



Let Parents Earn and Children Learn

Final Report - FNV Mondiaal

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PREFACE

During the International Child Labour Conference 2010, which took place on 10 and 11 May in The Hague, new global child labour statistics were presented. According to estimates, child labour continues to decline, but only very gradually. A total of 215 million children are still involved in some form of work (according to the definition in ILO Convention 138) that prevents them from enjoying full-time education.

The ILO also states that there are fewer children in hazardous work, a term that is often used to describe the worst forms of child labour as defined in ILO convention 182. However, the staggering number of 115 million children are still exposed to hazardous work.

In 1997, another big international child labour conference was held in Amsterdam. Addressing that conference, Norbert Blum, the then German Minister of Social Affairs, said:

“If children are still forced to work and their parents are unemployed, the world is mad! Slavery is not right for this world. The term *child labour* is still too mild. It’s a crime!”

What he said was very true, and it is sad to note that 14 years later the situation is still alarming for a whole new generation of children.

Well over 200 million children are forced to work, and at the same time almost 200 million adults are unemployed (and even more are underemployed) according to the ILO. These are staggering statistics. Recently somebody calculated that if all working children pronounced their first name, one at a time it would take 14 years!

I conclude that the approach of focusing on the worst forms of child labour, an approach adopted in 2006, is not yielding the results that the international community was hoping for. At this pace we will never be able to fulfil the international promises to children: all children going to school by 2015 (Millennium Development Goal 2), and all children removed from the worst forms of child labour by 2016. It is high time we scaled up our efforts and looked at other perspectives and new approaches to achieving these goals.

In this study commissioned by the Dutch Trade Union Confederation FNV (with the support of the International Trade Union Confederation), researchers have looked at child labour from a new angle. They looked into the different relations between the existence of child labour and

the lack of decent work for adults. Researchers have visited projects, talked with experienced trade unionists and activists from the field, studied literature, etc. The outcomes are really interesting and challenge the current child labour paradigms.

The study found, for example, that where almost all child labour is eradicated (not only the worst forms), adults can substantially improve their wages and improve chances of obtaining decent work. In one of the case studies in the report, there was a 150% increase in wages for the adults in areas where child labour was removed, while the increase was far less in places where child labour continued. Continuing child labour is therefore perpetuating poverty. Trade unions play a crucial role in harvesting the benefits for adults.

While we knew that child labour undermines the bargaining position for adults, it is very promising to see evidence showing that an area-based approach addressing all child labour can have positive consequences for both children and adults.

FNV has committed itself to fighting all child labour as part of its efforts to promote decent work. This has to be accompanied by public provision of free, universal and compulsory quality education, and by building and maintaining public awareness and commitment, by campaigning for governments to ratify and apply ILO Conventions 138 (Minimum Age for Employment) and 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour), and by employers ensuring they comply these Conventions throughout their operations, including their supply chains.

It is my sincere hope that the new perspectives and lessons learned that we bring to your attention through this report will change the way you look at the issue of child labour. I ask for your support for a new comprehensive approach to tackling the problem within this broader framework: eradicating child labour and promoting decent work for adults.

Let parents earn and children learn!

Agnes Jongerius



President FNV

Introduction

This study centers on the links between child labour and decent work for adults. It examines trade union, non-governmental organisation, government and ILO programmes to fight child labour in nine countries – India, Nepal, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Brazil, Morocco, Tanzania and Albania. The FNV supports five of these programmes, which are managed by: the Building and Wood Workers International in India and Nepal; the agricultural workers union APVVU and the non-government organisation MVF in India; the national teachers' union, the *Syndicat national des Enseignants* (SNE) in Morocco; and the two teachers unions, FSASH and SPASH in Albania.

The research undertaken as part of the study comprised field visits by a team of researchers and many meetings with the different types of people involved – trade unionists, employers, government officials, ILO specialists, members of non-governmental organisations and programme beneficiaries. This was complemented by analysis of existing reports on the programmes concerned.

A summary of this report was distributed and presented at the World Conference Against Child Labour held in the Hague on 10-11 May 2010 and organised by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, in collaboration with the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank. The conference conclusions, the so-called roadmap, have been included in this final report.



India

“Take two children from the workplace and create a job for an adult”

In the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, the trade union APVVU is using new progressive legislation on rural employment to step up its fight against child labour.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), adopted in 2005, provides poor workers in Indian villages with an opportunity for significant development. It stipulates that all rural households have the right to receive from the government a minimum of 100 days work per year for a wage of 100 rupees (\$2.1) per day. This is manual work on local community development projects requested by the community and approved by the authorities. For example, digging small irrigation ponds, building small roads and cleaning water reservoirs.

Although the NREGA is one of the most progressive laws adopted by India in recent years, implementation of the law in such a gigantic country as India is not easy. Several trade unions are running information campaigns so that potential beneficiaries of this legislation know how to submit projects. One such union is the APVVU¹⁾ in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

“People were supposed to register with the authorities before 2006 if they wanted a job under the scheme but they didn’t always receive the information in time to register”, says P. Chennaiah, APVVU secretary and coordinator.

“The slowness of the bureaucracy, the corruption and the dishonest practices of some influential people also acted as a brake on implementation of the law. In 2009, only 5% of villages in the state of Andhra Pradesh had taken up the hundred days of employment envisaged by the scheme (the average is 62 days). This percentage increases to 30% in areas where our union is helping workers to request implementation of the law. Thanks to our awareness raising campaigns, 800,000 people have received a NREGA jobseeker card.”

“We help them on condition that they send their children to school”

The APVVU combines the campaign with strengthening its struggle against child labour.

“For a long time now, we have been showing workers the negative effects of child labour, mainly using emotive and visual media, such as short pieces of theatre and marches”, explains P. Chennaiah.

“We also tell parents about the social welfare benefits they are entitled to, especially with regard to the education of their children. This awareness raising is useful but it does not always have a lasting effect. What we are doing now is to reach agreements with each household: we agree to help them register with the NREGA scheme and obtain practical benefit from it, but this is on condition that they send their children to school.”

The 100 rupees paid out by NREGA jobs is below the minimum wage but it has forced employers to slightly increase pay in the agriculture sector.

“In September 2008, the minimum wage was 126 rupees per day in irrigated zones, 123 rupees in semi-irrigated zones and 119 in dry zones in Andhra Pradesh”, says P. Chennaiah.

“NREGA provides jobs to many agricultural workers and this reduces the availability of labour, forcing landowners to increase pay. For the same work, pay rose from 30 to about 40-50 rupees per day (from \$0.6 to between 0.8 and 1.0) for a woman and 50-60 rupees for a man. Where there is a union active, we manage to obtain pay parity between men and women”, he added.



1) The APVVU (Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vrudhidarula Union) has 48 affiliated unions in the state of Andhra Pradesh

The APVVU uses NREGA to promote the social inclusion of the people who suffer most discrimination. P. Chennaiah explains:

“On construction sites where we are present, we demand that every unit of 20 workers includes 50% women and at least four older workers (they carry out the easier tasks). If there are disabled people in the community, we ask that one is included in every group of 20 workers. Such workers would, for example, be given the job of distributing drinking water. The aim is that they are physically present and integrated among the workers. We also ask that each unit of 20 workers arranges for a small welcome centre for workers’ children and for someone to take charge of it. Moreover, we have campaigned for the NREGA scheme to include projects for individuals belonging to the more disadvantaged social classes, the dalits (untouchables) and indigenous peoples. For example, development of their agricultural land and the removal of stones from the land.”

The fight against child labour depends mainly on preventing the rural exodus of poor workers. Prior to 2006, during the off-season, many rural workers migrated to big cities such as Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad. Some of them took their children with them but these children did not usually go to school because of the difficulty of enrolling in a new school during the school year and because of the parents’ lack of awareness of the importance of education. Most migrant workers’ children therefore continued to work alongside their parents. The children who didn’t accompany their parents stayed at home to help their younger brothers and sisters and grandparents and to look after livestock. They therefore didn’t have time to attend school.

“We explain to these potential internal migrants that although the pay for NREGA jobs is a bit less than they might earn in town, they will at least have shelter and dignified work as opposed to the town where living and working conditions are often very bad” emphasises P. Chennaiah.

According to APVVU statistics, 30% of the 800,000 people helped by the union to benefit from the system are former seasonal migrant workers who now stay in their villages.

154,000 new members in 3 years

The fight for the implementation of NREGA and the abolition of child labour has also allowed the APVVU to increase its membership.

“Out of the 800,000 people that our union has helped to enrol in this system, 154,000 joined the union between 2006 and 2009, taking total union membership to 574,500. Unlike the political parties, our main objective is to help the poorest people rather than get them to join the union

at any price. However, we are very pleased at the increase of approximately 40% in membership in about three years”, notes P. Chennaiah. *“Our campaign has also allowed us to increase trade union dues from 12 rupees to between 25 and 50 rupees.”*

APVVU has noticed a great change in people’s attitude, including among workers who do not normally migrate in the off-season:

“There is social control of each NREGA project. Its members decide themselves that children can and must go to school”, affirms P. Chennaiah. *“As their own income increases, there is less need for their children to earn an income. Previously, a family of two parents and three children could earn 100 rupees per day (15 rupees per child and 30-40 per adult). That is the same as the wage earned by an adult worker employed on a NREGA project. All this also generates jobs. In the kind of agricultural work that takes place in Andhra Pradesh, the withdrawal of two children from the workplace creates an average of one job for an adult.”*

The APVVU’s fight against child labour also depends on cooperation with teachers and their unions in order to improve attendance of children from the most disadvantaged communities, such as the dalits.

