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Employers' and Workers'

# HANDBOOK ON HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR



**Employers' and Workers'**

**HANDBOOK  
ON HAZARDOUS  
CHILD LABOUR**

Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP)  
Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV)

International Labour Office - 2011

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## PREFACE

The ILO estimates that across the globe there are a total of 115 million children under the age of 18 currently involved in hazardous work. That is more than half (53%) of the 215 million child labourers worldwide engaged in hazardous child labour. Most hazardous child labour is found in the agricultural sector but children are in fact working in almost every economic sector, including sectors considered extremely hazardous such as mining and construction.

This Handbook is the output of effective collaboration between the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV). It has been produced in an effort to kick-start a campaign against hazardous child labour, which was the theme of this year's World Day Against Child Labour on 12th June 2011. To mark the World Day, the ILO also released a Report, which states that there has been a rise of 20 per cent in hazardous work among older children within 4 years and that there is also growing evidence that adolescents suffer higher rates of injuries at work than adult workers.

Children below the minimum legal age for work (14/15 years) should, of course, not be at work but in school. Older children (aged 15-17) on the other hand - who are above the minimum working age - should not be put at risk by working in hazardous, unhealthy and unsafe workplaces and conditions.

In this respect the social partners have an important role to play in ensuring that workplaces are safe and healthy. This Handbook aims therefore at providing a useful tool for employers and workers, containing information on hazardous child labour and suggestions for actions that can be taken to safeguard young workers.

The Handbook, which was realised within the framework of the project on "Social Partnership and Advocacy to Tackle Child Labour" funded by Irish Aid, provides an overview of child labour as defined by ILO Conventions. It describes how employers and workers are working jointly to combat hazardous child labour in key sectors, such as agriculture, construction, mining and manufacturing, and makes suggestions on how this cooperation could be strengthened in the future. The suggestions include, for example, the development and implementation of the national hazardous child labour lists, the establishment of workplace safety and health committees and improvements

in collective bargaining agreements. This Handbook is therefore an expression of our belief that the outcome of our collective efforts as social partners will be more than our individual efforts as employers' or workers' organizations.

Particular appreciation is extended to our colleagues in ACT/EMP and ACTRAV, Anne-Brit Nippierd and Claude Akpokavie, and Peter Hurst, former IPEC-OSH specialist, for compiling this publication. We also thank those who provided comments and inputs including Susan Gunn (ILO-IPEC) and Yuka Ujita (ILO-Safe Work), Bukola Bolarinwa and other colleagues in ACTRAV and ACT/EMP. And finally we wish to thank the Irish Government for their support which enabled the ILO to produce and disseminate this publication.

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## FOREWORD

The global pace of reduction of child labour worldwide has slowed down. In the period between 2004 and 2008, the number of child labourers declined from 222 million to 215 million – representing only a 3 per cent reduction in child labour worldwide. It is expected that the effects of the recent financial crisis will not improve this state of affairs.

It is against this background, that the ILO's Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) have launched a global campaign to eliminate hazardous child labour, which represents the largest percentage of child labour. Both employers' organizations and trade unions have a significant role to play in combating child labour. ACT/EMP and ACTRAV have therefore launched this campaign in order to reinforce their ongoing efforts. Furthermore, this joint campaign stems from the firm conviction that social dialogue offers a crucial means to achieve the sustainable eradication of child labour.

The Employers' and Workers' Handbook on Hazardous Child Labour is the main policy tool for the ACT/EMP-ACTRAV campaign. This Handbook provides a general overview of child labour and explains the main International Conventions dealing with this subject. It provides the definition of hazardous child labour and details the various hazards. The Handbook also explains the role of the social partners in combating hazardous child labour and ends with practical advice on what can be done to eliminate it.

The key messages of this campaign address the need to:

- strengthen social dialogue and action on the part of the social partners on the elimination of hazardous child labour;
- ensure the effective participation of the social partners in the compilation and implementation of national lists of hazardous child labour;
- make workplaces safe and healthy for all workers – young and adult alike;
- expand collective bargaining agreements to include clauses specifically addressing child labour issues, where appropriate;
- make greater use of joint employer–worker safety and health committees.



This handbook was developed to provide employers' organizations and trade unions with a reference document for use within their respective organizations, as well as in joint action to combat hazardous child labour. We are confident that leaders, policy makers, trainers, child labour focal points and members of employers' organizations and trade unions will find this handbook a useful tool in their efforts to eradicate hazardous child labour.

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## KEY MESSAGES

### **Message 1: Strengthen social dialogue**

Employers' organizations and trade unions should continue to strengthen social dialogue and action on the elimination of child labour, especially hazardous child labour.

### **Message 2: Increase social partners' role in creating hazardous child labour lists**

The role of employers' organizations and trade unions in the development, implementation and periodic revision of national lists of hazardous child labour must be strengthened.

In each country, employers' organizations and trade unions must play an active role in the elaboration of the hazardous child labour list. They must also widely disseminate the hazardous child labour list and help to implement its provisions in enterprises and workplaces.

### **Message 3: Make workplaces safe and healthy for all**

Combating hazardous child labour means making workplaces safer and healthier for all workers – young and adult.

Adequately improving workplace safety and health practices and conditions will allow children who have attained the minimum legal age for employment in their country (which may be as low as 14 or 15) to stay in their jobs.

Employers' organizations and trade unions must continue to interact, and work together to ensure safer and healthier workplaces in all economic sectors and to encourage youth employment.

### **Message 4: Include child labour clauses in collective bargaining agreements**

Employers' organizations and trade unions should ensure that clauses on child labour, including hazardous child labour, are included in collective bargaining agreements.

### **Message 5: Increase workplace cooperation**

Employers' organizations and trade unions must promote greater use of joint employer–worker safety and health committees and workplace safety and health risk assessments. This will not only combat child labour in those enterprises but will also discourage small producers in their supply chains from using child labour.



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## INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1990s, when child labour re-emerged as an international issue, workers' and employers' organizations have been increasingly involved in efforts to combat it. At the global level, workers' and employers' organizations have joined forces in supporting the adoption of ILO Conventions against child labour. At the national level, they have engaged actively in tripartite dialogue regarding the ratification of conventions, the adoption of national anti-child-labour laws and compliance with those laws. In numerous cases they also participate in projects and programmes to reduce child labour in collaboration with the ILO and other stakeholders.

The fight against child labour is the responsibility of everyone: governments, employers, trade unions, international organizations, teachers, social workers, parents, children themselves, experts and civil society organizations must all play their part. Trade unions have, in fact, been actively involved in the fight against child labour and have campaigned since their inception for free, basic, compulsory and quality education for all children.

In 2006, the ILO Governing Body set 2016 as the target date for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. The ILO's social partners, employers' and workers' organizations have been fundamental in working to achieve this aim as part of a growing worldwide movement against child labour. From 2010, with the adoption by the ILO of a Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016, special priority is being given to the elimination of hazardous child labour.

## Box 1. Social dialogue

Social dialogue is defined by the ILO as including all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between or among representatives of governments, employers and workers on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. It can exist as a tripartite process, with the Government as an official party to the dialogue or it may consist of bipartite relations only between labour and management (or trade unions and employers' organizations), with or without indirect government involvement. Social dialogue processes can be informal or institutionalized, and often they are a combination of the two. Dialogue can take place at the national, regional or enterprise level. It can be inter-professional, sectoral or a combination of these. The main goal of social dialogue is to promote consensus-building and democratic involvement among the main stakeholders in the world of work. Successful social dialogue structures and processes have the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability and boost economic progress.

Source: ILO Industrial and Employment Relations Department (Geneva, 2011)  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/areas/social.htm>

## Description of the Handbook

**Part 1** of of this Handbook gives an introduction to child labour, facts and figures and the general characteristics, including the causes of child labour.

**Part 2** provides key references and information on the main Conventions on child labour, together with some of the key definitions, concepts and current terminology on the subject, with special attention given to hazardous child labour.

**Part 3** examines hazardous child labour in greater detail. It describes why working children are at such risk in terms of their safety and health. It examines in depth the main hazards and risks for child labourers in sectors such as agriculture, mining, construction, fishing, brick-making, scavenging and domestic service.

**Part 4** examines the role of employers' organizations and trade unions in the fight against hazardous child labour. At international level, it explains the role of the social partners in using the ILO supervisory system. At the national level, it explores their participation in the development and implementation of legal national hazardous child labour lists to address work which, by its nature, can be harmful. At the workplace level, it looks at the use of workplace safety and health risk assessment to address work which, due to the circumstances in which it is carried out, can be harmful. Part 4 also explores ways to further the initiative, with a focus on the workplace, particularly greater use of workplace safety and health committees, including improving links with labour inspection and encouraging the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements that contain clauses on child labour.

**Part 5** focuses on practical advice on what can be done in the future to eliminate hazardous child labour, and provides a list of useful resources and organizations.





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## PART 1

# AN OVERVIEW OF CHILD LABOUR

Child labour is a global phenomenon which spans numerous sectors in both developed and developing economies. The term “child labour” refers to work and economic activities carried out by persons under the age of 18 years, that harms their safety, health and wellbeing and/or hinders their education, development and future livelihoods.

