▶ Child labour in Peru

February 2023

Eliminating child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains: an integrated approach
Results from the CLEAR Cotton project

Key points

▶ Project co-funded by the European Union and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

▶ Duration: 5 years (March 2018 – February 2023).

▶ Regions covered: Ica, Piura, with national-level results.

▶ Beneficiaries: Children and their families working at any level of the cotton, garment and textile value chains; key ministries and other governmental agencies; public regional authorities; employers' and workers' organizations; media.

▶ Implementation: by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the local implementing partners.

▶ Partners: Ministry of Labour; SUNAFIL (labour inspectorate); National and Regional Committees for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour (CPETI and CDRPETIs); *Escuela Superior de Arte Pública "Ignacio Merino"; Escuela Superior Pedagógica*; civil society organizations.

Child labour situation in Peru

Peru is an Alliance 8.7 Pathfinder Country and a member of the Regional Initiative "Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour" (Red LACTI). The country has thus committed to accelerate action towards the eradication of child labour. Peru has ratified the relevant international instruments, such as ILO Convention No. 138 on minimum age of employment and Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour. It also adopted laws and policies at national level to address it, like the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour 2012-2021.

However, child labour remains an issue in Peru. The national household survey of 2019 showed that 18.9 per cent of children aged 5-13 were in child labour, and that 9.1 per cent of children aged 14-17 were in hazardous child labour[1]. These figures are likely to increase due to the negative impact of the Covid pandemic on the country[2].

The sectors that are the most affected by child labour are agriculture (including cotton production), fishing and mining, regrouping almost 60 per cent of all children found in child labour. Cotton production has existed in Peru since pre-Columbian cultures, and has stayed a traditional crop. But its cultivation involves all the members of the family, including children, often at the expense of their school attendance.

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[1] Government of Peru, 2019, Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAHO) 2019.

[2] ILO, 2020, *COVID-19 could set back 10 years of progress against child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour (ILO: Lima, 2020). Available here: www.ilo.org/caribbean/newsroom/WCMS_759377/lang--en/index.htm.

The CLEAR Cotton project

The project aimed at contributing to the elimination of child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains in target producing countries. The project worked following an integrated approach, both by production area – covering all producing regions in the target countries – and by value chain – acting at all levels of the national cotton value chain. This approach allowed the project to address the basic needs of children and families at risk, working with local and national actors in the cotton sector. The specific objectives were:

- Enhanced compliance with legislative and regulatory frameworks and implementation of policies to eradicate child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains.

- Reduced recourse to child and forced labour by local communities with enhanced economic opportunities in selected cotton growing/processing districts.

In Peru, the project was limited to a set of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities.

The CLEAR Cotton project collaborated with the Brazil-funded South-South cooperation project "Cotton with Decent Work" in selected interventions.

Young boy beneficiary of the school reinforcement, Peru © ILO, 2021

Main results

Research

- **Analysis of child labour and its worst forms in the cotton value chain and identification of strategies for its prevention and elimination**, to identify the scale of the child labour in cotton productions and identify stakeholders' needs.
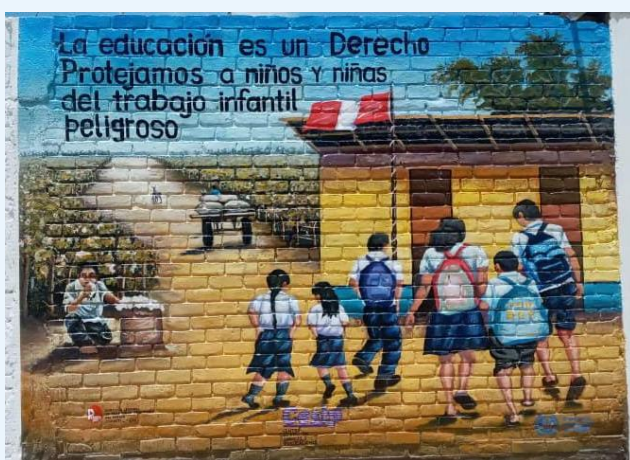
Capacity-building

- A **virtual course** on child labour and social dialogue was developed and implemented, targeting enforcement officers and direct respondents.
- **The CDPETI and CDRPETIs were reactivated**, in 10 regions.
- **50 members of CDRPETIs**, of all 25 regions, **were trained** on their role and how to address child labour.
- **5 actions plans were adopted** by CDRPETIs.
- **485 participants** from CDRPETIs, SUNAFIL, unions, agricultural associations and civil society organizations from 6 countries in Latin America **shared their experiences and good practices** during online sessions.
- **30 stakeholders** from the Ica region (public authorities and producers) were trained on the role of cooperatives and how to create one through the ILO's tools **Think.COOP and Start.COOP**.
- **57 agents** of two municipalities in Ica were trained on the **municipal model to identify and address child labour**, adopted by the Ministry of Labour.

Awareness-raising

- **2 awareness-raising campaigns** were developed and implemented, focusing on child labour in agriculture and the textile sector.
- CDRPETIs were supported to develop **communication videos on child labour in cotton production**.
- **3 videos on child labour** were included in the **Government online platform** "I learn at home" dedicated to school distance learning during the pandemic.
- **More than 2 million people were reached** through multi-tool awareness-raising campaigns, including drawing competitions, radio podcast, online videos, etc., at regional and national level.

Direct support to affected communities

- **340 children in or at risk of child labour benefitted from school reinforcement** to avoid them dropping out of school due to the school closure during the pandemic.
- **The National University of Piura (teaching department)** committed to train future teachers on child labour and keep implementing school reinforcement schemes, after training received.

Painted mural as part of the awareness-raising campaigns, Santa Elena, Peru © ILO, 2022

Good practices and lessons learned

- Eliminating and preventing child labour in agriculture requires an integrated approach, including through close collaboration between labour, agriculture, education and social protection actors, social partners and civil society organisations.
- The transnational collaboration between committed partners has permitted to learn about effective examples and apply them in the cotton sector.

Next steps and challenges

- Apply the integrated approach and lessons learned from the project to address the growing problem of child and forced labour in other sectors.
- Pilot the implementation of Child Labour Risk Identification Model (MIRTI) in different sectors and regions.
- Provide adequate social protection to farming families, to mitigate their vulnerabilities to shocks, based on data collected from the national child labour survey.

▶ **Resources**

▶ **Alliance 8.7 webpage**

▶ **Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour Regional Initiative**

▶ **Virtual course on child labour and social dialogue**

▶ **Resources from the textile and garment campaign**

▶ **Resources from the agriculture campaign**

▶ **Music Against Child Labour competition 2021**

▶ **www.ilo.org/clearcotton**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

CLEAR COTTON

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