“We contact the teachers at state schools to raise their awareness and to help them to understand the culture of members of lower castes”, explains the APVVU coordinator. *“This is important because a lot of teachers are from higher castes and continue to think that the children from lower castes are not ‘ready’ to receive an education. For example, we lead a march twice a year, from village to village, to raise the awareness of teachers and all workers about the need to send every child to school.”*

“All our children go to school now”

“Most of the people in our village do not own any land. The APPVVU union has helped us to formulate demands so we can benefit from NREGA. For example, in March 2010, we were able to form six groups of between eight and 14 people to dig reservoirs. We worked from 9am to 4pm with a one-hour break. We have had further discussions with the authorities about increasing the number of working days. Implementation of NREGA has changed a lot of things in our village. Eight to ten years ago, some of us used to migrate to the cities during the low agricultural season but now only educated people go to the cities, to work for companies. Our children no longer go to work. A few years ago, they often worked, but now we use the income from our work to pay for their education and all our children go to school.”

Indian trade unions grow stronger thanks to their fight against child labour

Trade unions have increased their membership and negotiated pay rises in the brick kilns sector as a result of their fight against child labour.

Children are sometimes employed in brick kilns at a very early age in India. There are many children aged only five who carry out the more simple tasks: preparing clay, carrying bricks and making piles of bricks. They are not employed directly by the brick kiln owners but they help their parents who are paid on a piecework basis. The overwhelming majority of these parents are not educated and are unaware of the opportunities afforded by education. They therefore do not enrol their children at schools, especially as there is sometimes a lack of good quality schools in the rural regions where the brick kilns are located. The parents prefer to avoid spending on education (purchase of clothes and exercise books etc) and make their children work alongside them in order to increase their meagre family income.

A project run by eight Indian BWI¹⁾ affiliates in four states is managing to reverse this trend. Funded by several foreign trade unions, including the FNV, it aims to convince workers to send their children to school and it will, if necessary, build schools in areas where there are none. BWI affiliates currently manage 19 schools.

“Our objective is not to take over the government’s responsibility for schools”, emphasises Rajeev Sharma, BWI coordinator in south Asia. “When our schools have achieved a satisfactory level and we feel confident that the government is in a position to take them over and maintain the same quality of education, we transfer responsibility for them to the authorities. However, we monitor them closely to make sure they are well managed.”

The BWI has already transferred responsibility for a dozen schools to the government.

“We also follow very closely the progress made by the children after we transfer responsibility to the government so that we can be sure that their education is going well and that they do not go back to work”, added Sharma.

The need to be patient with parents

Anita Gupta, director of the BWI school in Fatehabad (Uttar Pradesh), is one of the trade union activists who go from brick kiln to brick kiln to assess the extent of child labour and to try to persuade parents to send their children to school:

“Sometimes, I have to return several times in order to persuade parents. At first, many of them question whether it is worth sending their children to school. We explain that poverty will persist from

generation to generation if their children do not go to school. We try to be practical and explain that education will allow them to calculate their earnings and check whether they are being paid correctly and to read information about the government social welfare programmes from which they might benefit. I tell them that education at our school is free and I offer to complete the enrolment forms myself. We usually manage to persuade them. Most of them finally agree.”

Shobat Masik, trade union organiser for the construction union BMS²⁾ in Punjab state, finds it difficult to convince some parents:

“When I talk to them about the harmful effects of making their children work, they say that their income will fall if their children go to school and that they cannot afford to send several children to school. I have to work hard to persuade them and I have to be patient because as the parents have not had an education themselves, it takes a long time to convince them that it would be a good long-term investment for the family. When the children go on to secondary school, you can sense that they are interested in their studies. They want to carry on and they will resist any attempt by their parents to make them work rather than go to school.”

Dilbagh Singh, 43, has a job at the Mittal brick kilns in the village of Bhullar, in Punjab state. He had this to say about his family’s experience:

“If the BMS union had not convinced me of the importance of education, I would have made my 12-year-old daughter continue working. My wife, my older children and myself are working harder and harder so that she can go to school. We get up at 3am and work at the brickworks from 4am to 9pm, six days a week. We get very tense because we are not paid the minimum wage if we don’t reach the quota of 1000 bricks.”

Like other parents approached by union activists, Dilbagh Singh is very proud of how well his daughter is doing at school.

“At first, it can take some time for parents to understand the importance of education but later they are proud to see their children at school and wearing the school uniform and the community actively supports our projects”, explains Purna Prasad, coordinator of BWI projects in India. “For example, in Uttar Pradesh we set up a school in a village where the residents had always been illiterate. They are so pleased with our project that the village offers to help us when we do not have enough resources to organise events.”

1) Building and Wood Workers’ International

2) Bhatha Mazdoor Sabha

When there are not enough places in the schools managed by BWI affiliates, union members help the parents to enrol their children in state schools. They also work with local communities to put pressure on the authorities to improve the quality of state education.

More than 11,000 children now go to school instead of work, and the unions have become much stronger

The BWI estimates that more than 11,000 children have already left work and entered education thanks to the project schools, campaigns, lobbying and awareness raising. A total of 1,711 children currently go to BWI schools in India, including 802 girls. In addition to their support for the fight against child labour, BWI schools are an excellent point of entry into communities where few workers are members of trade unions. The schools can show how useful trade unions are for providing other services to workers, such as helping them to obtain the social welfare payments to which they have a right and providing adult literacy courses. The BWI project has led to an increase in trade union membership.

"We have recruited 30,000 new members since the beginning of the child labour project in 1995 and we currently have 40,000 dues-paying members and another 40,000 non-dues paying members", said Kulwant Singh Bawa, general secretary of the BMS, which is active in the state of Punjab.

In Uttar Pradesh, membership of the UPGMS³⁾ has risen from 50 in 1995 to more than 48,000 members today.

This increased membership has had a direct impact on trade union collective bargaining capacity. Employers are generally powerful individuals at the local level. They have political connections and often exploit their workers and do not comply with the law. The unions have been strengthened by their increased membership and have won significant pay rises. This has compensated parents for the loss of income caused by sending their children to school rather than taking them to work. In Punjab, for example, the BMS has managed to increase pay rates from 160 to 286 Indian rupees (\$3.5 to 6.4) per 1,000 bricks during the last ten years. There have also been important pay rises in Uttar Pradesh, where according to Tula Ram Sharma, UPGMS president,

"negotiations with the 'employers' association resulted in pay increasing from 70 to 150 rupees per thousand bricks between 1995 and 2010."

Activists in BWI affiliated unions also help women workers to create mutual aid groups that allow them to obtain micro-credit to start small income generating activities.

"These groups have a direct impact on reducing child labour because families are able to allocate more money to the education of their children", says Vidyavati, an activist who has created mutual aid groups in the Nagla Banjara region of Uttar Pradesh.

These groups also have awareness raising sessions about children's rights and the usefulness of trade unions and sometimes lead members to participate in mass mobilisations, for example, demonstrations against child labour.

Collective bargaining with the employers' federation

The fight against child labour does not provoke direct confrontation with the employers. As pay depends on the number of bricks produced, employers are not particularly interested in including children within their workforce, especially because they risk prosecution. The BWI has negotiated an agreement with the All India Bricks and Tiles Manufacturers Federation⁴⁾ that includes several substantial advances, including an employer commitment to ban child labour in the sector and to cooperate with campaigns seeking to promote the establishment of educational infrastructure within or near to the brickworks (through government programmes).

"If there are no schools near the brick kilns, we ask the employer to make available a place where the children can have lessons from a private teacher or older children. These are local arrangements and the families sometimes club together to set them up", explains Akwinda Kaur, the BMS union secretary.

The success of this project has encouraged the BWI to go further and negotiate agreements with local authorities and employers to decree villages and brickworks as "child labour free zones" (see box on page 40). By the end of 2009, there were 95 such villages and 614 "child labour free" brick kilns. Union members check compliance with these commitments and ensure that all the children are enrolled at school. This requires regular monitoring because a large proportion of those employed in the brickworks is composed of internal and seasonal migrants and it is therefore sometimes necessary to begin some or all awareness raising activities every year.

Extension of the project to Nepal

The BWI has extended its project to fight child labour to Nepal, where its two affiliates, CUPPEC⁵⁾ and CAWUN⁶⁾ manage three schools with a total of 189 pupils (94 girls). CAWUN has established a primary school in one of the 14 brick kilns at Sudal, in the Bhaktapur region.

"We had 1900 members in the Bhaktapur district when we opened the school in January 2008. It has helped us recruit between 200 and 400 new members every month because the workers can see that we are providing direct practical help", explains Rajendra Kumar Baniya, CAWUN's general secretary.

3) Uttar Pradesh Gramin Mazdoor Sangthan

4) The All India Bricks and Tiles Manufacturers Federation represents about 35,000 brick kilns employing seven million people.

5) Central Union of Painters, Plumbers, Electro and Construction Workers

6) Construction & Allied Workers Union of Nepal.

“About half of those employed in the Sudal brick-works are migrants from other parts of Nepal. Their children can attend classes in our school and then take their exams at schools in their home area. 85% of migrant pupils passed their exams last year.”

As in India, Nepalese union activists must sometimes return several times to the homes of parents to persuade them of the usefulness of education. Workers who already send their children to school sometimes persuade the other workers. The gradual unionisation of Sudal’s workers is making it possible for them to negotiate better pay and this compensates for the reduction in income caused by their children stopping work.



Minbahadur Thapa (right), a worker in a brick kiln of Sudal (Nepal), is delighted that his nine years old daughter won’t have to work with him anymore: *“When I work with my wife, I manage to produce 1,000 bricks during an 11 hour day, but if I am helped by one of my daughters, we can make 150 more. However, last year, the union managed to increase wages from 270 to 410 Nepalese rupees (3.70 to 4.2 Euros) for 1,000 bricks. This increase in my family income convinced me to let my daughter attend classes at the CAWUN school.”*

Si Schaman, 14, is doing well and has reached the ninth grade. He owes this in part to the union activists who persuaded his parents to let him go to school.