It must be emphasized that the term “child labour” does not encompass all economic activities performed by children under the age of 18 years. Millions of children legitimately undertake work, paid or unpaid, that is appropriate for their age and level of maturity. By so doing, they learn to take responsibility, gain skills and enhance their families’ and their own well-being and income.

### Facts and figures

The past two decades have seen concerted efforts to reduce the levels of child labour; efforts in which employers and workers and their organizations have played substantial roles. The good news is that, globally child labour is on the decrease. From a total of 246 million girls and boys in child labour in 2000, the figure fell by 11 per cent to 218 million in 2004, with a further decline to 215 million by 2010. The number of children in hazardous child labour has fallen more rapidly, with a 26 per cent decline in the period from 171 million to 126 million and a further decline to 115 million by 2010. However, as an ILO report on hazardous child labour notes, “Progress has been uneven, neither fast enough nor comprehensive enough to reach the 2016 goal.”<sup>1</sup>

Regionally, Asia and the Pacific have the largest number of children in hazardous child labour. However, the largest proportion of children in hazardous work relative to the overall number of children in the region is in Sub-Saharan Africa (see table 1).



**Table 1 Number and percentage of children, aged 5 to 17, engaged in hazardous child labour (by region).**

Region	Total children ('000)	Hazardous work ('000)	Incidence rate (%)
World	1,586,228	115,314	7.3
Asia and the Pacific	853,895	48,164	5.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	141,043	9,436	6.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	257,108	38,736	15.1
Other regions	334,242	18,978	5.7
Source: <i>Children in hazardous work: A review of knowledge and policy challenges</i> (Geneva, ILO IPEC, 2011), p. 8.			

In hazardous child labour, boys outnumber girls across all age groups. Boys account for over 60 per cent of children in hazardous child labour, in both the age groups 12–14 and 15–17 years. Girls account for most of the decline in the total numbers of children in hazardous child labour, declining by 24 per cent to 5.4 per cent from 54 to 41 million.

Boys, on the other hand, saw their numbers increase, not only in absolute terms but also in incidence rates. Hazardous work is increasing for older children, aged 15 to 17, with a 20 per cent increase from 52 to 62 million in the period 2004 to 2008. This is a worrying figure because it may indicate that the trend seen from 2004 to 2008, of an increasing number (and percentage) of older boys in hazardous child labour, is continuing. Of greatest concern is an alarming 20 per cent increase in hazardous child labour in the 15 to 17 year age group.

This translates to 10.5 million more adolescents working in dangerous jobs or conditions, a rise from 51.9 million to 62.4 million children over a period of only four years.<sup>2</sup>

The breakdown for child labourers between economic sectors is as follows<sup>3</sup>:

- 60 per cent agriculture
- 7 per cent industry
- 25.6 per cent services
- 7.5 per cent undefined

This makes action in the agricultural sector crucial to any strategy to eradicate child labour.

## General characteristics of child labour

The general characteristics of child labour are outlined below.

- Worldwide, the number of child labourers is very large. An estimated 215 million children (under 18 years of age) carry out economic activities which qualify as child labour across occupational sectors as diverse as:
  - primary sectors, such as agriculture, fishing, mining, quarrying and stone breaking;
  - construction and associated industries, such as brick making;
  - manufacturing/industry – textiles and garments, sports goods, carpet weaving, tanneries and leather workshops, woodworking, paints, metal working, ceramics, glassware, surgical instruments, fireworks, handicrafts to name but a few;
  - services – hotels, bars, restaurants, fast-food establishments, tourism and domestic service;
  - Six out of ten child labourers work in agriculture.
- Children often start to work at a very young age, from as young as five, in both urban and rural areas. The work of these very young children is often characterized as “helping out” but begins at about the age that a child should be entering primary school.
- An estimated 115 million children carry out hazardous child labour. These children work in jobs where they risk being killed or injured or can suffer work-related ill health, although precise data is invariably lacking due to under-reporting of occupational accidents and illness. The ILO estimates that as many as 22,000 children are killed at work each year.<sup>4</sup>
  - Well over 70 per cent of child labourers work in the most dangerous sectors; namely, agriculture, construction, mining and fishing.
  - Long-term health problems due to working as a child labourer may not develop or become disabling until the child is an adult. Permanent health problems can include: musculoskeletal disabilities due to carrying heavy loads; lung diseases from exposure to dusts; cancers and reproductive disorders due to exposure to pesticides and industrial chemicals. The effects on health of long hours, poor sanitation, stress, sexual harassment and violence at work also need to be considered.

- While child and adult workers in the same situation face similar hazards, children are at greater risk from these dangers as their minds, bodies and emotions are still developing and they are less able to protect themselves.
- Girl child labour forms a significant part of the workforce in many sectors, such as child domestic labour, hotels and restaurants and agriculture. Girl child labourers have a double burden and are particularly disadvantaged since they usually also undertake domestic chores in their own homes before and after their work and at weekends. Their access to education is often more restricted than that of boys.
- Child labour laws – if they exist – are frequently less stringent than those relating to other types of work. Regulations are often lacking, or are only poorly applied and enforced, and there are sectors where certain categories of children are legally exempted from their coverage.

Much child labour remains hidden from view. The real extent of the child labour problem may be invisible to policy and decision-makers since much of the work that these children do is considered to be “helping out” and is seldom recognized in official statistics. It is often only the head of the household who is registered as working, especially in cases of migrant workers and their families.

Child labour may also go unnoticed when underage workers are supplied through labour contractors and sub-contractors.

- In terms of supply chains and child labour, many children above the legal minimum age for employment (14–15 years of age and upwards, depending on the country) work in small enterprises or on smallholder farms that supply produce and products under contract to large national and multinational enterprises and companies. So, in order to ascertain the true extent and nature of child labour involved in the end product’s production, it is necessary to trace back through the entire supply chain.
- Child labour can impede children’s access to education and/or skills training, and limit their possibilities of economic and social mobility and advancement in later life. Even when working children attend school they may be too tired to concentrate properly and so their educational performance suffers and they fall behind. Families often cannot afford to send their children to school, especially in regions where there is no universal free primary education.

- Poor skills and vocational training also conspire to keep children as child labourers. Skills and vocational training should be incorporated into school curricula to prepare and equip children from an early age for their entry into the world of work. Skills and vocational training are especially vital for children who have reached the minimum legal age for employment in their country to ensure that they can find decent employment and do not end up as child labourers working in poor and hazardous conditions.
- Most child labourers come from poor families and households. For example, 75 per cent of the world's core poor – surviving on less than US\$1.25 per day – live in rural areas, including fishing communities, where the bulk of child labour is found.

The prevalence of child labour reinforces poverty and undermines decent work and sustainable livelihoods, as it perpetuates a cycle where household income for the self-employed or waged workers is insufficient to meet their families' economic needs. Breaking that cycle, therefore, involves tackling poverty; for example, helping parents and families to engage in new income-generating activities to earn better wages, combined with helping to provide job creation measures, skills retraining and micro-finance.

- The “family” element that is often associated with child labour – for example, in agriculture and home-based, small-scale production – which is bound up with culture and tradition – can make it difficult for communities to acknowledge both that children can be exploited and that action needs to be taken.

## What causes child labour?

The reasons for child labour are many and the causes will vary from country to country and from one economic sector to another. However, several common causes do exist, as detailed below:

### Poverty

As mentioned previously, a powerful determinant of child labour is poverty. Poor families may send their children out to work or ask them to work in the family business or on the family farm because the family needs the extra

money or work effort that the children provide. Large numbers of children work as unpaid workers on family farms and in family stores that depend on family labour to survive economically. For some families, child labour provides the only means of generating sufficient income to ensure at least partial schooling for their children in areas where basic education is not free. It is now widely acknowledged that child labour cannot be tackled in isolation from the problem of poverty.

Poverty is undoubtedly a key cause of child labour. However, child labour itself is also a cause of poverty. Because child labourers generally come from poor families, the fact that they are prevented from obtaining an education means that poverty passes from one generation to the next. In effect, child labour is part of a vicious cycle of poverty.

Efforts to reduce child labour must endeavour to break the cycle of poverty by helping children to stay in school so that they, in turn, can gain better employment and be in a better position to support the schooling of their own children.

### **Low cost of child labour**

In many instances, working children represent a plentiful source of cheap labour. The prevalence of child labour in many sectors undermines decent work for adults, as it maintains a cycle where household income for both self-employed workers and waged workers is insufficient to meet their economic needs.

### **Lack of decent schooling**

Many areas lack quality education for all. This may include, among other things: an absence of schools; schools of variable quality; lack of accessible education for children; poor/variable rates of school attendance; low standards of educational performance and achievement; poor rates of pay for teachers; problems of retaining teachers in remote rural areas.

