



International Labour Organization
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
ILO-IPEC

ACTIVITIES FOR PREVENTING AND COMBATING CHILD LABOUR IN MOLDOVA 2003-2010



BACKGROUND AND PRIORITIES

Moldova is one of the countries most seriously affected by the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) in South Eastern Europe such as: trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation, street work, illicit activities (begging, petty theft and drug peddling) and hazardous work in agriculture. The prevalence of the WFCL has disastrous effects on the safety, health and well-being of children. One third of the 145 school-age children sampled in the ILO-IPEC 2004 Rural Child Labour Study reported that their parents force them to work; and two thirds stated they are punished if they fail to work or perform poorly. Migration has left thousands children outside the care of both parents. Many of these “social orphans are at risk of abuse, neglect and labour/sexual exploitation. Urgent action was and is still needed to eliminate these practices.

The ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has been working in Moldova since September 2003 to provide technical and financial assistance to eliminate the worst forms of child labour and to implement the ILO’s child labour conventions: Minimum Age Convention (1973) No.138 and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (1999) No.182. Since 2004, the projects in Central and Eastern Europe have been implemented under a common programming framework, **Project of Technical assistance for the Elimination of Child labour, including Trafficking, in countries of Central and Eastern Europe (PROTECT CEE)**, in Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo (as defined by the UN Security Council Resolution 1244), Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.

Under PROTECT CEE umbrella the following sub-regional projects funded by the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany were implemented:

- Combating Child Labour in selected Stability Pact countries: Capacity Building and Direct Action – Sub-regional Programme with Focus on the Worst Forms of Child Labour¹,
- Combating Trafficking in Children for Labour and Sexual Exploitation in the Balkans & Ukraine (Phase I)²,
- Trafficking and other Worst Forms of Child Labour in Central and Eastern Europe (Phase II)³ and
- Support for policy level and up-scaling activities for Combating Child Labour in Central and Eastern Europe.

The main activities were focused on: mainstreaming child labour into legislation and policies, capacity building for public authorities, workers’ and employers’ organizations, establishment and piloting of Child Labour Monitoring Systems (CLMS), direct services for children at risk to enter WFCL / involved in WFCL and awareness raising.

Since April 2009, Moldova was included in the USDOL-funded ILO-IPEC **Project for Development, Awareness Raising, and Support for the Implementation of the Global Action Plan on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016**⁴ (GAP Project). The GAP Project in Moldova aims at formulating a National Action Plan (NAP) to Eliminate Child Labour in Moldova, based on:

- Carrying out necessary training on policy development and enforcement and developing, publishing and distributing reference materials;
- Reviewing the role, composition and the functioning of the National Steering Committee (NSC) for Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour to ensure that trafficking issues are integrated in policy guidance and advice functions of the NSC;
- Reviewing roles and responsibilities of other partners like employers, workers, security personnel, welfare service providers and academics and provide necessary guidance and training.

¹ Sub-regional project funded by the German Government completed on 30 June 2008.

² Sub-regional project funded by USDOL completed in January 2007.

³ Sub-regional project funded by USDOL to be completed in December 2009

⁴ GAP Project implemented during April 2009 – September 2010

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE BASE ON CHILD LABOUR

ILO-IPEC interventions in Moldova have been based on several studies: 1/ Comparative analysis of national Legislation and Policies with ILO and other international standards on child rights (2004); b/ Rural Child Labour Study (2004); c/ Labour Market Studies in five target areas (2006), d/ Research on the hazards to which child workers are exposed in the agriculture sector of Moldova (2007). The findings of the above researches and data gathered within the ILO-IPEC supported Action Programmes helped to better understand the dynamics of child labour in the country and plan further interventions.



In July 2009 the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) launched the first **National Child Labour Study**. To date, over 12,500 households have been interviewed as part of the Labour Force Survey carried out during the period of September 2009 -March 2010. The findings of the first National Child Labour Study will be launched in July 2010 and will contribute to the development of a comprehensive analysis of the state of Moldova's working children through identification of priority groups, patterns, analysis of working conditions and their effects on working children.

The child labour module, developed with the support of the ILO-IPEC/SIMPOC and mainstreamed in the 2009 Labour Force Survey, will be included in other studies, to be carried out in the future by the NBS at regular intervals.