“I began to work with my parents at the brickworks at the age of five. My job was to prepare the earth placed in the moulds that my parents used to make the bricks. This was very hard work during the winter because the water I had to use was cold. I worked from 8am to 12pm and then for another two hours in the afternoon. I used to see the other children going to school pass close by and I wanted to do the same but my parents did not realise the importance of education. I worked like this for two years until we were visited by two of the teachers at the nearby school managed by the UPGMS union in Fatehabad, Uttar Pradesh. They conducted an investigation into the brick kilns. They often came to talk with my parents and eventually persuaded them to send me to school. I went to the UPGMS school until the fifth grade, then I went to a state school. I like going to school, I think I am further ahead than the others because I’m getting an education. At home, I read the paper to my parents and I can help them with arithmetic if they have a problem.”

“When I work with my wife, I produce 1000 bricks during an 11 hour working day but if I have the help of one of my daughters, aged nine, we can make another 150”, said Minbahadur Thapa, a worker in Sudal.

“Last year, the union managed to negotiate a pay rise that increased the rate for each 1000 bricks from 270 to 410 Nepalese rupees (between \$3.7 and 5.7). This increase in family income finally persuaded me to let my daughter attend the CAWUN school.”

“Our project shows that education and awareness raising are the most important aspects of the fight against child labour. They are even more important than the fight against poverty.”

J.L. Srivastava BWI child labour project coordinator in India.

Withdrawing children from work increases decent work opportunities for adults

In Andhra Pradesh (India), the withdrawal of child labour from cottonseed production has had a positive impact on the wages and working conditions of adult labourers. It has also created additional employment opportunities for adults and this has in turn given adults greater bargaining power¹.

In India, the majority of workers in the hybrid cottonseed production industry are children, particularly girls. No other industry in India has such a high proportion of child labour in its workforce. In 2001, nearly 250,000 children were employed in cottonseed farms in the state of Andhra Pradesh, which is the main centre for cottonseed production in India. Children accounted for nearly 90% of the total labour force on those farms². In 2007, nearly 416,460 children under the age of 18, the majority of them (54%) younger than 14, were employed on cottonseed farms in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Karnataka states, which account for nearly 92% of the total production area in India³.

In cottonseed production, cross pollination (hybridisation) is the main activity and is done manually. This activity alone absorbs 90% of the total labour used in seed cultivation. Children are mainly employed in this activity. They are made to work long hours (10–12 hours a day) and are paid less than market and official minimum wages. They are also exposed to large quantities of poisonous pesticides and are often trafficked as migrants from other places.

The exploitation of child labour on cottonseed farms is linked to larger market forces. Several large-scale national and multinational seed companies, which produce and market the seeds, are involved in perpetuating the problem of child labour. Cottonseed production is carried out through contract farming. Companies depend upon local farmers for seed production. They make seed buy-back arrangements with local farmers through middlemen called 'seed organizers'. Although seed companies are not directly involved in the production process, they exert substantial control over farmers and the production process by supplying foundation seed, advancing production capital, fixing prices and stipulating quality controls.

Local seed farmers employ children on long-term contracts involving the payment of advances on wages and loans to their parents. The farmers employ children primarily in order to minimize costs. In cottonseed production, labour costs account for about 50% of total cultivation costs. Farmers endeavour to cut these labour costs by hiring children because the wages paid to children are far below both the market wages for adults in other agricultural field work and even further below official minimum wages. They also hire children in preference to adults because farmers can

squeeze out higher productivity from children. Children will work longer hours, will work much more intensively and are generally much easier to control than adult workers⁴.

A study commissioned this year by the India Committee of Netherlands and FNV Mondiaal has been comparing the changes to adult wages and working conditions when children are withdrawn from the labour force in the hybrid cottonseed sector in Andhra Pradesh. The study was carried out in four villages. Prior to 2005, many child labourers worked on the seed farms in these villages. In the two villages that were left to continue as normal (Umityala and Nandinne), the child labour situation has remained almost unchanged since 2005. But in the other two (Narsipalle and Padigapadu), there was a fall of more than 90% in the number of children working between 2005 and 2009 following:

- a) Social mobilisation in favour of children's education and against child labour by civil society organisations such as the MV Foundation (MVF). With the support of FNV, one of the actions of the MVF has been to form Child Rights Protection Forums (CRPFs) with local youth, and Joint Action Committees consisting of representatives of trade unions, teachers and CRPF members. With the help of these agencies, MVF has organised a large scale campaign against child labour with a focus on cottonseed production.
- b) Proactive measures by the government of Andhra Pradesh, such as law enforcement (taking action against the employers of children), creating "bridge course centres", constructing new schools and upgrading other schools, and extending the midday meal scheme from primary to secondary school level.
- c) The initiatives of some seed companies such as Monsanto and Bayer. They have been implementing an action plan that includes publicity campaigns, price incentives to growers for not employing children, disincentives like blacklisting farmers who use child labour and the creation of separate schools to rehabilitate former child workers. The initiatives undertaken by

1) This article is a summary of a study commissioned this year by the India Committee of Netherlands and FNV Mondiaal to compare the changes in the wages and working conditions for adults when children are withdrawn from labour force in the hybrid cottonseed sector in Andhra Pradesh. The original study, "No Child Labour – Better Wages", was written by Davuluri Venkateswarlu and RVSS Ramakrishna and is available at http://www.fnvmondiaal.nl/kinderarbeid/algemeen/no_child_labour_better_wages.asp

2) Venkateswarlu, Davuluri (2001) "Seeds of Bondage: Female Child Bonded Labour in Hybrid Cottonseed Production in Andhra Pradesh", Business and Community Foundation and Plan International (full report available at <http://www.indianet.nl/sob.html>).

3) Venkateswarlu, Davuluri (2007), "Child Bondage continues in India cotton supply chain", study commissioned by India Committee of the Netherlands, ILRF, DWHH, OECD Watch (full report available at www.indianet.nl/pdf/childbondagecotton.pdf).

4) Venkateswarlu, Davuluri and Lucia da Corta (2005) "The Price of Childhood: On the Link between Prices Paid to Farmers and the use of Child Labour in Cottonseed Production in Andhra Pradesh, India", published by the India Committee of the Netherlands, International Labour Rights Fund and Eine Welt Netz NRW (full report available at http://www.indianet.nl/PriceOf-Childhood2005_Final.pdf).

these companies have had some positive impact in reducing the numbers of working children but due to their limited geographical coverage, their efforts have had a minimal impact on the overall extent of child labour in the industry.

The massive reduction of child labour has an impact on the wages of adults

The study found that changes in the incidence of child labour have a direct bearing on the wages of adults. In the two villages where interventions were made, it was found that average daily wages for adults in cottonseed farms increased by 151.9% between 2005 and 2009, compared to a 52.8% increase in the other villages during the same period.

The impact of withdrawing children from the seed farms has not been limited to this sector alone. Its impact is observed on the wages in other agriculture activities, including activities which were not using child labour extensively, where wages are somewhat higher compared with wages in cotton seed. In the villages where interventions were made, wage rates increased by 131% for female adult workers and 105% for male adult workers between 2005 and 2009, compared to 51% and 56% respectively in the other villages. The gap between wage rates for cottonseed and other agricultural operations has fallen in the "intervention" villages because of the scarcity of labour caused by the withdrawal of children from the labour force. In other villages, the wage gap between cotton and non cottonseed activities persists.

Labour arrangements and working conditions

Seasonal agreements with the labourers to pay advances/loans is a common practice followed by seed farmers in all cottonseed production locations. Cottonseed production requires assured supply of labour for carrying out various activities. The seed producers therefore prefer to make

advance agreements with labourers before starting seed cultivation. They employ workers on long term contracts and pay advances/loans to them. Advances/loans are used by the employers as a means to retain workers and curtail their freedom and mobility. Although this system is still prevalent in all villages in the study, some favourable changes in terms and conditions were found in the "intervention" villages. Some farmers used to charge interest on advance payments. This is now rare in "intervention" villages although it is still a common practice in the other villages.

The scarcity of labour due to the withdrawal of children from the labour market has improved the bargaining power of adult workers and improved wages and working conditions in "intervention" villages. Workers are now demanding higher advance payments and additional facilities at workplaces. In 2005, farmers used to pay 30 % to 60 % of the monthly salary as an advance. Now the workers are demanding a minimum of one month salary as an advance. Moreover, and despite the payment of advances, workers are not hesitating to leave the employers in the middle of the season if they find better wages and opportunities elsewhere. A farmer in Nasipalli village said: "Labourers used to be after us and now we are after them".

To sum up, the withdrawal of child labour from the workforce had a positive impact on the wages and working conditions of adult labourers. The removal of children from the workforce created additional employment opportunities for adults and increased the demand for them. This has in turn increased the bargaining power of adults when negotiating for better wages and working conditions. The substantial rise in wage rates and improved working conditions for adult workers in the areas where children are withdrawn from labour market compared to areas where children constitute a significant proportion of the workforce clearly supports the argument that the presence of child labour reduces the bargaining power of adult workers and keeps wages down.

IPEC shows the way in Karnataka

Since 2006, an IPEC programme¹⁾ in the Indian state of Karnataka has resulted in the withdrawal of 6,500 children from work and their enrolment at schools. The creation of mutual aid groups by mothers, the involvement of social partners in awareness raising activities on child labour and technological progress in small-scale industry are some of the elements that have led to the success of this programme.

One of the key points of the IPEC programme in Karnataka is support for the creation of mutual aid groups for mothers with children who are either at work or at risk of dropping out of school. These groups provide their members with access to micro-credit, which allows them to embark on income generating activities (making candles, soap, saris, etc.). IPEC's partner NGOs also help them by conducting small market research studies and offering vocational training.

"This increase in income increases the women's decision making powers within the family; they generally use this money for what they judge to be essentials, such as the education of their children. Access to micro-credit also allows them to avoid borrowing from private money lenders for urgent needs, which can lead them and their children into debt bondage", explains Gita Suresh, one of the IPEC programme associates.

More than 7,000 mothers have joined mutual aid groups in the project areas of the Karnataka Child Labour Project of the ILO. They also attend awareness raising programmes about child labour, children's rights and workers' rights. They then monitor the use of child labour in their villages and try to persuade every family to send their children to school. The programme also helps women to gain access to Indian government social programmes in Karnataka, which are not always known to the population.