The lack of free, compulsory, quality primary education for all poses various problems. Parents find it difficult to send their children to school if they have to pay tuition and other fees (such as the provision of uniforms and school textbooks). If parents cannot afford these costs, children stay away from school and often end up working for the family or others. Where basic education is not free, child labour may be the only way for some families to

generate enough income to ensure at least partial schooling for their children. Equally, schools in rural areas sometimes organize and supply child labour to generate income for the school. Where free schools are available, the quality of the education offered may be poor and parents may consider that their child would be better equipped for survival if he/she works and learns a skill.

Free school meals are now being used in many programmes as a key strategy to boost school attendance and thereby reduce child labour.

In rural areas, families living far away from the nearest school face a further dilemma, either because they cannot afford the cost of transportation to school or because it is too difficult or time-consuming for their children to walk.

The lack of education blights the child labourers' chances of escaping from the cycle of poverty by finding better jobs or becoming self-employed. Educational deficits carry over into adulthood, as lack of literacy, poor educational levels and low skill levels block pathways out of poverty for many workers.

### **Lack of controls in smaller workplaces**

Child labour is much less common in large enterprises. In small, often unregistered enterprises, child labour is more prevalent. Labour inspectors rarely visit such workplaces and there is little trade union involvement. Child labour can flourish in such conditions as child workers are not organized and are more easily exploited.

### **Absence of workers' organizations**

The incidence of child labour is greatest where trade unions are weak or do not exist. Trade unions are often not found in small-scale enterprises, or in what is termed the "informal economy", where it can be difficult for workers to organize.

### **Health and social protection**

The state of health of the key income-earners in the family and the lack of adequate social protection can have an important influence on whether to send a child out to work. If parents are sick, children are forced to become breadwinners. The death of one or both parents can produce a similar result.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa has had a dramatic impact on the incidence of child labour. In 1990, there were half a million AIDS orphans but by 2003 the number had reached over 12 million. In Zambia, almost 30 per cent of the increase in child labour has been attributed to the HIV/AIDS pandemic<sup>5</sup>.

The number of child-headed households, in which parents have died from the HIV/AIDS virus and where extended family networks are unable to cope with the sheer numbers of orphans, is also increasing. The growing number of AIDS orphans means that work is often vital for these children in order to earn enough food or money for their own survival.

### **Cultural or family traditions**

In some societies, children working alongside adults are considered an essential element of child socialization. Furthermore, certain traditional trades or professions require extended periods of apprenticeship. In the same way, participation of children in the mobility of adults within the West and Central African sub-region, either by travelling with their parents or by being placed in the household of members of the extended family for study or apprenticeship, is a widespread traditional practice.

Families may place great importance on children following in their parents' footsteps. This tradition may also reinforce prevailing social biases: girls imitate their mothers and boys their fathers and grandfathers. If a family has a tradition of engagement in a hazardous occupation, there is a great likelihood that the children of that family will enter the same line of work.

### **"Nimble fingers" argument**

There is a common misconception that children are more able to perform certain tasks than adults. This idea is based on the "nimble fingers" argument in which children are thought to be better at activities such as carpet-making because their fingers are more nimble than those of adults. However, this theory has been proven false in detailed sector studies, including those related to Indian carpet-making<sup>6</sup>.

## Lack, or non-enforcement, of regulations and laws

Weak or non-existent labour laws and non-enforcement where laws do exist greatly facilitate the practice of using child labour. For example, 75 per cent of the world's poor live in rural areas where labour standards are often low, and where over 60 per cent of all child labour is found. Huge numbers of self-employed and waged labour rural workers have to contend with poor labour conditions. Decent work deficits typically include: lack of freedom of association and collective bargaining; underemployment; low wages; poor occupational safety and health standards and general working conditions; gender inequality; long hours of work; poor working time arrangements; lack of social protection; poor housing; discrimination; and weak social dialogue. Compared to those working in other economic sectors, many rural/agricultural workers are inadequately protected by national labour law.

## Discrimination

Discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, social origin, caste, ethnicity or any other grounds, has been a further factor that has led to the persistence of child labour across the globe.

### Sources

*Eliminating child labour: Guides for employers* (Geneva, ILO ACT/EMP and IOE, 2007).

*Trade unions and child labour pack* (Geneva, ILO ACTRAV 2000).

*Tackling hazardous child labour in agriculture: Guidance on policy and practice* (Geneva, ILO IPEC 2006).





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## PART 2

# THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON CHILD LABOUR

This section gives detailed information on the main child labour conventions, key definitions, concepts and current terminology. Focus is especially given to the requirements in the ILO Conventions in respect of hazardous child labour.

### Conventions and concepts, definitions and terminology

The international legal framework refers to conventions and other international treaties that seek to protect children from exploitation and abuse and ensure their access to fundamental rights, including education. There are three main instruments that underpin national efforts to prevent and eliminate child labour:

- ILO Convention on Minimum Age for Employment, 1973 (No. 138) provides that ILO member States are to pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to progressively raise the minimum age for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons (158 ratifications to date).
- ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour 1999 (No. 182), calls on member States to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour, as defined below, and applies to all children under 18. To date, 173 countries have ratified this Convention, making it the most widely ratified ILO Convention.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted in 1989 and sets out the basic rights of the child. The CRC makes reference to the relevant provisions of other international instruments. Article 32 of the CRC is the one most relevant to child labour:
  1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.



2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:
  - (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
  - (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
  - (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

The two ILO Conventions are accompanied by the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190) and the Minimum Age for Employment Recommendation, 1973 (No. 146), which give non-binding guidance to governments and the social partners on implementation of the Conventions.

### **What is “child labour”?**

Child labour is work carried out by a child below the minimum legal working age set by a country in accordance with ILO Convention No. 138 (generally 14/15 years); or any work undertaken by a child below the age of 18 that can be considered a worst form of child labour in line with ILO Convention No. 182, namely, types of forced labour (including slavery, trafficking, bonded labour and compulsory recruitment for use in armed conflict), commercial sexual exploitation, illicit activities and hazardous work.

Child labour is therefore all work that is likely to hinder the education, development and future livelihood of persons under the age of 18 years and that is likely to harm their safety, health, morals and well-being.

The term “work” encompasses most economic activities carried out by children, whether paid or unpaid, in the formal or informal economy, for a few hours or full time, casual or regular, legal or illegal. It excludes chores undertaken in the child’s own home which does not interfere with the child’s education, safety and development, but includes work performed by domestic workers.

## Who is defined as “a child”?

Article 2 of the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182) states that “the term ‘child’ shall apply to all persons under the age of 18” This is also the definition used in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## What are “the worst forms of child labour”?

ILO Convention No. 182, Article 3 states that:

the term “the worst forms of child labour” comprises:

- (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 as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (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 children.

## What is “hazardous child labour”?

Convention No. 182, Article 3(d), defines what is popularly referred to as “hazardous child labour” (HCL) as “work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children”. Hazardous child labour is work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions that could result in a child being killed or injured/maimed (often permanently) and/or made ill (often permanently) as a consequence of poor safety and health standards and working arrangements.

Both ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182 state that hazardous work should not be carried out by anyone under the age of 18, with certain reservations (see the section on Minimum age for employment and young workers below). Under ILO Convention No. 182, the determination of what constitutes hazardous child labour is made nationally in a government-led process. Convention No. 182, Article 4 requires governments to draw up and apply a legally-binding hazardous child labour list, prescribing activities and sectors that are prohibited for children under 18:

Article 4:

1. The types of work referred to under Article 3(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 children] shall be determined by national laws or regulations or by the competent authority, after consultation with the organizations of employers and workers concerned, taking into consideration relevant international standards, in particular Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999.
2. The competent authority, after consultation with the organizations of employers and workers concerned, shall identify where the types of work so determined exist.
3. The list of the types of work determined under Paragraph 1 of this Article shall be periodically examined and revised as necessary, in consultation with the organizations of employers and workers concerned."

Because this list is central to efforts to eliminate hazardous child labour, Convention No. 182 emphasizes the importance of a proper consultative process, especially with workers' and employers' organizations, in drawing up, implementing and periodically revising it.

In compiling a national list, countries must also identify where such hazardous work is found and devise measures to implement the prohibitions or restrictions included in their list.

Advice for governments and the social partners on "work which, by its nature [...] is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children", and which could therefore be included on a national list, is given in ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190), Paragraph 3:

"In determining the types of work referred to under Article 3(d) of the Convention [No. 182], and in identifying where they exist, consideration should be given, inter alia, to:

- (a) work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- (b) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;

- (c) work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
- (d) 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;
- (e) 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.”

See Part 4 for a longer discussion of the hazardous child labour list process and the role of employers’ organizations and trade unions in the development and implementation of these lists.

In contrast, “Work which by [...] the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children” is dealt with at workplace level by employers in cooperation with their workers; and also by statutory services such as labour inspection.

A key tool for addressing the circumstances under which hazardous work is carried out, and for devising and implementing safe solutions, is workplace safety and health risk assessment. The ways in which risk assessment can help employers, in cooperation with their workers, to deal with child labour in their workplaces is discussed in Part 4.