MAINSTREAMING CHILD LABOUR INTO LAWS AND POLICIES

The Government of Moldova is committed to eliminating child labour and has ratified:

- the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (26.01.93),
- the ILO Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age (21.09.99)
- the ILO Convention No. 182 on the WFCL (14.06.02)
- the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (12.04.07)
- the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (16.09.05)
- the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (16.09.05)
- the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (19.05.06).

In addition, Moldova is part of two CIS treaties:

1. Agreement on cooperation of Ministers of Internal Affairs in returning juveniles to the states of their residence (signed in 1993).
2. Agreement on Cooperation of the States Parties against Trafficking in Human Beings, Organs and Tissues of Human Beings (2005).

The **National Steering Committee (NSC)** for Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour was established (Decision No. 631 of 05.11.04) based on the first **Memorandum of Understanding** between the Government of Moldova and ILO-IPEC signed in 2003. Since its establishment, the NSC⁵, promoted several legislative and

⁵ The NSC includes the following institutions: Ministry of Economy and Trade, Ministry of Education and Youth, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Internal Affairs, General Prosecutor's Office, National Employment Agency; National Confederation of Trade Unions, National Confederation of Employers and the NGO "La Strada". The Deputy Minister of Economy and Trade is the chairperson of the NSC.

regulatory changes that aim at protecting children against exploitation and providing them with the necessary support, among which:

- the **Law on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings No. 241-XVI** of 20.10.2005,
- the **Law on Labour Inspection No 140-XV** of 10.05.2001,
- the **Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence No. 177** of 11.03.2008,
- the **Contravention Code No. 218** of 24.10.2008,
- the **Law on Labour Force Migration No.180-XVI** of 10.07.2008,
- the **Law on Occupational Safety and Health No. 186** of 10.07.2008, etc.

Activities aimed at combating child labour were integrated in the **Decent Work Country Programme for 2008-2011**, the **National Plan of Action (NAP) on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for 2008-2009**, the **NAP on the National Referral System for Protection and Assistance to Victims and Potential Victims of Trafficking for 2009-2011** and the **NAP on Preventing and Combating Violence against Children for 2009-2011**.

The capacity building and advocacy work carried out by ILO-IPEC partners contributed to mainstreaming WFCL concerns in modus operandi of government, employers and workers organizations. Over the last years, the ILO constituents promoted the following collective conventions and code of conducts:

- the National Collective Convention on the Elimination of WFCL in Moldova and the the List of Hazardous Child Labour (July 2007);
- the Code of Conduct on the elimination of child labour in agriculture (December 2007);
- the Code of Conduct on the elimination of WFCL for employers from all sectors (December 2008);
- the Collective Agreement in Construction Sector for 2009-2013, with provisions against WFCL (July 2009).

In addition, the National Commission for Consultations and Collective Bargaining (NCCCB) approved the establishment of a Permanent Tripartite Council on Child Labour⁶.

A new **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** for the elimination of child labour between the ILO and the Government of Moldova (signed on 10.08.2009 and approved through the Government Decision No. 682 of 13.11.2009) entered into force on 20.11.2009. It is effective for five years and will be automatically extended for another five-year period.

The above measures will stimulate effective use of the existing experience, commitment and resources of tripartite partners and other stakeholders, concerned with prevention and elimination of WFCL in Moldova.

DIRECT SERVICES TO CHILD LABOURERS AND THEIR FAMILIES



In order to effectively address child labour issues in Moldova, **almost 300 professionals** (social workers, job and education counsellors, peer educators, employers' and workers' representatives, priests, NGOs staff, members of Municipal and District Committees against Trafficking, NSC etc.) **benefited from capacity building activities** aimed at: 1/ increasing the outreach in 5 target areas; 2/ scaling up the child labour monitoring and youth employment model interventions in all areas of Moldova and 3/ establishing strategic priorities for sustainable prevention of WFCL beyond the timeframe of the ILO-IPEC Action Programmes in Moldova.

As a result of ILO-IPEC Moldova project interventions, **2,158 children (996 boys and 1,162 girls) were withdrawn and prevented from WFCL, including trafficking** in children through a wide range of educational and non-educational services, as follows:.