The IPEC programme in Karnataka covers many aspects of the prevention and elimination of child labour. One of the essential components is to raise awareness among the public. This is done through the wide distribution of posters in public places, video clips at cinemas, street theatre, etc. Part of this awareness raising is carried out by NGOs and INTUC²⁾ and HMS³⁾ trade unions, which have trained hundreds of trade union activists on the issue. These activists have passed on the information to colleagues at their workplaces or at local union meetings.

"Our activists report cases of child labour to us, we can then intervene, explain about the government programmes available, contact the local authorities to organise the withdrawal of children from work and enrolment at a school", explains Srini-vasa Murthy of HMS. *"Our cooperation with IPEC has led us to prioritise the issue of child labour in the trade union agenda, which was not previously the case",* adds Shantha Kumar of INTUC.

HMS estimates it recruited 10,000 new members and INTUC estimates it recruited 21,000 members in the agriculture and construction sectors during the 18 months they participated in the programme.

"Thanks to this project, we have been able to unionise workers in the informal economy, which is usually very difficult to do," highlights N.M. Adyanthaya, INTUC Vice-president and the ILO Governing Body's Workers' Group spokesperson on the IPEC Steering Committee.

By joining the union, workers in the informal economy obtain access to social security payments more easily, which gives them confidence and encourages them to withdraw their children from work.

"We have also been able to persuade the villagers that it is not in their children's best interests to send them away to work as migrant labourers," adds N.M. Adyanthaya.

The IPEC programme also works with Indian employers to eradicate child labour. A Voluntary Code of Business Practices has been adopted by the Karnataka Employers Association in order to prevent child labour. Several partnerships have also been developed at the local level. For example, a study conducted in Chamarajnagar district in 2007 by the TECSOK consultancy⁴⁾ showed a significant presence of children in the traditional silk industry, especially in reeling and twisting. Production is characterised by very limited use of technology, homeworking, lack of regulations and low incomes. This sector is also very labour intensive. An Indian NGO, MYRADA, implemented an IPEC project in about one hundred production units in 2008 and 2009. The aim was to help employers invest in motorised charakas⁵⁾ (especially through the creation of mutual aid groups that can facilitate access to credit) while raising their awareness about child labour. This change to motorised from manual charakas increased productivity by 10% to 20%, increased net revenue and eliminated child labour. A total of 110 children were withdrawn from 100 production units and enrolled at school.

1) International Labour Organisation's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour.

2) Indian National Trade Union Congress.

3) Hind Mazdoor Sabha.

4) <http://www.tecsok.com/>

5) Machine for unwinding silk.

Cambodia

Commercial pressures can reduce child labour

Clauses in trade agreements can lead to an improvement in working conditions and a reduction of child labour, as in Cambodia, where United States commercial pressure has contributed to the implementation of an ILO factory inspection system in the clothing industry.

The clothing industry generates about 70% of Cambodia's export revenue¹. It employs approximately 280,000 people, many of whom are young women from rural regions. In January 1999, the United States and Cambodia signed a trade agreement with the aim of improving working conditions in the sector. It made annual increases in Cambodia's export quota of clothes to the United States dependent on compliance with employment legislation and international labour standards. Since 2001, an ILO project called Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) has prepared reports twice a year on respect for these criteria. ILO teams of inspectors make unannounced visits to companies and check working conditions against a list of more than 500 criteria, including child labour.

Inspectors interview employers, trade union representatives and workers. They also meet workers away from the factories in order to prevent undue influence by managers. On the issue of child labour, the ILO inspectors make visual checks during their visits and also check company employment records. If they suspect that workers are not of legal age, they conduct a detailed examination of the employment documents and may also visit the place of birth to check administrative documents. It is not easy to make these checks because birth registration is not yet universal and identity documents are easily falsified. Some employers claim in good faith that they have a policy of not employing under-age workers but that they are deceived by falsified identity documents.

If it transpires that one of the approximately 240 companies participating in this inspection system has employed children under 15 years of age, a protocol signed by the Ministry of Labour, the employers' association GMAC² and the BFC provides for cooperation to find the best possible solution for the children. The children must be withdrawn from the workplace but the employer must continue to pay them their wage until they are 15 years old. During this period, the children can follow a vocational training or basic education course and when they reach the age of 15, they can return to their job under the specific conditions set down in Cambodian law for workers under 18 years of age. If employers refuse to follow these procedures, cases are referred to the Ministry of Labour.

Monitoring by ILO inspectors has continued since the end of the quota system, especially because the major interna-

tional brand names that import Cambodian clothes have publicly insisted on the importance of working conditions in supplier countries.

"We have been able to stop monitoring Cambodian suppliers because we are confident in the system put in place by the BFC," says Vannchhai Leng, GAP manager in Cambodia.

Moreover, all interested parties in Cambodia recognise the BFC has contributed to improving working conditions and reducing the number of violations of trade union rights in the factories. Although the ILO estimates that more than 1.5 million children work in Cambodia³, the monitoring system has contributed to a very pronounced reduction in the number of children under the age of 15 working in clothing factories. The most recent BFC reports indicated that very few children are now employed in the sector⁴.

Cambodians who knew the clothing factories before the start of the ILO inspections testify to a reduction of child labour in these factories, even though their number was never as high as in other sectors. Chhorn Sokha, former leader of the CCAWDU⁵:

"Between 1994 and 1998, I worked in a clothing factory in the Phnom Penh region, employing around 1,200 workers. About 40 or 50 workers were only 14 or 15 years old but they had false identity documents stating that they were 18."

Ath Thorn, CLC⁶ president confirms this state of affairs:

"Before 2001, many factories in the clothing industry employed children. I worked in a factory myself and it was clear that some of the other workers were under the age of 15. The Better Factories Cambodia programme and trade union pressures have led to a major reduction in the number of children employed in the factories inspected by the ILO, but child labour is more of a problem at subcontractors."

Noun Rithy, ex-coordinator of the ILO workers' education project, emphasises that there has been widespread realisation of the importance of this issue.

"When I joined the ILO in 1998, there were many children working in the clothing industry. The Better Factories Cambodia programme has made a big impact on employers, workers and the general public. Before this programme, people were not concerned about the situation of working children."

1) ILO, Better Factories Cambodia, "Cambodia's Garment Industry Struggles in the Face of the Global Economic Downturn", March 2010.

2) Garment Manufacturers' Association in Cambodia.

3) ILO, Better Factories Cambodia, "Give Children a Chance: End Child Labour!", March 2010.

4) BFC reports can be consulted at <http://www.betterfactories.org/>

5) Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers' Democratic Unions.

6) Cambodian Labour Confederation.

Nobody mentioned anything about it, not even within the trade unions. The general public did not distinguish between children who go to school and are then able to help their parents in their work and full-time child workers who are deprived of an education. However, the Better Factories Cambodia programme, IPEC⁷⁾, social partners, the government and the codes of conduct introduced

by the main companies have all contributed to a gradual raising of awareness. Employers of domestic workers now pay attention to the age of the children brought from rural areas and customers in restaurants ask questions if they see that children are working in the establishment.”

⁷⁾ International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO).



Tanzania

Trade union rescues more than 6,000 child domestic workers

A Tanzanian trade union is combining public education campaigns with union action to combat one of the most hidden forms of child labour – domestic work. This struggle has enhanced its credibility and reputation. It has also contributed to the introduction of legislation to regulate the sector.

In Tanzania, as in so many countries of the world, domestic work is one of the main tasks imposed on children, especially girls. Tens of thousands of girls, sometimes as young as five or six, are exploited in this way. Most of them are brought to town by people who have gained the trust of the family by promising to pay a wage and enrol the child at school. The reality is often very different. Many employers take advantage of the isolation and age of these children to inflict all kinds of abuse on them: extremely long working hours (sometimes as much as 18 hours a day), accommodation in very poor conditions (for example, even on the kitchen floor), revolting food, blows and insults. Tanzanian child domestic workers are never paid more than \$12 per month even though the minimum wage for this type of work is \$48 per month. In many cases, employers do not even pay the wages or pay them several months late.

Trade unions find that girl domestic workers are particularly difficult to organise because they work as individuals and in private houses. However, the trade union CHODAWU¹⁾ has taken on the task of helping them and of fighting the employment of child domestic workers. Its action against child labour takes two forms: first, it tries to prevent child labour and second, it tries to rescue child workers and enrol them at school. The union begins by creating committees against child labour in each area covered by the programme. Composed of influential people in the local community, such as teachers and civil servants, their main role is to identify child domestic workers by observing what is going on in the neighbourhood, talking with residents and maintaining contact with local associations and authorities.

“Our visits always have a positive effect”

If a case of child labour comes to the committee’s attention, it sends a delegation to try and make the employer understand the harm done by the exploitation of child domestic workers and to persuade the employer that children belong at school.

“In order to ‘open the doors’, respected figures in the neighbourhood, for example, a senior administration official, form part of the delegation,” explains Leah Medard, a CHODAWU activist, in the Kawe neighbourhood of Kinondoni district, Dar es Salaam.

“If we do in fact identify someone who is employing a child, we try to make that person understand by explaining that even though the employment of minors is illegal, we do not want to punish employers, we simply want to help the children. We usually succeed in persuading employers of the importance of children’s rights, but in some cases, that is impossible: the door remains closed, security guards prevent us from entering the premises or we are told that the child is a niece or a cousin. But our visits always have a positive effect. Even if employers refuse to release a child, they feel they are being watched by the community and they don’t treat the child as badly.”

Given the extent of the exploitation of child domestic workers in Tanzania, CHODAWU prefers to dialogue with employers rather than threaten them with legal action.

“It would be difficult to punish everybody because in my neighbourhood alone, for example, there are between 50,000 and 100,000 employers,” says Edmund Mapunda, a member of the child labour committee and a local administration officer in the Mazizini neighbourhood, Ilala district, Dar es Salaam.