### Minimum age for employment and young workers

Young workers are female and male adolescents below the age of 18 who have attained the minimum legal age for admission to employment and are therefore legally authorized to work under certain conditions (see table 2.1). The ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) stipulates that ratifying States must fix a minimum age for admission to employment or work. Under this Convention, the minimum age for employment or work should not be less than 15 years, but developing countries may fix it at 14.

However, young workers, above the national legal minimum age for employment but under 18, must not be engaged in hazardous work. If they are involved in hazardous work then they would be classed as child labourers and not as young workers, their employment under such hazardous conditions would be in breach of the law and they would have to be removed to a place of safety.

Efforts must be made to ensure that young workers labour under decent conditions of work, which means good, healthy and safe working conditions. Employers’ and workers’ organizations have vital roles to play in promoting youth employment and ensuring that “young workers” are employed under decent conditions.

**Light work**

Girls and boys aged 13 to 15 – too young to work full-time legally – are, however, permitted to carry out “light work” as per the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), Article 7:

- “1. National laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons 13 to 15 years of age on light work which is:
- (a) not likely to be harmful to their 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.”

Article 7, Paragraph 4 of the same Convention allows developing countries to substitute the ages of 12 and 14 for 13 and 15 in Paragraph 1 above

**Table 2. Minimum age for admission to employment or work (ILO Convention No. 138)**

	In general	Developing countries
General	15 years	14 years
Light work	13 years	12 years
Hazardous work	18 years	







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## PART 3

# HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR

As stated earlier, of the world's 215 million child labourers, 115 million are engaged in what is termed "hazardous child labour". These girls and boys work in jobs that can result in them being killed, injured or suffering work-related ill health, including psychosocial problems. Some of the health problems they experience can result in permanent disability, impairment or illness in later life.

The reality is that we do not know how many children are killed, injured or suffer health problems as a result of their work. The ILO estimates that 22,000 children are killed every year at work,<sup>7</sup> but figures for non-fatal accidents involving child labourers or ill health caused by work are currently unavailable. Every year there are 270 million accidents at work and 160 million cases of ill health due to work and child labourers figure among these statistics.

Lack of data, linked to under-reporting of accidents and ill health, is a global problem. The lack of access to accurate data makes it difficult to assess the scale of the child labour problem, hampers prioritization of activities for elimination and prevents efficient allocation of resources.<sup>8</sup>

### **Why are children at greater risk than adults from health and safety hazards in the workplace?**

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 have an even more pronounced effect on child labourers. The consequences of lack of safety and health protection can often be more devastating and long-lasting for them resulting in permanent disabilities. They can also suffer psychological damage from working and living in an environment in which they are denigrated, harassed or experience violence.

When speaking of child labourers it is important to consider more than the concepts of work hazards and risks as applied to adult workers and to include the developmental aspects of childhood. Because children are still growing, they have special characteristics and needs that must be taken into consideration when determining workplace hazards and the risks associated with them in terms of how their environment affects their physical, cognitive

(thought/learning) and behavioural development and emotional growth. The World Health Organization's definition of "child health" encompasses the complete physical, mental and social well-being of a child and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

It is also important to bear in mind that the consequences of some health and safety problems do not develop or become disabling until the child is an adult so this aspect of permanent long-term disability or incurable disease must be factored in when the long-term effects of working as a child labourer are considered. Examples of such outcomes would be long-term musculo-skeletal problems in later life resulting from carrying heavy loads as a child, or cancer or reproductive problems developing in adulthood as a result of exposure to pesticides, industrial chemicals or heavy metals.

There is no reason to believe that children would be able to avoid work-related accidents and ill health if they carry out virtually the same work as adults. Many of the hazards and risks they face are similar to those faced by adult workers and so any child at work could experience a traumatic injury or contract a chronic disease.

In fact, child labourers are at even greater risk from workplace hazards than adult workers for the reasons given below.

## General

- Per kilogram of body weight children breathe more air, drink more water, eat more food and use more energy than adults. These higher rates of intake result, for example, in a greater degree of exposure to diseases and toxic substances/pollutants. Children also need more sleep than adults.
- Their small physical size and the requirement to carry out tasks beyond their physical strength may pose additional risks.
- Their shorter stature means they are closer to the ground and may more easily inhale/absorb toxins such as soil-applied pesticides
- Younger children especially have greater hand to mouth activity which may affect the intake of harmful substances

## Skin

- A child's skin area is greater than an adult's per unit body weight, which can result in greater skin absorption of toxics. Skin structure is only fully developed after puberty.

## Respiratory system

- Children have deeper and more frequent breathing than adults and are therefore liable to breathe in more substances that are hazardous to their health.
- A resting infant, for example, has twice the volume of air passing through the lungs compared to a resting adult (per unit of body weight) over the same time period.

## Brain

- Maturation of the brain can be hindered by exposure to toxic substances.
- Metals (such as lead and methyl mercury) are retained in the brain more readily during childhood and absorption is greater.

## Gastrointestinal, endocrine and reproductive systems and renal function

- The gastrointestinal, endocrine and reproductive systems and renal function are immature at birth and mature during childhood and adolescence. The process of eliminating hazardous elements is therefore less efficient than in adults. Exposure to toxic substances in the workplace can hinder the process of maturation.
- The endocrine system and the hormones that it generates and controls play a key role in growth and development. The endocrine system may be especially vulnerable to disruption by chemicals during childhood and adolescence.

## Enzyme system

- The enzyme system is immature in childhood, resulting in less effective detoxification of hazardous substances.

## Energy requirements

- Children consume greater quantities of energy than adults because they are growing, and this can result in increased susceptibility to ingesting toxins.

## Fluid requirements

- Children are more likely to dehydrate because they lose more water per kilogram of body weight through the greater passage of air through their lungs, the larger surface area of their skin and their inability to concentrate urine in their kidneys.

## Sleep requirements

- Children between the ages of 10 and 18 require about 9.5 hours of sleep per night for proper development.

## Temperature

- Children experience increased sensitivity to heat and cold, as their sweat glands and thermo-regulatory systems are not fully developed.

## Physical strain/repetitive movements

- Physical strain, especially combined with repetitive movements, on growing bones and joints can cause stunting, spinal injury and other life-long deformities and disabilities.

## Auditory/noise

- In principle, the effects of excessive noise apply to children as well as adults, though at present it is not unequivocally clear whether children are more vulnerable to noise than adults.

## Cognitive and behavioural development

- A child's capacity to recognize and assess potential safety and health risks at work and make decisions about them is less mature than that of adults. For younger children this ability is particularly weak. The ability to consider options, to look at a situation from a variety of perspectives, to anticipate consequences and to evaluate the credibility of sources increases throughout adolescence. By mid-adolescence, most young people's decision-making processes are similar to those of adults.

## Other risk factors

Other factors that increase levels of risk for children include:

- lack of work experience – children are unable to make informed judgements;
- a desire to perform well – children are willing to go the “extra mile” without realizing the risks;
- learning unsafe health and safety behaviour from adults;
- lack of safety or health training;
- inadequate, even harsh, supervision; and
- lack of power in terms of organization and rights.



Children may be reluctant to let others know when they do not understand something. They want to show their superiors and others that they are big enough, strong enough or old enough to do the job. They may fear dismissal if they fail at a given task. Children are often unfamiliar with hazards and risks and not trained to avoid them.

## Disability and child labour

Little is known about what happens to child labourers who become disabled as a result of their work, or about disabled children who become child labourers, and currently there is no alternative to informed guesswork. Based on evidence of the situation of children with disabilities in developing countries – itself sketchy, at best – it is likely that disabled child labourers will face great difficulties in finding decent work opportunities as adults, and in integrating into their communities and society. In particular, their chances of attending school are likely to be greatly reduced. Lack of access to education and the likelihood of being unable to read or write would decrease their chances of acquiring marketable skills enabling them to rise out of poverty and earn a decent livelihood in adulthood. They are also likely to have poor access to orthopaedic or prosthetic services or assistive devices. They would be disadvantaged by having to make do with makeshift devices to enable them to move around when they have lost a limb or can no longer walk, by the lack of access to technical aids if they have lost their vision or hearing or to counselling and support if they have been traumatized.

### Source

Tackling hazardous child labour in agriculture: Guidance on policy and practice. Guidebook 3: Eliminating hazardous child labour in agriculture (Geneva, ILO IPEC 2006) Section 1.4, pp. 7–9.