⁶ This Council includes six members, representing the government, workers and employers organizations.

- 130 children (69 boys and 61 girls) were withdrawn from WFCL and 845 children (362 boys and 483 girls) were prevented to enter WFCL through educational services (tuition classes, referral to the primary/secondary education system and referral to vocational training programmes);
- 125 children (62 boys and 63 girls) were withdrawn from WFCL and 1,058 children (503 boys and 555 girls) were prevented to enter WFCL through non-educational services (support group sessions to develop children's social skills, job and education counselling services and employment support for children at legal age for employment).

Over **29,400 children indirect beneficiaries** received information on WFCL and services from the trained professionals and **about 11,600 family members and teachers** received information on WFCL from the trained Peer Educators and other multidisciplinary professionals.



AWARENESS RAISING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

ILO-IPEC supports awareness raising and knowledge sharing activities to sensitize the general public about child labour. As a result of these activities, the level of awareness on WFCL issues, including trafficking among authorities, parents, child care givers, children and general public increased in the last years.



In order to efficiently address child labour issues in Moldova, **299 professionals from relevant public institutions and NGOs at all levels were trained** as part of the ILO-IPEC supported Action Programmes during the period 2005-2009. These include:

- social workers and psychologists,
- job and education counsellors,
- peer educators,
- employers' and workers' representatives,
- members of the municipal and district committees against trafficking,
- members of multidisciplinary teams, church representatives etc.

In 2007, the ILO-IPEC partners mainstreamed WFCL issues into the curricula of three universities of Moldova. Approximately **2,000 students benefited from trainings including information on WFCL and Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS)**, carried out in 2007-2009 from the regular budgets of these universities.

Almost **600 members of the Multidisciplinary Teams⁷ (MDTs) from all areas of Moldova, responsible for the National Referral System, benefited from an initial training including a module on WFCL issues and CLMS, organized in 2007-2009** by the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child.

⁷ The Multidisciplinary teams (MDTs), responsible for the NRS include the following specialists: social workers, psychologists, child protection specialists, police officers, health workers, representatives of local public administration, and local NGOs etc.

The NSC approved the nominal composition of the **group of national experts on child labour** (Government letter No. 02/3-2606 of 05.05.09). The group includes 13 professionals from relevant public institutions (central and local level), workers and employers' organizations, academia and NGOs, previously capacitated as part of ILO and other partners' training programmes. These experts will facilitate replication of the ILO-IPEC model interventions beyond the timeframe of the ILO-IPEC programme in Moldova under the leadership of the Child Labour Unit (CLU), institutionalized within the Labour Inspection in 2007.

The capacity building and sensitization activities were based on several **ILO-IPEC materials**:

1. Poster "Your Future is in Your Hands";
2. Poster for Youth Centres against Trafficking and other WFCL;
3. Poster on Child Labour Monitoring model;
4. Child Labour Monitoring System Guidelines;
5. Brochure for parents on WFCL and Trafficking in Children in Moldova;
6. Brochure for children on trafficking and other WFCL in Moldova;
7. Brochure for youth on trafficking and other WFCL in Moldova;
8. Pocket Booklet on ILO Conventions 182 and 138 and ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work;
9. Flyer on Child Labour Monitoring for Lawyers and Policemen;
10. Flyer on Child Labour Monitoring for Health Workers;
11. Flyer on Child Labour Monitoring for Labour Inspectors;



12. Flyer on Child Labour Monitoring for Psychologists and Teachers;
13. Flyer on Child Labour Monitoring for Social Workers and Representatives of the local public administration;
14. Flyer "Education: the Right Response to Child Labour";
15. Flyer for Church Goers "Orthodox Church against WFCL";
16. Pastoral Guide for Church representatives "Orthodox Church for the Elimination of WFCL";
17. Bookmarks on the World Day Against Child Labour;
18. Calendars, based on the Poster for Youth Centres against Trafficking and other WFCL;
19. Information note on child labour issues in Moldova;
20. Newsletter "IMPACT" dedicated to WFCL issues.

To date, more than 26 organizations from Moldova use the ILO-IPEC materials in their activities against WFCL.

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