The union only contacts the police when the worst types of abuse are uncovered, for example, sexual harassment. In other cases, CHODAWU does everything possible to persuade the employer to send the child to school or to allow the child to follow a vocational training course at one of the union apprenticeship centres.

“Children who want to return to their village are in a minority”, notes Silpha Kapinga, coordinator of CHODAWU action on child labour. “Living conditions are even more difficult than in towns: drought, lack of food, drinking water sources are far away, the heat, etc. In 2009, we only took 100 children back to their regions of origin; these were children who had no family in Dar es Salaam or who did not like the town.”

Avoid going to court

Since the union was created in 1995, CHODAWU has rescued more than 6,000 children from domestic work. Public education campaigns organised through the media and in the home villages of the children have prevented

1) Conservation, Hotel, Domestic and Allied Workers’ Union.

the recruitment of thousands of others. CHODAWU activists have found that it has become difficult to recruit child domestic workers in the villages where they have organised these campaigns. The union has also persuaded the local authorities to issue municipal orders to punish employers and also the parents and intermediaries who take children to town to put them into domestic work.

“Enforcement of these orders is good because they are widely publicised in rural communities. Punishment may be a fine, payment of a goat or a chicken, etc” says Vicky Kanyoka, IUF²⁾ coordinator for Africa.

Such orders allow the guilty to be punished without having to go through long procedures in the courts.

CHODAWU leaders recognize that their initiatives against child labour have not led to the recruitment of many new members among adult domestic workers.

“In general, women domestic workers do not contact us unless they have a problem”, notes Towegale Kiwanga, CHODAWU general secretary.

Neither does the rescue of child domestic workers create many jobs for adults because employers are generally quite poor themselves and most of them do not have the means to pay the full rate for an adult domestic worker.

However, the fight against child labour has improved CHODAWU’s public image and allowed it to organise effective lobbying of the government. For example, it has won legal recognition of women domestic workers as workers and benefits such as a minimum wage, maternity rights and annual holidays. Its education campaigns have also led the general public to realise that the employment of children as domestic workers constitutes serious exploitation and should not therefore be seen as helping poor families by arranging for them to have one less mouth to feed.

“Eventually, if we manage to achieve a big reduction in the number of child domestic workers, we will be able to negotiate improved pay for adults and we will be in a better position to back up our members”, concludes Towegale Kiwanga.

“We have gained in dignity”

Pauline Charles, 19, used to be a child domestic worker. She has now started a small independent dressmaking business after receiving training from CHODAWU.

“I began to work as a domestic worker in 2005, at the age of 14, after my seventh year of school. I worked for a family of four. I got up every morning at 4am and I worked till 11pm or midnight for \$13 per month. I heard about the training opportunities offered by CHODAWU. At first, my employer did not want to let me go to the dressmaking course but he later agreed. I attended the CHODAWU course from 8am to 12pm. He became more severe and shouted at me more because he claimed I was spending too much time on the training course. I left him and went to live with a friend during the six months training course.

Thanks to the small amount of money that I was able to save while I was working, in 2008 I bought a sewing machine and rented a room in order to start a small dressmaking business. I got together with a friend of mine, Rhoda, who was also a child domestic worker and who was also on the CHODAWU course. Our income barely covers our expenditure and food needs, but we earn more than when we were domestic workers. We have also gained in dignity: we do not have to suffer the moods of our employers any longer, we are free to do what we want with our time, to go to church or elsewhere.”



2) International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations, to which CHODAWU is affiliated.

Morocco and Albania

The fight against child labour depends on schools

Keeping children at school is the best way to prevent them being exploited at work. In Albania and Morocco, projects run by teachers' unions and supported by the FNV have allowed hundreds of children to enrol or stay on at school.

Teachers have a key role to play in preventing child labour. Teachers notice the first signs of disengagement that very often leads to children dropping out of school and going to work. In Albania, one of the poorest countries in Europe, a project organised by the teachers' unions FSASH¹⁾ and SPASH²⁾ shows that if teachers are motivated, they can persuade even the most disadvantaged children to come to school. The project covers 20 schools in four districts.

"We began by educating the teachers about the dangers of dropping out and child labour. Then we set up a group of teachers and pupils at each school who were prepared to do something to stop children dropping out," explains Stavri Liko, FSASH general secretary.

"When a child stops attending school, the teachers visit the parents and ask them why this is happening. They try to find a solution together and to persuade them of the importance of education for the future of both the child and the family."

The teachers must sometimes visit the family several times in order to persuade them to send the child back to school, but their moral authority in society helps to convince the parents.

"We have to spend time with the families and try to understand their problems and why they sometimes have reservations about the education system," explains Dilaver Lena, a teacher in the suburbs of Tirana.

"Some parents are from the north-east of Albania, a region where many people believe that girls should stop going to school when they reach adolescence and begin to mature physically. They stop sending their daughters to school, arguing that the journey is not safe, but they are really only making excuses. If they really have fears about their children's safety, we try to organise things so that a small group of pupils who live in the same area can go to school together. I can also ask a representative of the authorities to come with me on my next visit to the parents in order to reassure them and to guarantee a police presence on their route to school."

1) Albanian Trade Union Federation of Science Teachers

2) Albanian Independent Trade Union of Teachers

A special focus on Roma children

The project pays particular attention to Roma families. Many Roma parents did not themselves stay at school for long and have very little understanding of the opportunities offered by education. They are often financially worse off than other Albanians, to such an extent that they may not always be able to clothe their children appropriately. They are sometimes afraid that the other children will laugh at their children when they go to school. The teachers do not have the resources to support poor parents financially, but they can help them, for example, by providing them with schoolbooks kept from previous years. The teachers' unions also encourage their members to ask their pupils to give Roma children a friendly welcome when they come to school.

Since the beginning of the project in 2006, FSASH and SPASH have managed to bring back to school 600 of the 2,170 children who had dropped out. They have also prevented more than 1,800 at risk children from dropping out.

"The dropout rate falls by at least 30% at the schools covered by this project," says Stavri Liko.

"The same is true in the Roma community. One of the schools covered by our project is at Levani, in the district of Fieri. When the school year began in September 2009, the teachers identified 94 pupils who were at risk of dropping out, almost all were children in the Roma community. The project has paid a lot of attention to these children: regular meetings with their parents, the Roma Association and the local authorities; the organisation of sporting and cultural activities, and so on. In June 2010, 56 of the 94 pupils were completely integrated at school and no longer presented any risk of dropping out, 22 were sometimes absent and 16 were absent for long periods."

The trade unions FSASH and SPASH note that the action against child labour makes the teachers feel very proud and motivated and strengthens their relationship with the trade union movement. The success of their project has made other teachers want to join the fight against child labour. In addition to the 570 teachers currently participating in this kind of action in the 20 schools covered by the project, the unions have persuaded approximately 1,000 teachers to act in the same way throughout the country.

Moroccan teachers organise

Many other teachers' unions are organising throughout the world to fight child labour. For example, since 2004 the national teachers union in Morocco, the *Syndicat national des enseignants* (SNE), has run a programme to try and stop children dropping out of school. It first focused on five

primary schools in the poorest neighbourhoods of the city of Fès. This initiative was successful so it extended the project to four other regions in Morocco.

As in Albania, the SNE persuades teachers and school managers to contact the parents of children who have stopped going to school. They are willing to visit the parents at their home several times. When absolutely necessary, the union offers material aid to the poorest children, for example, schoolbooks, clothing and spectacles. Many Moroccan schoolchildren drop out of school because problems with their eyesight prevents them from reading the blackboard. Their parents do not have enough money to buy spectacles for them. The authorities make provision for the distribution of spectacles but, in practice, they do not seem to have enough pairs of spectacles available.

The SNE does all it can to make the schools more attractive for the children: building refurbishments, clean playgrounds, new libraries, cultural and sporting activities, school trips... The programme also provides support classes for children having difficulty with their lessons.

"This is important because parents tend to stop sending them if their children do not get good marks at school", emphasises Abdelaziz Moun-tassir, SNE vice president.

"Their own ignorance makes them question the wisdom of spending money on education."

One of the programme's priorities is to change the attitude of teachers towards their pupils.

"Corporal punishment is still inflicted on pupils at some schools", explains Abdelaziz Moun-tassir. "Some children hate school because the teachers hit them and these children are at risk of dropping out of school. We propose training sessions for teachers to try and change their practices. This includes raising their awareness about children's rights. At the beginning of the programme, the teachers had no understanding of children's rights."

"They were unaware of international conventions and Moroccan legislation on the subject. We also organise awareness raising workshops on these issues for parents."

The SNE programme also tries to improve communication between parents, teachers and school management.

"Every month, the teachers invite the parents to discuss the problems of their children at school or at home," explains El Kasboui Boushat, director of the Al Quods School.

"They try to get to the heart of the issues. For example, if a child is always late or does not do their homework, this might be due to a problem of domestic violence that the child dare not talk about. Moreover, between 70% and 80% of parents of children at the school are illiterate and do not understand the need to support their child's learning at home. When I feel it is necessary, I call parents into my office to remind them of the need to encourage their children to do their homework."

Spectacular results

All the schools that participate in the programme have experienced a spectacular reduction in the number of children dropping out at the primary level. For example, from 160 in 2004 to 18 in 2009 at the 18 Novembre School and from 34 in 2004 to 9 in 2009 at the Al Quods School. At the beginning of the school year in September 2010, the number of children dropping out of school had fallen by about 50% at the Hay Chouhada and Imame Ghazali 1 schools in comparison to 2005³⁾. Participating schools have also noted an increase in enrolment numbers, sometimes to the detriment of other schools in the same area.

3) The number of children dropping out fell from 34 in 2005 to 18 in 2010 at the Hay Chouhada Primary School and from 23 to 12 at the Imame Ghazali 1 Primary School.



The project has also allowed the SNE to recruit new members and improve its image. The SNE explains that the number of union members has risen from 34 to 41 at Hay Chouhada School and from 21 to 29 at the Al Quods School during the course of the project, from 2003 to 2010.

