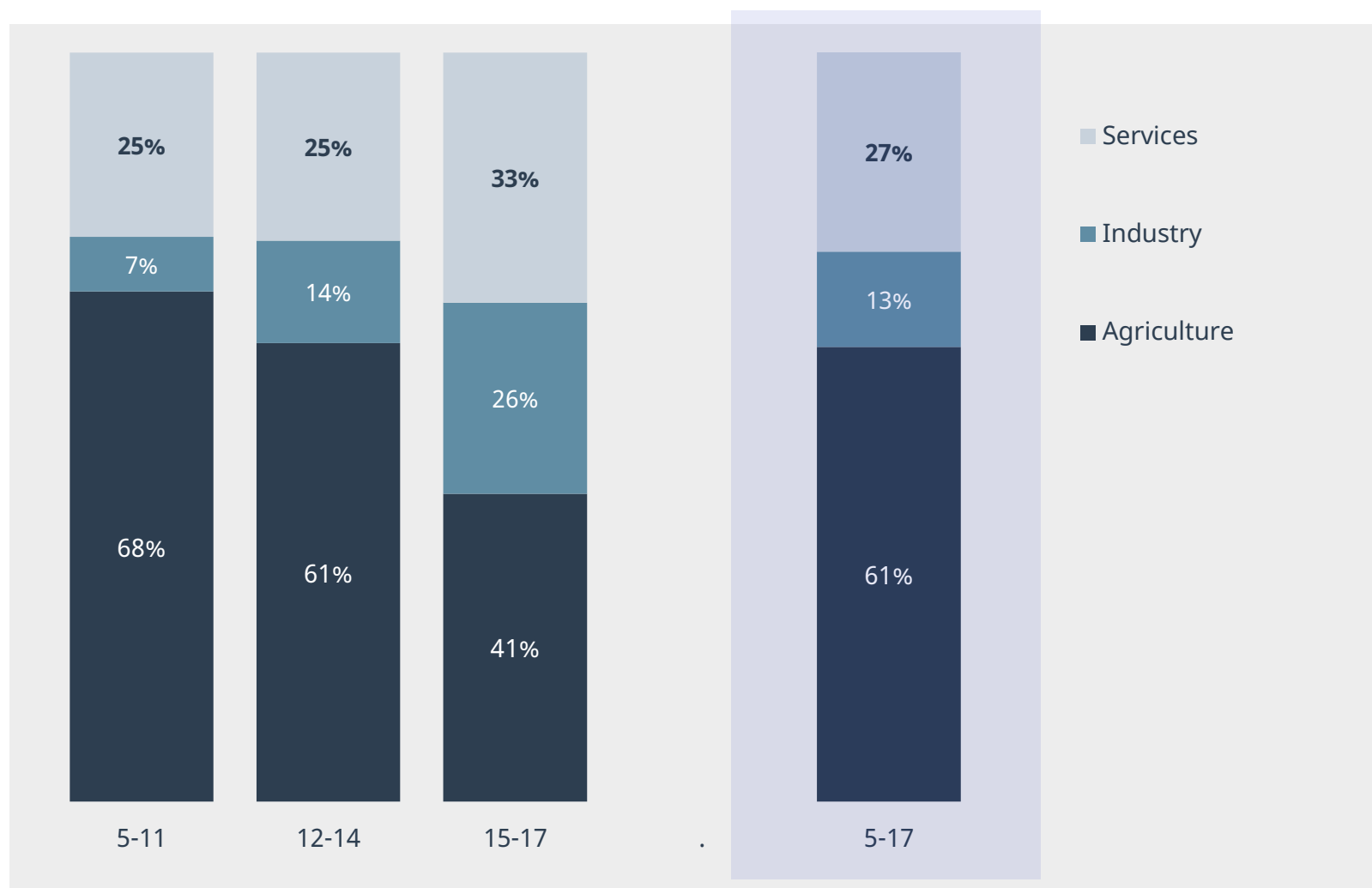


Root Causes of Child Labour

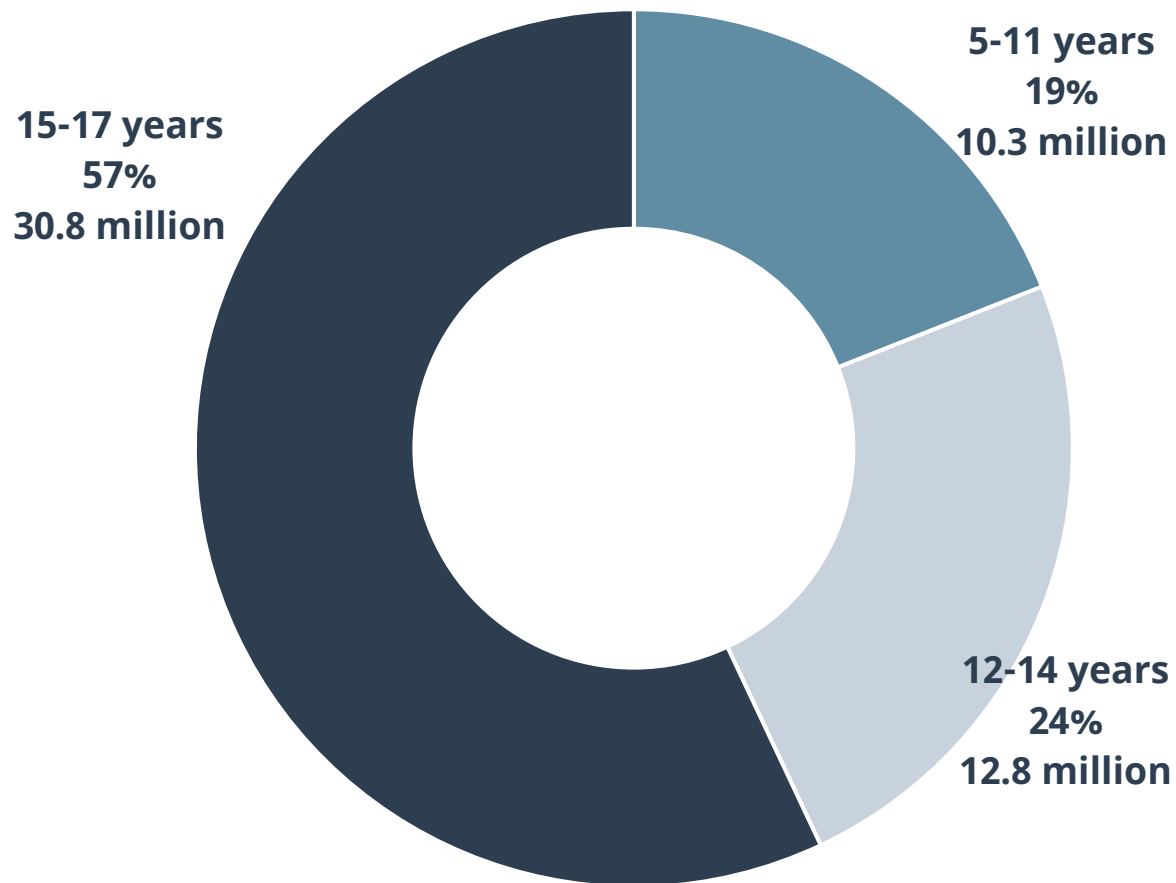
- Poverty and economic pressures
- Educational barriers
- Limited decent work opportunities, incl. decent wage and fair income
- Severe commercial pressure related to pricing, costs and time
- Cultural norms and expectations
- Lack of enforcement of regulation
- Migration and labour shortages
- Shocks and climate change effects impacting on the deterioration of livelihoods and rural households' vulnerability



Most child labour is in agriculture, although the relative share diminishes as children grow older



Percentage distribution of children aged 5 to 17 years in child labour, by sector of economic activity, age and sex



**Hazardous work occurs among
children of all ages**

Fig. 4 Number and percentage distribution of children aged 5 to 17 years in hazardous work, by age

Durban Call to Action

1. Make **decent work** a reality for adults and youth above the minimum age for work by accelerating multi-stakeholder efforts to eliminate child labour, with priority given to the **worst forms of child labour**
2. End child labour in agriculture
3. Strengthen the prevention and elimination of child labour, including its worst forms, forced labour, modern slavery and trafficking in persons, and the protection of survivors through **data-driven and survivor-informed policy and programmatic responses**
4. Realize children's **right to education** and ensuring universal access to free, compulsory, quality, equitable and inclusive education and training
5. Achieving **universal access to social protection**
6. **Increasing financing and international cooperation** for the elimination of child labour and forced labour

ILO Child Labour Framework of Action

- The need for a cohesive strategy on child labour, promoting systematic collaboration;
- The need to ensure that we can effectively support the Durban Call to Action



If the ILO, with respect to each of the six commitment areas,

- supports the *design and piloting* of effective policy responses and tools that address child labour root causes and strengthen systems; and
- *mobilizes* constituents and partners to implement these responses at scale,

Then we can achieve a sustainable reduction in child labour.

- Following the roadmap drawn by the international community through the Durban Call to Action, the ILO will help its partners and stakeholders advance efforts to prevent and eliminate child labour.





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ASEAN Inter-Sectoral Workshop and Launching of the ASEAN Roadmap for the Prevention of Child Labour Including the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2035

18 – 19 November 2025
Bangkok, Thailand and Virtual

Supported by:



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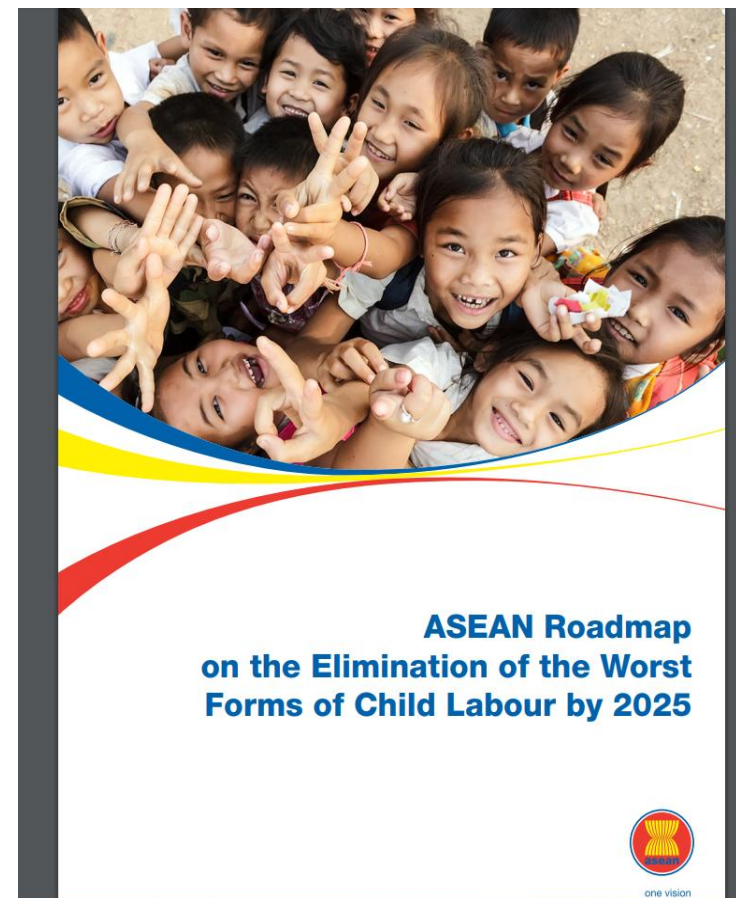


ILO/Japan
Multi-bilateral
Programme

ASEAN Roadmap on the Prevention of Child Labour, Including the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour 2026-2025

Region-wide framework of cooperation that complements the commitments and actions of AMS against child labour at national and global levels

- by building upon achievements and lessons learnt from the implementation of the previous ASEAN Roadmap and similar policy initiatives



ASEAN Roadmap on the Prevention of Child Labour Including the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2035

Prohibition of child labour practices and promoting good governance for elimination of child labour including:

- Labour inspection, especially in hard-to-reach sectors
- Institutional capacity for law enforcement
- Strengthening good governance for CL elimination
- Strengthening coordination and cross-sectoral collaboration

Prevention of child labour practices including:

- Addressing root causes of CL
- Access to education, especially in rural and remote areas
- Rural development and poverty reduction
- Decent work for young workers
- Public awareness raising; understanding modern forms of child labour (e.g. online exploitation)

Protection of children including:

- Social protection.
- Improvement of systems to identify, withdraw and support children from child labour

Basic policy imperatives to end child labour are well-known, backed by evidence from decades of research and experience

- Ensuring free and good quality **schooling**
- Stronger **legal protections** and enforcement mechanisms against child labour
- Equipping **education** systems to support school-to-work transitions for legal-aged children and youth
- Universalizing **social protection**
- Expanding access to **basic services** including safe water and electricity
- Expanded **due diligence** to address child labour in business operations and supply chains



Progress against child labour also hinges on addressing broader structural challenges facing economies and societies:

- Economic formalization and decent work for adults
- Redressing unfavourable terms of trade and inadequate technology transfer
- Diversifying rural economies
- Advancing workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively
- Tackling discrimination in the world of work

Integrating Child Labour Concerns into Policies, Strategies

- DWCP, UNSDCF, national development strategies
- Social protection, OSH, Education sector plans and policies
- Financial Sector inclusion
- Collective Bargaining Agreements, Free Trade Agreements,
- NAPs on business and human rights, NAP Trafficking
- Global Level: Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection, Universal Social Protection 2030, Decent Jobs for Youth



Integrated National Plans on Child Labour

Recognizing the need for prevention, anchoring child labour elimination in the Decent Work agenda and tackle root causes

- All Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, particularly enabling rights FoA/CB,
- Social Protection
- Youth Employment
- Skills Development
- Addressing Informality
- Supply Chains
- Climate Change, Fragility



ELEMENTS OF AN INTEGRATED POLICY RESPONSE TO CHILD LABOUR

INCLUSIVE AND
EQUITABLE
QUALITY
EDUCATION
FOR ALL

SOCIAL
PROTECTION
SYSTEMS,
INCLUDING SOCIAL
PROTECTION FLOORS

DECENT WORK
FOR ADULTS
AND YOUTH
OF LEGAL
WORKING AGE

LEGAL
STANDARDS
AND
REGULATION

**SOCIAL DIALOGUE AS
A FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT**

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CHILD LABOUR

1. Limited legal protections
2. Poverty and social vulnerability
3. Exposure to individual and collective shocks
4. Poor quality schooling, limited school access
5. Limited decent work opportunities, difficult transitions to work
6. Absence or weak realization of freedom of association and of the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, and of other forms of social dialogue

Global and Regional Frameworks and Context

Alliance 8.7

ASEAN

Integrated
Approach

Durban Call
to Action

6th Global
Conference on
Child Labour
(2026)

Regional
Consultations
(2025)

Bali Process on
People
Smuggling, TIP
and Related
Transnational
Crime





Thank You