## What does poor safety and health mean in practice?

Below are a few of the reported cases from across the globe of the consequences of hazardous child labour:

- An 11-year-old girl, illegally employed on a farm in Ceres, Western Cape, South Africa, fell off a tractor, resulting in the amputation of her left leg.<sup>9</sup>
- A 15-year-old migrant farm worker in the United States was fatally electrocuted when a 30-foot section of aluminium irrigation pipe he was moving came into contact with an overhead power line. Two other child

labourers with him sustained serious electrical burns to their hands and feet.<sup>10</sup>

- A 17-year-old girl had part of the third finger on her left hand amputated after her fingers were crushed in a machine only one hour after starting her Easter holiday job in a bakery.
- An eight-year-old boy harvesting tomatoes in a field in Mexico was run over and killed by a tractor.
- Muro-ami is a fishing method that relies on children swimming out to bang on coral reefs in order to scare fish into nets. In the South China Sea off the Philippines, Jun, a 12-year-old boy was killed by a needle fish. The needle fish, which can skim the water at up to 20 knots, impaled the boy's neck with its 15 cm long beak, severing an artery and killing him.<sup>11</sup>
- In Zimbabwe, the wheels of a tractor, which had been standing overnight, had become bogged down in the mud. The following morning, Matthew, a 12-year-old boy started the tractor, revved up the engine to free the wheels, trying to move in a forward direction (when the safe procedure would have been to try to reverse out). The wheels remained stuck, resisting forward movement, and the tractor reared up on its front wheels and overturned backwards, fatally crushing the boy beneath it.<sup>12</sup>
- In the United Kingdom, Gary, a schoolboy, was riding on the drawbar of a tractor/trailer combination when he fell off and was run over by the trailer nearside wheel. He died of internal injuries.

## A wide range of hazards and levels of risk

Child labourers are at risk from a wide variety of mechanical, biological, physical, chemical, dust-related, ergonomic, welfare/hygiene and psychosocial hazards, as well as long hours of work and poor living conditions (see table 3).

**Table 3. Potential outcomes of hazards faced by child labourers by sector**

Occupation/ sector	Hazards/risks	Possible safety and health outcomes
Agriculture	Working with heavy, dangerous and often mobile machinery (e.g. being run over by a tractor); exposure to toxic pesticides and fertilizers; animals; exposure to organic crop and animal dusts; lifting heavy and awkward loads, often over long distances; exposure to extreme temperatures; poor hygiene and sanitary conditions.	Injuries from machinery, including amputations; chemical poisoning (chronic and acute); injuries from livestock; diseases such as asthma and bronchitis; back pain and other muscular problems in shoulders, legs etc.; cuts and other bodily injuries.
Fishing (sea and freshwater)	Drowning due to falling overboard or being trapped in nets while diving; injuries from hooks, rope, cables, nets; exposure to sun and extreme temperatures; heavy loads; long hours/periods at sea; poor hygiene; deep diving; wounds from fish.	Fatal accidents; musculoskeletal injuries; bone deformation; wounds and blistering to hands from fish hooks, nets; puncture wounds from fish spikes, etc.; decompression illness and ear injuries from diving.
Mining (underground and surface)	Tunnel collapses; rock falls; explosives; heavy loads; suffocation; strenuous work; poisoning from mercury; diseases such as silicosis; harsh and psychologically risky environment.	Death or severe injury from tunnel collapse or explosives; musculoskeletal injuries; bone deformation; suffocation; exhaustion; mercury poisoning.
Construction	Falls from heights; falling objects; heavy loads; digging/shoveling; sharp tools; cement dust, etc.; metalwork; breaking stones/rocks; noise.	Injuries from falls or being struck by falling objects; musculoskeletal problems; blistering of hands and skin; cuts and wounds to skin; respiratory problems due to dust.
Brick-making	Exposure to silicate, lead and carbon monoxide; lifting heavy and awkward loads; burns from ovens; long hours; exposure to solar radiation.	Burns from ovens; poisoning (acute and chronic); musculoskeletal problems; dermatitis.
Carpet weaving	Inhalation of wool dust contaminated with fungal spores; poor work posture (squatting); poor lighting; poor ventilation; hazardous chemicals (pesticides).	Respiratory diseases, such as asthma; musculoskeletal problems; eye strain and defective vision at premature age; chemical poisoning; aggravation of non-occupational diseases.



Occupation/ sector	Hazards/risks	Possible safety and health outcomes
Tannery	Exposure to corrosive and toxic chemicals – lime, chrome, etc.; strenuous work; heavy loads; skin problems; bacterial contamination of the hides.	Dermatitis from handling hides and corrosive chemicals; musculoskeletal injuries; exhaustion; chemical poisoning.
Scavenging	Cuts and wounds; infectious diseases; dermatitis and fungal infection; poor hygiene conditions; rodents.	Tetanus; other infectious diseases; infected cuts and wounds; chemical poisoning; food poisoning; burns (from build-up of methane gas and explosion).
Domestic work	Long working hours; physical and sexual abuse by the employer and family members; strenuous and demeaning tasks; isolation from family and society; confinement to the workplace.	Physical injury and psychological trauma as a result of harassment and abuse; emotional distress due to poor living and working conditions and confinement to the workplace, ill-treatment by the employer and isolation from the family.





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## PART 4

# THE ROLE OF EMPLOYERS' AND WORKERS' ORGANIZATIONS IN ERADICATING HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR

Employers' and workers' organizations are combating hazardous child labour in several ways. At the international level, the social partners make use of the ILO supervisory system to get their respective governments to fully apply ratified conventions on child labour. At the national level, the social partners are participating in the hazardous child labour list process and at the sectoral level, employers and workers are cooperating to eliminate hazardous child labour in the different sectors.

Employers and workers are also engaging in the fight against child labour at the workplace level. This is done through a variety of means, including safety and health risk assessment, joint safety and health committees and collective bargaining agreements. Finally, the social partners can also play an important role in transforming hazardous child labour into decent jobs for youth.

### Using the ILO supervisory system to ensure application of ratified conventions

At the international level, employers' organizations and trade unions use the ILO supervisory system to contribute to the elimination of child labour. As a natural consequence of its tripartite structure, the ILO was the first international organization to associate the social partners directly in its activities.

The participation of employers' and workers' organizations in the supervisory mechanism is recognized in the Constitution under Article 23, paragraph 2, which provides that reports and information submitted by governments must also be communicated to the representative employers' and workers' organizations. They may, for instance, draw attention to a discrepancy in law or practice regarding a Convention and thus lead the ILO Committee of Experts to request further information from the government. They may also submit comments on the application of Conventions directly to the ILO Office.

The social partners make good use of this supervisory system by regularly sending comments to governments or directly to the ILO where their coun-

try has ratified either or both Convention No. 138 or No. 182 or any other relevant convention.

## **Involvement in the hazardous child labour list process**

As already referred to in Part 2, under the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, Article 4, employers' organizations and trade unions can play an important role in helping to develop the national list of hazardous child labour. The employers' organization, which may include sectoral associations among its members, can bring together hazardous work definitions for the various sectors or direct members to the sectoral associations. Equally, through its members, trade union branches and workplace representatives, a trade union can also bring together hazardous work definitions and practices and identify where such types of work exist, to help with the compilation of the national list.

The national list of hazardous child labour states what forms of work must not be carried out by children below the age of 18, focusing on work which by its nature, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

### **Box 2. Examples of how employers' organizations and trade unions are inputting nationally to the hazardous child labour list process**

In Nicaragua, the employers' organization drafted a Practical Guide for the implementation of the lists of hazardous work for children.

In Mongolia, in September 2008, the national list of hazardous child labour was modified following consultations with ministries, with workers' and employers' organizations – principally, the Mongolian Employers' Federation (MONEF) and the Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions (CMTU), – and NGOs. The new list covers work carried out in the formal and informal economies, identifies hazardous conditions prohibited for children in herding, prohibits the employment of children in night clubs and body massage establishments and identifies workplace conditions hazardous for children.

In Chile, in September 2009, within the framework of Chile's National Decent Work Programme, the Confederacion de la Produccion y del Comercio (employers), the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (workers) and the Ministry of Labour approved the list of hazardous child labour for persons below 18 years of age.

In Bolivia, at the end of 2007, an agreement was signed between the Bolivian Ministry of Labour, employers' representatives (Confederación de Empresarios Privados de Bolivia) and workers' representatives (Central Obrera Boliviana) to start a consultation process aimed at developing the list of hazardous work. A draft list was produced after a thorough consultation process based on social dialogue.

In Mali, activities undertaken by the social partners included the revision of the national list of hazardous work with the participation of the national employers' council (Conseil National du Patronat Malien – CNPM) and the two national trade union centres, the National Workers' Union of Mali (UNTM) and the Workers' Trade Union Confederation of Mali (CSTM).

Source: *The Social Partners and IPEC: Action against child labour, 2008-2009*. Supplementary report to the IPEC International Steering Committee, March 2010 (Geneva, ILO IPEC).

Drawing up the list is only the first step, followed by dissemination of the list and implementation of its requirements.

An employers' organization can help to disseminate information to its members' and sectoral associations on what is in the list and what steps they may need to take to achieve compliance with its requirements. Child labour could be a confusing issue for a typical business owner. He or she may not know the legal age of work or how hazardous work is defined for workers below the age of 18. For a business that is aware that it is employing children, the options of what to do with current workers may also be a concern. Should the enterprise simply let them go or does it have a responsibility to them? Is there an organization that can help to ensure the welfare of children who are laid off? An employers' organization can be a first point of contact and information for its members on these questions.

The employers' organization can encourage its members to be more aware of the hiring policies of their suppliers, particularly those in the informal economy. It can help to ensure that suppliers are aware of the existence of

the hazardous child labour list and of their potential obligations in respect of its requirements.