“The reputation of our union improves among the teachers”, says Abdellah Hijazi, coordinator of the SNE programme at Al Quods School.

“The Moroccan unions have always defended workers’ interests, but they are now seen to be also working for the welfare of the children. That encourages the teachers to join the union.”

The Albanian and Moroccan teachers’ union projects show that with a little imagination and a lot of motivation, it is possible to prevent child labour by persuading parents to send their children to school. The governments must now take responsibility for carrying this work forward because they have the resources to extend this project at the national level. It is encouraging to see that the Moroccan government has adopted an emergency plan to stop children dropping out of school and to note that this plan uses some of the SNE programme guidelines. Finally, the Albanian and Moroccan teachers’ unions have become involved in the creation of “child labour free zones” (see box page 40), which promises further progress in their struggle.



Mohammed is back at school thanks to a trade union programme

The beginning of the school year in September 2009 will always remain engraved on the memory of Mohammed Mofakir, a nine-year-old pupil at the Hay Chouhada Primary School in Fès. A place was waiting for him in class 4 but his parents, beset by serious financial problems, suddenly decided he should stop school and begin work. The SNE programme, which with the support of the FNV tries to keep children in school, took action straightaway.

“As soon as we noticed that this pupil was not attending classes, we asked his friends and neighbours what was the problem”, explains Mohammed Moufid, coordinator of the SNE programme at Hay Chouhada Primary School. “They told us that he was working as an apprentice cobbler. We went to talk to his parents, who told us about their financial problems which were due to the father’s lack of regular employment. We insisted on the importance of education for the future of their child. They said they were aware of this but felt they had no choice. I went to see Mohammed’s parents three times. Finally, in exchange for assistance with school equipment and clothing for their son, they agreed to send him back to school.”

Mohammed Mofakir is very grateful to the SNE teachers. *“My work as an apprentice cobbler was not easy, partly because I had to use glue and the fumes gave me a headache. I worked six days a week, from 9am to 8pm to earn a weekly wage of 50 dirhams (€5). I liked going to school and I missed my friends. I am very happy to be with them again and to be able to continue at school.”*





If all working children were to pronounce their name one at a time, it would take 14 years.

Colombia

“The fight against child labour is a long term investment”

The Colombian trade union CGT uses its contacts in the informal economy to prevent child labour. It helps vulnerable children to improve their school results and behaviour.

According to Colombian government statistics, 786,567 children aged between 5 and 17 had a job outside the home in 2007 and 841,733 other children were working at least 15 hours per week at home. The overwhelming majority were working in the informal economy, a sector in which the Colombian trade union CGT (Confederación General del Trabajo) has been active for decades. The CGT took up the fight against child labour at the beginning of the 1980s. At that time, the union focused more on occupying the children with games while their parents participated in trade union activities, but in doing this, CGT activists learned a lot about the lives and work of the children. Myriam Luz Triana, national finance secretary for the CGT was one of the pioneers of this accompaniment of child workers:

“We gradually brought together a group of about 150 children of union members and the friends of these children. Once a week, we took them to a park opposite the CGT offices in Bogota for a meal and a series of games designed to increase their self esteem and help them understand children’s rights and the harmful effects of child labour.”

The CGT has provided extra-curricular activities to support children at school since 1996. The programme started in Ciudad Bolivar, one of the poorest areas of Bogota, before being extended to Bojaca and Facatativa, two other neighbourhoods in the Colombian capital. CGT activists contact school directors and teachers, ask which children are having problems with their schoolwork, meet them and try to persuade their parents to allow them to attend these activities. They then go on to ask the enrolled pupils if they know children who do not go to school but who would like to join them. The activities include individual assistance with homework and games that make it easier for the children to understand the subject matter. The educators are mainly CGT members and volunteer students.

The CGT organised the school accompaniment project to help children overcome the difficulties they encounter in learning some subjects during normal school hours, which often occurs because the class size prevents teachers from being able to give the weaker students the attention they need. The level of education achieved by the parents is another obstacle.

“I wanted my son to participate in the CGT activities because he was not doing very well at school, partly because nobody at home was able to help him with his homework”, explains Gloria, 38, a resident of Ciudad Bolivar. “I would like to help him, but I didn’t even get as far as secondary school. His school results have improved a lot since the CGT educators started helping him. He is also able to learn how to use the Internet at the CGT centre, which is impossible elsewhere.”

Improvements in the children’s behaviour

In addition to improvements in school results, participation in these programmes often has other results that parents do not expect, such as better behaviour on the part of their children towards both their family and friends. This improved behaviour is mainly due to the small-scale role play games organised as part of the CGT programme: the children are asked to play the role of their parents and of friends that they have treated badly, and this helps them understand how their behaviour might hurt other people. People from outside the family and school have an important and influential role, all the more so as the activities are conducted in a recreational atmosphere.

“The children are tired of hearing their parents and teachers always saying the same thing. If people from outside the family and school also emphasise the importance of the same things, the children finally understand that they are indeed important. The contribution of the CGT educators is really important because, in addition to helping the children with their studies, they teach them the rules of social behaviour”, explains Gloria, a mother in Facatativa. “The children must arrive on time if they want to participate in the CGT activities. I have noted that my two children have become a lot more punctual in everyday life and that they are more aware of their responsibilities”, adds Wellington, who lives in Bojaca.

Participation in the CGT programme opens the children’s eyes to the promise of the future. Many of them do not imagine they will be able to do anything very interesting when they grow up but the union educators show them that a more disciplined approach makes it possible to achieve things, for example, go to university and get a more interesting job.

“When I was aged between nine and sixteen, it seemed normal to me to combine school and work, It was only when I met the CGT people that I realised that child labour was really something negative”, explains Juan Pablo.

Like six other former child workers, he became so involved in the programmes that he was employed by the CGT.

"I have learned the values of solidarity, mutual aid and equality at the CGT", adds Wellington Triana Marquez, another former child worker who has become CGT youth coordinator. "I learned the value of respecting others because the programme treated all participants as equals in the activities."

"People talk about child labour and children's rights at school but the CGT explain them in a way that makes them easier to understand",

notes Lady Alexandre, 11, who has been attending CGT courses for the last three years in Facatativa. This awareness raising about children's rights is sometimes accompanied by their first steps as a union activist.

"When possible, we take the parents and children to demonstrations such as on 1 May because that opens up new perspectives for them. We also took the children to a demonstration in front of a school in Facatativa to call for an increase in the number of teachers", explains Mercedes Posada, one of the CGT project managers.

Avoiding bad company

Even though the great majority of the children that benefit from these projects attend school for part of the day, the CGT explains that the projects fight child labour by occupying the children during the rest of the day, when their parents are at work and cannot keep an eye on them. Keeping bad company, for example, joining gangs, and drug taking often leads children to drop out of school. They may then move quickly into crime or find they need to work full time (see box on the next page).

"I like to know that my child is not hanging about in the street after school. I can see a difference between him and other children who do not participate in the programme. They talk differently and they often swear", says Gloria, from Facatativa.

Sometimes, the CGT programme is not enough to improve school results, but attendance may encourage children to continue going to school.

"Some children in my class go to the CGT courses on Friday afternoon but their extremely difficult financial situation has a negative impact on their schooling", explains Nuri Guzman, a teacher at the Nuestra Señora de Gracia School in Bojaca.

"For example, we have a 13-year-old boy called Bryan whose nutrition suffers because the family is so poor. One day, he had some homework that consisted of cutting out a drawing on a sheet of paper. The other children distracted him and the paper was torn. He could not do his homework because he didn't even have another sheet of

paper at home. His school results have not improved but he would have stopped coming to school if it were not for the fact that he attends the Friday afternoon class. Some children are given a meal at school for a small fee, but not all the parents can afford it and the system does not operate during the holidays."

The CGT estimates that 5,000 children have so far participated in these programmes.

"But when we conduct awareness raising sessions in the schools, we reach even more people", explains Myriam Luz: "The teachers and children pass on what we tell them to their community, even though they do not all participate in our school support programmes."

In addition, the CGT keeps the issue of child labour on the agenda of the dozens of trade unions it has formed in the informal sector.

The CGT also facilitates adult access to vocational training courses, in cooperation with the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA), which is under the Ministry for Social Welfare. Union activists sometimes use these courses to raise the awareness of parents about the dangers of child labour.

"The government thinks that enforcement of the law against child labour is effective, but we prefer to focus on dialogue, on educating parents about the importance of sending their children to school", explains Nuri Guzman.

Public recognition of the value of trade unions

Although the CGT's fight against child labour has not led to the recruitment of new members, it has achieved its objective of fulfilling its duty to society.

"The work brings us recognition, including from the non trade union community, from the families", stresses the CGT general secretary, Julio Roberto Gomez Esguerra. "This improvement in the CGT's image is a long term investment, a seed that can grow. Some union leaders think that child labour is an inevitable part of the world today and that nothing can be done about it. Many trade unionists believe that the fight against child labour is "not worth it" from the political point of view. However, we think it is a clear priority. Moreover, we do not limit ourselves to combating the worst forms of child labour. No form of child labour is acceptable. All you have to do is think about it. The countries that do not get involved in this issue are neglecting the future of their society."

Myriam Luz emphasises that the recruitment of new members was not the objective of the campaign against child labour.

“Perhaps we are making a mistake by not focusing more on ourselves but the most important thing is the children. Parents have been incredibly grateful because they understand that the CGT sees its role is broader than the usual union activities and they talk about it to other workers. They understand that our union believes it is not fighting child labour because it is fashionable and they know we will carry on with or without international financial support. The people who live in Ciudad Bolivar were surprised that we continued with our work there because they are used to seeing ‘charitable’ organisations provide them with help for their own political reasons and then leave after the elections.”

The CGT programme proves that it is not always necessary to resort to sanctions by the authorities nor to achieve significant increases in family income in order to prevent child labour. Trade unionists can build relations of trust with the parents through permanent dialogue and providing practical help for the children. Workers who did not previously think the education of their children was a priority may now rapidly change their opinion and agree to make sacrifices in order to provide their children with a basic education.

“If I had known about the CGT when I was 14, I would not have joined a gang”

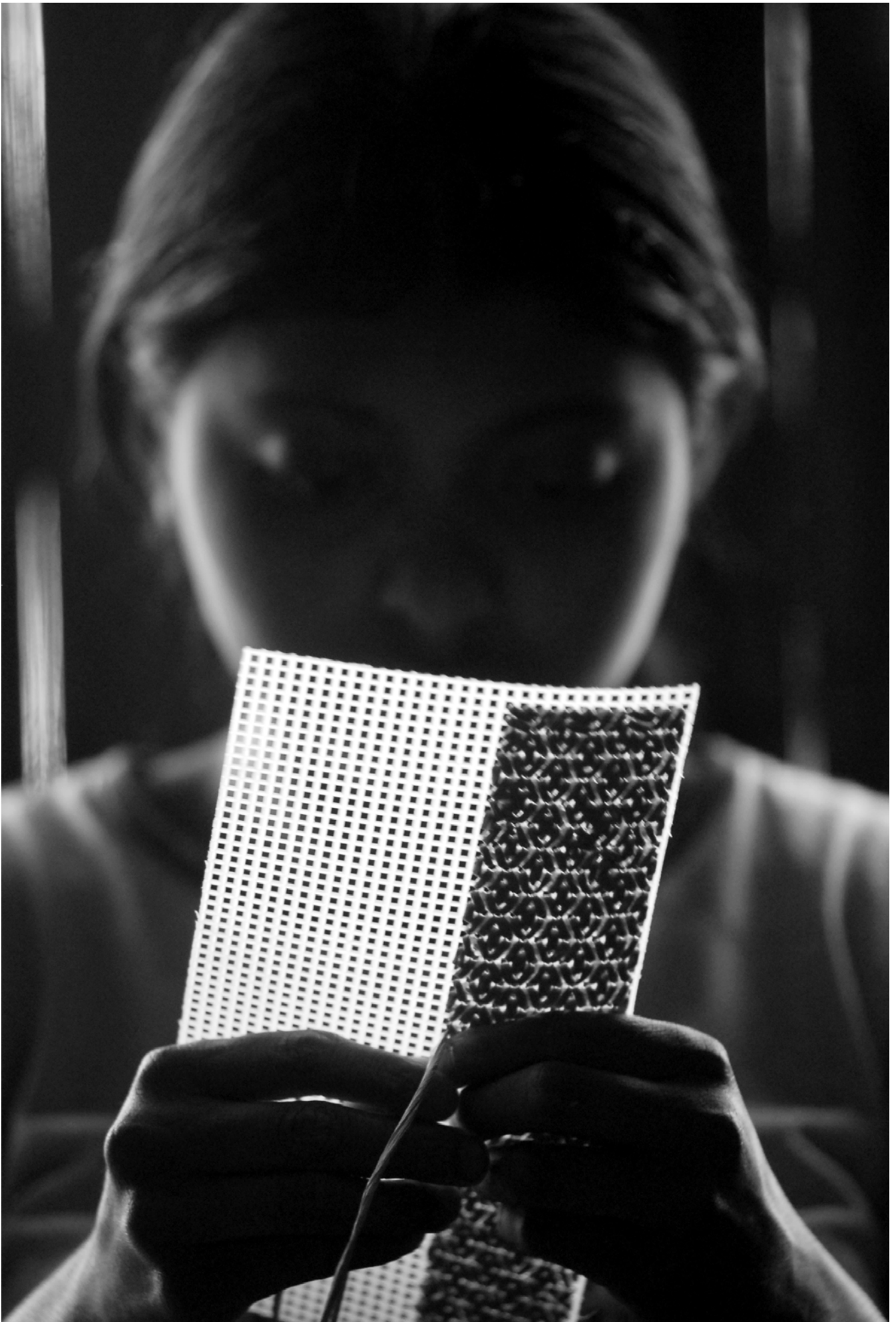
One of the CGT educators, Andres Ortiz, is a former child worker. He was also a member of violent gangs before redeeming himself by good conduct. His advice could save Colombian children who are tempted to keep bad company.

“When I was 14, I joined the small gangs that hung around my neighbourhood and I also did quite a lot of little jobs, for example, I worked at a baker’s and a shoe shop. I sometimes slept at my home, sometimes at my friend’s and sometimes in the street. My friends had an influence on me. I used to see them in the street having fun and I wanted to do the same thing. At first, there was no organised gang as such, we were just a group of friends who drank and smoked together. When we didn’t have enough money to buy drugs and alcohol, we started to steal. The next stage was to arm ourselves in order to control territory. The violence in my neighbourhood gradually got worse and my friends became more and more heavily armed. As my school was located in an area controlled by a rival gang, I had to stop going to school.

When I was 18, one of my best friends was murdered at my side and I decided to leave the gang. I went back to work and I managed to get myself off drugs through my own efforts. Other friends told me about the CGT activities. I began to work for the union. I imagined going on to higher education but two years later, three men assaulted me in the street. This attack had nothing to do with my past as a gang member. They shot me in the back. Since then, I have been paralysed from the waist down. I now work for the CGT as an educator in the school back up programmes in Ciudad Bolivar and I am also involved in cultural activities with the children. I go to university every morning. I would like to teach disabled children. I try not to talk about my past with the children but if I trust them and they trust me, I can of course advise them. It is important because it is now easier to start taking drugs compared to when I was young. You can get drugs easily at school or anywhere. There are also more armed children than there were when I was young. It used to be just gang members who were armed.

If I had known about the CGT programme when I was 14, I would not have made so many mistakes. There weren’t so many opportunities for young people at that time. I am certain that the CGT would have been able to guide me down the right path.”





Brazil

Brazil government programme makes a difference for children

The Brazilian government is running an income redistribution programme for poor families that are prepared to observe some strict conditions, including the regular attendance of their children at school. The programme has contributed to a 22.8% reduction in child labour.

Created in September 2003 by the federal government, the Bolsa Família (PBF) is a direct but conditional cash transfer to poor families with an income of US\$ 40-80 and families living in absolute poverty with an income of up to US\$ 40. Over 12 million households in Brazil fulfil these criteria.

PBF is part of a strategic programme called Zero Hunger, which aims to ensure the human right to adequate nutrition, promote food safety, contribute to eradicating extreme poverty and achieve citizenship for the most vulnerable sectors of society. The Zero Hunger programme to overcome hunger and poverty has three main components. The first one is to promote immediate relief from poverty through direct government cash payments to families.

The second is to improve access to basic social rights in the areas of health and education by insisting that families comply with conditions that can help them break out of the vicious cycle of intergenerational poverty. PBF beneficiaries must comply with three main conditions:

- Education. Enrolment of children at school and regular attendance (at least 85% for children aged 6 to 15 years and at least 75% for children aged 16 or 17 years).
- Health. Monitoring of vaccinations and the growth and development of children under seven. Prenatal visits for pregnant women and post-natal care for mothers aged between 14 and 44.
- Social Services. At least 85% take-up of complementary social and education programmes for parents of children aged up to 15 years who are at risk or have been withdrawn from child labour. These programmes aim to help PBF beneficiaries overcome their vulnerability and poverty, for example, by employment and income generation, adult literacy, provision of civil registration and documentation programmes.

Previously existing benefits, including *Bolsa Escola* (school attendance benefit), *Bolsa Alimentação* (food benefit), *Cartão Alimentação* (maternal nutrition benefit), *Auxílio Gás* (cooking gas benefit) and PETI (Programme for the Eradication of Child Labour), were amalgamated into the PBF. All households eligible for the benefits must be registered on the *Cadastro Único* (Single Registry), which contains the

data and information used to identify all low-income families in the country. Municipal, state and federal governments can access the registry to obtain a socio-economic assessment of enrolled families. The main goal is to facilitate analysis of the main needs of the enrolled families in order to help the formulation and management of public policies aimed at this segment of the population.

PBF has been the subject of several studies in recent years, both in Brazil and abroad. They have demonstrated the programme's effectiveness in fighting poverty¹⁾. The programme, which forms the basis for the federal government's social policies, has been contributing to the reduction of poverty in Brazil since 2004, along with other economic policies such as the real increase in the minimum wage and the reduction of interest rates²⁾.

Direct influence on school attendance

The fight against child labour is not a direct objective of the programme. However, the PBF has directly influenced the increase in school attendance because recipients of the benefit must keep their children at school. In 2007, the programme coordinators realized that the incidence of absenteeism from school was greater in the 15-17 age group (17.8% compared to 2.4% for other ages) and decided to extend the benefit to cover children in this age group. This extension means the programme now serves over 1.8 million young people³⁾.

Statistics show a steady decline in the total number of children at work, especially in recent years. According to the National Household Survey, there was a reduction of 22% between 2004 and 2008. The PBF's contribution to this reduction is undeniable, even though its impact has been indirect, as part of the broader social policy of Lula's government.

The way that households use the benefits is an important indicator of the programme's impact. According to a study by Ibase (2008), the purchase of school equipment is the second most frequent use of funds by beneficiaries (46% used funds for this purpose), surpassed only by expenditure on food (87% used funds for this purpose). However, the programme outcomes in terms of educational qualifications depend on the provision of high quality public education and thorough monitoring of beneficiary compliance with conditions⁴⁾.

1) See IPEA, *A importância das cotas para a focalização do Programa Bolsa Família*, Textos para discussão nº 1349, Rio de Janeiro: IPEA, 2008. See also ILO, *Relatório Trabalho Decente e Juventude*, ILO, Brasília, 2009.

2) CACCIAMALI, Maria Cristina, Fábio Tatei and Natália Ferreira Batista, *Impactos do Programa Bolsa Família Federal sobre o Trabalho Infantil e a Frequência Escolar*, in: IPC/ UNDP, São Paulo, 2008.