Similarly, trade unions can help to disseminate information on, and raise awareness of, the national hazardous child labour list and promote its implementation. National trade union centres can distribute information on the list to their sectoral trade union member organizations, and even help with training on the topic. Sectoral trade unions can then distribute information to their members and workplace representatives, through local trade union branches and workplace committees. Many unions have an education service which can provide training for workplace representatives on the hazardous child labour lists and how the trade unions can make use of them to help eliminate child labour.

### **Box 3. Common elements in national hazardous child labour lists**

National hazardous child labour lists obviously vary from country to country, but an analysis of lists shows that there are often common elements which include:

#### **A. Generic hazards**

- (a) Lifting and carrying of heavy weights.
- (b) Working at height.
- (c) Maintenance of unguarded machinery in motion.
- (d) Operation of machinery in motion which is not fully guarded.
- (e) Exposure to very toxic, toxic and harmful chemicals, including listed carcinogens (cancer-causing chemicals).
- (f) Exposure to asbestos.
- (g) Exposure to harmful ionizing radiation.
- (h) Night work.
- (i) Work with high-risk biological agents.
- (j) Operating cranes, hoists and machine-operated lifts.
- (k) Work with a risk of contact with high-voltage electricity.
- (l) Work under abnormal conditions of heat, cold, vibration and noise.
- (m) Work with power-driven machinery.



## B. Activities

- (a) Work in slaughterhouses.
- (b) Mixing and application of pesticides and exposure to pesticides during aerial spraying.
- (c) Manufacture, handling and storage of explosives and articles containing explosive material.
- (d) Exposure to lead compounds as gas, dust or vapour, including work with lead paints.
- (e) Production and handling of molten metals.
- (f) Commercial diving and work underwater.
- (g) Deep sea fishing.
- (h) Ship loading/unloading.
- (i) Mining and work underground.
- (j) Operating power-driven woodworking machinery.
- (k) Felling of trees and subsequent logging and cutting.
- (l) Work with wild, dangerous or poisonous animals.
- (m) Demolition work.
- (n) Ship-breaking.

Source: *Hazardous child labour: A law and practice report on the health and safety aspects of ILO Convention No. 182 in preparation for an ILO Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Hazardous Child Labour* (Geneva, ILO SafeWork, ILO IPEC, International Association of Labour Inspection, 2005).

## Sectoral level initiatives

This section provides a few documented examples of how workers and employers are helping, often jointly, to eliminate hazardous child labour in some of the sectors where child labour is prevalent.

### Agriculture

“Progress has been slow in agriculture in part because these children, spread out over the rural areas of the world, are the hardest to reach. Seldom do abuses in agricultural child labour make the news. But farming, fishing, and livestock-herding have many hazards [and high levels of risk] and create more injuries and illnesses than what we hear about. Given that this sector has over 100 million child labourers, agriculture must be a priority for the elimination of hazardous child labour.”<sup>13</sup>



The ILO's Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) has been coordinating a project in partnership with employers' organizations to combat child labour in the agricultural sector. Some of the steps taken by employers' organizations have included:

- adopting of a **child labour code of conduct** by the agricultural employers in Moldova (FNPAIA);
- including **child labour clauses** in the collective bargaining agreements of four palm oil/rubber plantations in Ghana;
- signing of a **joint statement to combat child labour in agriculture** between the Federation of Uganda Employers and two TUs – the National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers (NUPAW) and the National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU);
- conducting **child labour surveys** in different sectors and countries to provide up-to-date and reliable information and figures on which the employers' organizations can base their interventions and developing specific training and awareness-raising materials for employers.

In Kyrgyzstan's rural areas, many children work in the fields before and after school because low agricultural prices mean that small farmers are unable to pay for adult labour. A joint project of ILO-ACTRAV and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) – a global union federation – has trained trade union representatives to help them eliminate hazardous child labour in livestock rearing, cotton, rice and tobacco production. The Kyrgyzstan Agro-Industrial Workers Union (AIWU), an IUF affiliate, made child labour elimination a key priority in 2002. The union has well-developed infrastructures in all regions of the country which aid project implementation.<sup>14</sup>

## Fishing

There is considerable anecdotal evidence about child labour in fishing but little hard data on the numbers or safety and health impacts involved. In 2005, the Federation of Ugandan Employers (FUE) and the Ugandan National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU) targeted the fishing sector, where a great deal of hazardous child labour exists. A Rapid Assessment on Child Labour in the Fishing Sector in Uganda was conducted on the fish-landing sites of Uganda's major water bodies, including Lake Victoria. Interviews were conducted among 292 children, aged between five and 17, and 223 parents/guardians. Seventy-one per cent of the working children had been

injured or fallen sick in the previous six months. Injuries or wounds from insect and fish bites, puncture wounds, malaria, drowning incidents, chest pains and diarrhoea were experienced.<sup>15</sup>

## Mining

Evidence from various surveys and research studies demonstrate that mining is by far the most hazardous sector for children in terms of fatal injuries. Health risks to children in this sector are compounded by the environment in which they live, where the soil, water and air may be contaminated by toxic mercury or other heavy metals. Clean drinking water, health services and schools are often lacking, especially in the remote mining areas.<sup>16</sup>

In several countries, employers' organizations and trade unions are tackling the issue of hazardous child labour in small-scale mining.

The Mongolia Employers' Federation (MONEF), for example, has taken the lead in a wider alliance to address the most pressing problems of child labour in informal gold mining. A total of 100,000 people are engaged in this activity. Some 10–15 per cent of informal gold miners are children. Children do most of the jobs which are also undertaken by adults and face hazardous working and climatic conditions. They often work without protective equipment on unstable ground and are exposed to rock dust. They handle explosives and toxic chemicals, such as mercury. Injuries are frequent, severe and often fatal.

MONEF has negotiated with the Government on long-term policy and legislation to give formal status to informal miners. In addition, cooperation contracts are being drawn up between formal mining enterprises and informal gold miners. Informal miners often work in areas previously mined (and still controlled) by formal companies.<sup>17</sup>

## Brick-making

In India, the brick kiln, building, construction and stone quarrying industries employ millions of workers, including children. The campaign run by the Building and Wood Workers International (BWI) in the construction/building materials sector in India has removed more than 10,000 children from work and brought them within the educational fold. At present, there are a total of 17 BWI/Union-run Child Labour Schools and Preparatory Centres for former child labourers all over India. Implementing states currently include Bihar, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.<sup>18</sup>

In Tamil Nadu in 2010, the Employers' Federation of Southern India (EFSI) developed awareness-raising materials on child labour and conducted numerous awareness-raising sessions targeting the brick kiln sector. In Thiruvallur District a total of 511 brick kiln owners, managers, maistries and workers participated in these awareness-raising sessions aimed at combating child labour.

## Domestic work

In Tanzania, the Conservation Hotels and Domestic and Allied Workers' Union (CHODAWU) has been actively working towards the elimination of child labour, specifically focusing on child domestic workers since 1996. CHODAWU has forged strong alliances and networks with various strategic stakeholders and enjoys a good collaboration and support from the Government of Tanzania, the Association of Tanzanian Employers, the Trade Union Congress of Tanzania, international trade unions and non-governmental organizations.

## Carpet weaving

Obeetee is India's leading producer and exporter of hand-knotted, hand-tufted and flat-woven carpets. As a pioneer in establishing effective methods to battle the use of child labour, Obeetee maintains the highest standards of workplace conditions and accountability. The company claims that, "Our weavers and supporting manufacturers are amongst the best paid in the industry and receive superior benefits, which results in exceptionally high employee retention rates at all levels of work."<sup>19</sup>

Within a network of 24 satellite depots, Obeetee has over 75 full-time executives and supervisors whose sole purpose is to inspect its 10,000 looms and tufting frames over an area of nearly 60,000 square miles. Each loom is inspected at least once every 15 days, with additional surprise inspections from a head office representative at least once every 60 days. By means of these inspections, the company maintains detailed information on each and every weaver and their families to ensure that only those approved by Obeetee are working on their products. This inspection system, which Obeetee developed during the 1980s, along with other product quality controls, is random, frequent and thoroughly documented.

The company states that,

*"For more than a decade, and through the production of more than 500,000 carpets, not one instance of child labour has ever been discovered. It is this system of inspection that ensures a policy of zero tolerance ...."*<sup>20</sup>

## Sporting goods

Brand name companies no longer produce – they buy. Many common brand name companies in footwear, clothing and other sectors no longer manufacture their own products. For example, in the mid-1990s, Adidas, the clothing and sporting goods company, shifted from being primarily a producer of goods to a marketing firm, buying from local firms located primarily in Asia. It currently sources from over 700 independent businesses. To avoid bad publicity, brand name companies in Europe, North America and elsewhere need to ensure that child labour is not being used by any of their suppliers or by any of their suppliers' suppliers.

## Workplace level strategies

Employers and workers can combat hazardous child labour in their workplaces through mechanisms and processes which include safety and health risk assessment, joint safety and health committees and collective bargaining agreements.

### Risk assessment

A key tool for addressing the circumstances under which hazardous work is carried out and for devising safe solutions is the workplace safety and health risk assessment carried out by the employer in cooperation with the workforce.

Risk assessment is a self-help tool that allows enterprises – small, medium and large – to take action themselves to remedy health and safety problems, with the participation of the workforce, and to come up with practical and cost-effective solutions. The aim is to prevent and reduce fatal accidents, injuries and ill health at work.

There are no set definitions but a safety and health risk assessment is essentially a careful examination by an employer, in cooperation with her/his workforce, of any aspect of the business that could cause harm to people (whether arising from work activities or from other factors, e.g. the layout of the premises). A careful evaluation of the extent of the risks involved follows, taking into account existing safety and health measures that are already in place, and deciding what more needs to be done to protect those at risk. Risk assessment can be carried out by small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in exactly the same way as by larger companies. Using risk assessment to tackle their daily safety and health problems prevents companies, espe-

cially SMEs, from having to rely on external experts, consultants or officials to apprise them of any problems and determine the solutions (though, of course, advice and help may be sought from such persons).

#### **Box 4. Risk assessment: A five-step process**

Step 1. Identifying hazards and those at risk.

Step 2. Evaluating and prioritizing risks.

Step 3. Deciding on action to prevent or control the risks.

Step 4. Taking action – putting in place the preventive and control measures through a prioritization plan (it is most likely that all the problems cannot be resolved immediately).

Step 5. Monitoring, reviewing and updating

Source: *Risk assessment for small and medium-sized enterprises* (Geneva, ILO Safework, in preparation).

### **Using workplace safety and health committees**

In enterprises the industrial relations machinery usually involves various types of employer/management–worker committees. One type of workplace committee which could be of particular use in combating hazardous child labour is the joint employer/management–worker committee on occupational safety and health (OSH).

The ILO defines a workplace safety and health committee as “a committee with representation of workers’ safety and health representatives and employers’ representatives established and functioning at organization level according to national laws, regulations and practice”.<sup>21</sup> In many countries, the establishment of such OSH committees is a legal requirement (such as Angola, Austria, Estonia, France, Greece, Ireland, Kenya, Lithuania, Norway, Romania, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and the United Kingdom).

A joint OSH committee is a way for employers and workers to act cooperatively on a problem-solving basis to improve and maintain health and safety conditions, including addressing hazardous child labour both in the enterprise itself and, where relevant, throughout the enterprise’s supply chain.

Functions of joint safety and health committees include:<sup>22</sup>

- investigating injury and ill-health reports and relevant trends;

- receiving reports of internal inspections/checks, as well as reports from labour inspectors;
- ensuring liaison with the local labour inspector or local labour officer;
- developing risk assessment procedures;
- determining the type of occupational health and safety services that are to be provided;
- reviewing health and safety information, training and communication with workers;
- developing new policies and safe systems of working;
- developing policies to ensure that contractors and sub-contractors working for the employer/company follow the correct health and safety procedures;
- developing policies to ensure that the employer/company prevents the use of child labour at any point along the company's supply chain;
- developing policies to link into the local communities, and to ensure that hazardous company operations, e.g. pesticide spraying, do not harm local residents or pollute soil and water
- developing environmental policies;
- checking on the implementation of the OSH elements of collective bargaining agreements;
- discussing work changes, new plans for buildings, equipment and processes with a view to implementing risk-prevention measures.

There is usually a threshold for the number of workers that an enterprise can employ before an OSH committee has to be established – typically anywhere from 20 to 50 workers and above, depending on the national legislation – so many small enterprises would not have enough workers to justify an OSH committee.

However, the OSH committees in larger enterprises could help employers and workers in the smaller enterprises to tackle hazardous child labour. The employer and worker representatives on the larger enterprise's OSH committee could help to raise the awareness of, and train, employers and workers in the small enterprises, and enable them to refrain from using children in hazardous work. In many countries, it is already standard practice for larger enterprises to help SMEs with technical issues such as improving safety and health standards. This practice is all the more prevalent if the SMEs are supplying produce or products to the larger enterprise (e.g. smallholder farmers supplying crops such as sugar and tea under contract to an agricultural plantation for processing in that plantation's mill or factory).

Joint safety and health committees can play an important role in improving workplace OSH conditions but they often fail to function properly or are underused.<sup>23</sup> Also, in practice, such committees are far more prevalent and active in the industrialized sector than the non-industrialized sector.<sup>24</sup>

However, in respect of hazardous child labour, there seems to be little written evidence that enterprise safety and health committees play any significant role in its elimination. So, making use of such committees in the future could be an important “way forward”. Indeed, tackling the issue of hazardous child labour could be a means of prompting inactive committees to take a more active role for the benefit of all workers in the enterprise.

In the workplace, the safety and health of adult workers and young (child) workers are inextricably linked. You cannot adequately protect the safety and health of children employed as young workers unless you adequately protect the safety and health of adult workers in the same workplace. The dust particle or pesticide droplet that may harm the child worker may also harm the adult worker, and vice versa.

### **Labour inspection and safety and health committees**

Workplace safety and health committees also provide yet another link to labour inspectors, who are important players in child labour elimination. The establishment of safety and health committees can be legally required by labour inspectorates (for example, in Estonia, France, Norway, Romania, South Africa and Tanzania). In Tanzania, an inspector can stipulate the time and place for meetings of a committee. In Cyprus, Greece, Kenya and Lithuania, inspectors help to train committee members. In Greece, following a visit, the labour inspector will report either to the works safety committee or the safety representative on the results of the inspection and the recommendations made to the employer. Making greater use of the labour inspection–workplace safety and health committee link to tackle child labour could be another “way forward” in the future.

### **Collective bargaining**

Another important tool which can be used to address hazardous child labour is the collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Collective bargaining covers all negotiations which take place between an employer, a group of employers or one or more employers’ organizations on the one hand, and one or more workers’ organizations, on the other, for:



- determining working conditions and terms of employment; and/or
- regulating relations between employers and workers; and/or
- regulating relations between employers or their organizations and a workers' organization or workers' organizations.

It is a crucial mechanism in terms of enabling workers to obtain improvements in their terms and conditions of employment.<sup>25</sup> The Government is sometimes involved as a third party. Issues negotiated typically include hours of work, wages and occupational safety and health. In some instances, the scope of CBAs has been widened to include clauses prohibiting the use of child labour.

Child labour is now one of the issues often negotiated on and included in CBAs, providing an area of common ground on which employers and workers can build. However, in 2000, ILO ACTRAV observed that, "Collective bargaining has perhaps been overlooked as a means of fighting against child labour".<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, collective bargaining is often weak in sectors where child labour is found, such as agriculture. ILO ACTRAV observes that,

*"Because of the large number of small undertakings and the fact that they are widely scattered, the agricultural sector has always been a sticking point when it comes to trade union and collective bargaining rights. Moreover, the genuine employer can be hard to identify when the agricultural undertakings are part of a global supply operating all over the world. A lot of rural workers are independent or else temporary or seasonal workers. It also often happens that the labour legislation does not apply to this sector or includes special provisions that are less favourable than in the industrial sector. There are many such factors that account for the poor coverage of agricultural workers by collective agreements even though in some countries – Canada, Romania, South Africa and Uruguay – there has been some progress in this area in recent years, both in law and practice."*<sup>27</sup>

Examples of CBA agreements which include clauses on action against child labour are given below.

In 2006, the management and trade unions on the Gumaro Tea Development Plantations in Ethiopia decided to work together to eliminate hazardous child labour. In concluding a new collective bargaining agreement, a total of nine sub-articles directly related to the issue of child labour were included in the agreement. In the core sub-articles of the CBA, the company and the union agreed to:

- work jointly to eliminate hazardous child labour from the enterprise;
- conduct a study to find out the cause of the problem;
- eliminate child labour and consider possible solutions together with the community leaders;
- ensure that the steps taken by the government, trade unions and employers, are brought into effect to solve the problem of child labour.<sup>28</sup>

The Ghana Oil Palm Development Company and the Ghanaian General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU) negotiated a collective bargaining agreement, committing management and the union to work together to eradicate child labour in and around plantations. As an example of the results, farmers in a community called Akenkase within the company's catchment area, having undertaken continuous educational programmes using role-play and other participatory methods, decided to stop using child labour. They have formed a cooperative labour pool so they can help out on each other's farms with harvesting and other tasks.<sup>29</sup>

In Tanzania, the Tanzanian Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union (TPAWU) has signed agreements prohibiting child labour on cut-flower farms in Arumeru and Arusha. TPAWU's efforts benefited from a good working relationship between union leaders and cut-flower farm owners. In Arumeru district, monitoring of implementation of the agreement was more effective as the union has branches on every cut-flower farm. The branch leaders were also instrumental in monitoring and reporting back on child labour issues to TPAWU.<sup>30</sup>

In January 2007, a clause on the abolition of the worst forms of child labour was added to the Memorandum of Agreement between the Kenya Coffee Growers and Employers' Association and the Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union.<sup>31</sup>

## Promoting youth employment

One of the challenges for employers and trade unions in respect of hazardous child labour is how to promote youth employment for children who are of the minimum legal age for employment in their country (14–15 upwards according to national legislation). Under ILO Convention No. 182, no child (i.e., person under 18 years of age) shall work in hazardous child labour. However, if workplace safety and health conditions can be sufficiently improved to guarantee children in the 14/15 to 17-year age bracket "decent conditions of work", including proper training for them on safety and health

at work, then there is no reason why, in most jobs, these children should not remain at work, productively employed and earning wages. By sufficiently improving workplace safety and health conditions, the child ceases to be a “child labourer” and becomes classed as a “young worker”.

The only exception to this scenario is small-scale artisanal mining – surface and underground – which has been judged by the ILO’s governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations to be so hazardous that no child under 18 should work in this sector under any circumstances.

### **Box 5. Examples of promoting youth employment**

**1)** In 1999, the Turkish Confederation of Employers’ Associations (TISK) established a Bureau for Working Children in the Pendik Industrial Site of Istanbul, targeting children in metalworking workshops. The strategy was to monitor the well-being of children through various indicators, including their health status, vocational training opportunities and working conditions. In December 2005, TISK replicated and improved the strategy of this project by implementing a new project in collaboration with the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (TÜRK-İŞ). Trade unions and employer confederations have concentrated their efforts on children working in the industry, in street trades and in seasonal agriculture work. They have set up “TISK and TÜRK-İŞ Social Support Centre for Working Children” in Adana through which they have undertaken various activities and collected information on working children in the industrial sectors which they represent or in which they are involved. This information has been used to design policies which offer better training opportunities to apprentices, remove children from vocations unsuitable for their capacity and direct child workers to formal education where possible.<sup>32</sup>

**2)** Efforts to mainstream occupational safety and health in child labour led to a joint International Union of Food Workers, ACTRAV and IPEC workshop on child labour in agriculture. Participants were worker safety and health trainers of agricultural trade unions in Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania. This allowed participants to maximize the achievements of trade unions, mainly by pursuing opportunities in the area of safe work for youth (dealing with occupational safety and health issues, youth employment and linkages between formal training in youth polytechnics and the situation in the informal economy).<sup>33</sup>





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## PART 5

# CONCLUSIONS

The active involvement of employers and workers in combating hazardous child labour requires a step-by-step approach which can encompass the following points:

- **Investigation:** finding the facts at the local and national level, a watchdog role in bringing abuses to light.
- **Institutional development:** establishing sustainable structures (such as child labour focal points, units, committees and networks with other organizations), including participation in national child labour steering committees, national child labour action plans, national hazardous child labour lists and so on.
- **Policy development:** developing and updating policies and plans of action; including promoting policies for youth employment and poverty reduction.
- **Training:** providing training for employers and workers on combating child labour (for example, on workplace health and safety risk assessment as a means of reducing hazardous child labour).
- **Publicizing:** publicizing the various forms of child labour and those which put children at most risk.
- **Raising awareness:** organizing employers' and workers' education and public information activities.
- **Campaigning:** pressing for enforcement of legislation/standards, public education and consumer action.
- **Mobilization:** forming alliances with others, as part of a global network working for the elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and to advocate children's right to education and decent work when they reach the minimum age for employment.
- **Collective bargaining:** ensuring that clauses on child labour, including hazardous child labour, are included in collective bargaining agreements.
- **Codes of conduct:** ensuring that codes drawn up by employers' organizations, and by trade unions, are implemented.

- **Utilizing the support of the ILO:** ILO departments such as ACT/EMP, ACTRAV and IPEC can offer advice, information and technical support, and can provide access to extensive publications. To obtain the text of ILO Conventions and find out the status of ratification by Convention and country, go to ILOLEX: Database for International Labour Standards, <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/>.
- **Utilizing the ILO supervisory system:** providing regular comments to the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations regarding the application of child labour conventions.

### **The ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP)**

ILO ACT/EMP is a specialized unit within the ILO Secretariat. Its task is to maintain close and direct relations with employers' organizations in member States, to make the ILO's resources available to them and to keep the ILO constantly aware of their views, concerns and priorities. ACT/EMP's mission is to foster well-functioning employers' organizations, which are crucial in shaping an environment conducive to competitive and sustainable enterprises that can contribute to socio-economic development.

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ILO ACTRAV is a specialized unit within the ILO Secretariat which coordinates all activities related to workers and their organizations, both at headquarters and in the field. ACTRAV's mission is to maintain close relations with the trade union movement throughout the various countries of the world, to provide trade unions with the support of the ILO in endeavours to strengthen their influence by promoting activities which defend and advance the rights of workers.

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## USEFUL LINKS

### Employers' organizations/ILO ACT/EMP

Eliminating child labour: Guides for employers (Geneva, ILO ACT/EMP and IOE, 2007); <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/actemp/whatwedo/projects/cl/guides.htm>

- Guide 1: Introduction to the issue of child labour
- Guide 2: How employers can eliminate child labour
- Guide 3: The role of employers' organizations in combating child labour

Handbook for employers on child labour, (Geneva, International Organisation of Employers, IOE, updated in 2000).

### Trade unions/ILO ACTRAV

Trade unions and child labour pack (Geneva, ILO ACTRAV, 2000):

- Booklet No. 1: Guide to the booklets
- Booklet No. 2: Union policies and Action Plans to combat child labour
- Booklet No. 3: Fact finding and information about child labour
- Booklet No. 4: Campaigning against child labour
- Booklet No. 5: Collective bargaining to combat child labour
- Booklet No. 6: Using ILO standards to combat child labour
- Booklet No. 7: The tripartite structure to combat child labour

Bitter harvest: Child labour in agriculture (Geneva, ILO Bureau of Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), International Labour Organization, 2002), [http://www.ilo.org/actrav/what/pubs/lang--en/docName--WCMS\\_111427/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/what/pubs/lang--en/docName--WCMS_111427/index.htm)

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Health, safety and environment: A series of trade union education manuals for agricultural workers (Geneva, ILO ACTRAV and IUF, 2006). Child labour in agriculture (trade unions); [http://www.ilo.org/actrav/what/pubs/lang--en/docName--WCMS\\_111413/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/what/pubs/lang--en/docName--WCMS_111413/index.htm)

ILO Labour Education:

- Trade unions and child labour. 1996/1, No. 102.



- Health and safety at work: A trade union priority. 2002/1, No. 126.
- Top on the agenda: Health and safety in agriculture. 2000/1–2, Nos 118/119.
- Child Labour in Agriculture. 2003/2–3, Nos 131/132.

IUF website: [www.iuf.org/wdacl/2007/06/](http://www.iuf.org/wdacl/2007/06/)

## ILO reports

The end of child labour. Within reach. Global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (Geneva, 2006).

Accelerating action against child labour: Global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (Geneva, 2010).

Tackling hazardous child labour in agriculture: Guidance on policy and practice. International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) (Geneva, 2006).

- Guidebook 1: Background policy information
- Guidebook 2: An overview of child labour in agriculture
- Guidebook 3: Eliminating hazardous child labour in agriculture
- Guidebook 4: Initiatives to tackle hazardous child labour in agriculture
- Guidebook 5: Training resources for Guidebooks 1 to 4

The social partners and IPEC: Action against child labour, 2008–2009. Supplementary report to the IPEC International Steering Committee, March 2010.

## Web links

- IPEC: International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour of the ILO: [www.ilo.org/ipec](http://www.ilo.org/ipec)
- International Organization of Employers: [www.ioe-emp.org/en/policy-areas/child-labour/index.html](http://www.ioe-emp.org/en/policy-areas/child-labour/index.html)
- International Trade Union Confederation: [www.ituc-csi.org/about-us.html](http://www.ituc-csi.org/about-us.html)
- Social dialogue: ILO Industrial and Employment Relations Department, 2011: [www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/areas/social.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/areas/social.htm)

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## Employers' and Workers' Handbook on Hazardous Child Labour

Hazardous child labour is a global problem that requires a concerted approach to its resolution. The ILO's Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) have joined forces in a campaign to eliminate the practice and liberate 115 million children worldwide from this worst form of child labour.

The *Employers' and Workers' Handbook on Hazardous Child Labour* presents the facts of the issue, bringing together documented and anecdotal evidence on the devastating consequences of this form of labour. It not only explores in detail the physical, mental and emotional effect on the individual child but examines the wider social impact on communities that are tied into these practices.

The *Handbook* considers the ILO Conventions and international treaties already in place, stressing the importance of dialogue between social partners and governments in ensuring that the recommendations are not just embraced at the sectoral level but are implemented in the workplace. It offers practical advice to employers' organizations and trade unions, promoting the development of national hazardous child labour lists, proposing greater use of collective bargaining agreements containing specifically targeted child labour clauses and highlighting the need to empower workplace health and safety committees to ensure decent working conditions for all.

Using the *Employers' and Workers' Handbook on Hazardous Child Labour* as the main policy tool for the ACTEMP/ACTRAV initiative, it is hoped that, by 2016, the 183 ILO member States will have eliminated this form of child labour, with consequent benefits for their nations' economic development.

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