3) ILO, *Relatório Trabalho Decente e Juventude*, ILO, Brasília, 2009.

4) ILO, *opcit.*

Although the PBF contributes to increasing the number of children at school, it cannot alone directly reduce the incidence of child labour. The federal government must provide adequate public services, especially a comprehensive and good quality education system, for its social policy to be successful in reducing the incidence of child labour in Brazil. A lot of work remains to be done.

Support from the Brazilian labour movement

What is the input of the Brazilian labour movement on this issue? As this is a federal government programme, the Brazilian trade union movement’s contribution is mainly to support its continuation and development and monitor it with a view to promoting improvements.

PBF was mentioned in the resolutions of the last congress organized by the *Central Única dos Trabalhadores* (CUT), the largest Brazilian trade union central, held in August 2009:

“We cannot provide emergency programmes like the PBF for those who are outside the labour market and living in absolute poverty. However, these programmes must be combined with instruments for social inclusion, such as land reform and the National Programme to Strengthen Family Agriculture⁵⁾.”

In other words, the CUT recognizes the importance of the PBF but stresses the need to combine it with other social programmes, especially in rural areas.

The CUT stresses the importance of public policies on this issue but also directly contributes to improving the situation, for example, by organizing literacy programmes for young people and adults. A good example is a programme called *Todas as Letras* (All the Letters), which supports basic education for more than 80,000 people in different regions.

The CUT also wants to see an increase in the level of investment in the programme (the PBF’s budget is equivalent to a one per cent increase in interest rates on the public debt⁶⁾ and more effective control of PETI, which the CUT believes has been downgraded following integration of the social programmes.

Meanwhile, according to a survey published by Ibase in 2008⁷⁾, the vast majority of families benefiting from the PBF are considered to be in the informal economy. Only 16% are registered employed, which complicates legal representation and organization of such workers in unions.

5) CUT, *Resoluções do 10º Congresso Nacional da CUT, São Paulo*: CUT, 2009.

6) CUT, *opcit.*

7) IBASE, *Repercussões do Programa Bolsa Família na segurança alimentar e nutricional das famílias beneficiadas*, Documento Síntese, Rio de Janeiro: IBASE, 2008.



The level of unemployment is also quite high: 68% of beneficiaries had been unemployed for over a year at the time of the survey.

Beyond Child Labour

Analysis of the PBF's contribution to meeting the International Labour Office (ILO) Decent Work (Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work) standards needs to go beyond the issue of child labour, since this is only one of the strategic pillars of the campaign, and examine other aspects, including the provision of quality employment, the extension of social protection and promotion of social dialogue.

Regarding the provision of quality employment, it is clear that the PBF promotes full citizenship and inclusion of beneficiaries into the labour market. Therefore, there is a "need to think about taking further steps to emancipate beneficiary families, so they are able to find decent work opportunities capable of generating sufficient income to escape from poverty"⁸⁾. In other words, the PBF helps the country's poorest households to move towards finding employment and increasing their income. The struggle of Brazilian unions to improve working conditions, increase wages and create jobs is also a fight for decent work in Brazil and indirectly contributes to increasing the effectiveness of the programme.

The PBF helps to extend social protection in Brazil because, in addition to promoting the entry of citizens into the formal labour market and thereby extending the numbers

benefiting from legal employment contracts, it provides people with the resources to buy basic goods and services. However, the provision of public services by the state is more important than the funds provided by the PBF.

With regard to social dialogue, the entry of beneficiary families into the formal labour market also means that the PBF indirectly contributes to promoting the power of trade unions and the legal representation of workers.

The main argument put forward by critics of the PBF is that it discourages poor people from looking for jobs. Several studies have disproved this proposition. One study showed that, in the case of two groups of people with the same income, the proportion of people in employment is higher among PBF beneficiaries than among those not registered with the PBF.

In conclusion, PBF is clearly an effective tool for poverty alleviation and indirectly contributes to promoting ILO Decent Work standards in Brazil in the short term. However, in order to make a decisive contribution to eradicating child labour, the PBF must form part of a broader social policy that includes action to improve public health and education and develop an economic policy capable of creating jobs and increasing the income of these households.

8) SACHS, Ignacy, *Do Bolsa Família à inclusão social*, article published at "O Globo" newspaper, Rio de Janeiro, 2008.



Child Labour and Decent Work in China

Introduction

In 2008 China enacted three new laws that moved the country closer to establishing a legislative framework for promoting Decent Work. These laws do not address the issue of child labour directly. However, their focus on discrimination in employment, contractual constraints on employers and dispute resolution give them the capacity, in combination with domestic regulations prohibiting child labour and China's international obligations, to contribute to the goal of keeping children out of the work place. Of course, effective implementation remains a crucial issue.

On the other hand, research in China and elsewhere demonstrates that it is not possible to solve the problem of child labour by legislation alone. While the law can punish employers who demand and use children, legislation does not solve the key problem of the supply of children to workplaces and the conditions that create this trade in child labour. Despite an improving legal environment and impressive economic growth, these conditions are present in China. Child labour will continue to increase unless they are addressed in a cross-disciplinary and comprehensive manner.

This paper examines the links between child labour and the ILO goal of Decent Work for All (hereon after Decent Work). Our research consisted of discussions with partners in the field working to promote Decent Work and interviews with journalists and corporate social responsibility practitioners. Secondary sources include research papers¹⁾, Chinese media reports, academic papers, and publications by Chinese and regional labour NGOs and resources on the ILO website.

The legal framework prohibiting child labour

In December 1998, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) ratified the ILO's *Minimum Age Convention* (Convention 138) and reaffirmed that the minimum age of employment in China is 16 years – one year older than the ILO standard of 15 years of age. All persons employed between the ages of 16 and 18 are classified as juvenile workers and are subject to specific legal protections such as being prohibited from working in mines or in other heavy industrial jobs. In August 2002, The NPC ratified the *Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour* (Convention 182). China's national Labour Law prohibits the employment of juveniles under the age of 16 but does permit such recruitment in 'Art, sports and special-skill units' subject to health checks (Article 15). This exemption is not sufficiently clarified in the State Council's *Regulations Prohibiting the Use of Child Labour* (1991) and, as we shall see, sends the wrong message to employers tempted to exploit children. Employers found to

be in violation of these regulations are fined 5,000 yuan per child worker per month employed.

China has a well-established school programme designed to give students limited work experience and vocational training. The Education Department's regulations governing this work-study programme are temporary and date back to 1983. Over the last decade there has been widespread abuse of the system including cases in which teachers have acted as illegal gang bosses to supply child workers to factories in order to generate income for individuals, schools and/or factories. A recent report by the National Labour Committee provided graphic evidence of the supply of children to factories in Dongguan producing goods for Microsoft²⁾.

Although there are prohibitions on the involuntary trafficking of people into forced labour and other purposes such as marriage, there is confusion in China as to the definition of trafficking. As the number of children – and adults – trafficked into illegal employment has increased, there is now a strong case to be made for a specific law on human trafficking. This should include a comprehensive definition that recognises a child's 'agreement' to perform exploitative labour does not constitute voluntary choice.

The data gap

There appears to be no legal responsibility or mechanism for recording the extent of child labour in China. Evidence from various non-governmental sources indicates that the problem is growing but 'undisclosed information and data on the handling of child labour cases nationwide' remains classified as highly secret³⁾. This means that while the media and NGOs play an important role in bringing discussion of child labour into the public arena, government agencies are constrained from working more effectively at the national level by the absence of reliable data required for a satisfactory response at policy level. Partly as a consequence, we are left with a surfeit of moral denunciation from ordinary Chinese but a deficit in comprehensive government responses.

For example, media reports of the Shanxi brick kiln slavery case of 2007 produced details of enforced labour in horrendous working conditions. Following a massive police crack

1) This report draws heavily on a research paper published by the China Labour Bulletin entitled 'Small Hands: A Survey Report on Child Labour in China' (2007) ('Small Hands' hereon after). Available at: http://www.china-labour.org.hk/en/files/share/File/general/Child_labour_report_1.pdf (accessed 30/04/10).

2) The National Labor Committee 2010, 'China's youth meet Microsoft', available at: <http://www.nlcnet.org/reports?id=0034> (accessed 7 May 2010).

3) 'Regulations on State Secrets and the Specific Scope of Each Level of Secrets in Labour and Social Security Work', issued January 27, 2000 cited in 'Small Hands', Op.Cit.

down and the release of hundreds of slave labourers, the number of rescued children was put at between 51 and 109. Shanxi provincial government officials subsequently claimed the figure was 12, and, after a month-long investigation, on 16 July, stated without further explanation that only six of the rescued workers were actually children⁴). This suggests that child labour was not a significant factor in the scandal whereas journalists' interviews with parents suggest the opposite.

Occasionally media reports imply the scale of the problem via statistics cited by individuals. For example, Zhang Wenjuan of the Beijing Juvenile Legal Aid and Research Center told China Daily reporters that from 2001 to 2005, local authorities in Zhejiang province 'cracked down on 2,263 cases of child labour, involving 2,318 child labourers. The children's employers were fined 21.6 million yuan in total.'⁵

Although the absence of national data makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions, it appears that girls are more likely to be in work than boys. A report in the *Women of China* magazine refers to a 1996 survey by government agencies in the provinces of Guangdong, Shandong, Liaoning and Hebei that found that 73.5 per cent of 1,217 child workers were female⁶). China Labour Bulletin found that 'whether on the factory floors or in the streets and markets, one encounters more female than male child workers'⁷.

NGOs and labour NGOs (LNGOs) have tried to make up for the dearth in publicly available data. For example, in late 2006 an LNGO in the southern city of Shenzhen carried out a survey of 37 privately-owned factories selected at random. The researchers found child labour in over half of the workplaces including one factory with over 200 children. Acknowledging that the survey did not meet scientific standards, the researchers still felt that it was safe to conclude that:

*"Child workers are common in Shenzhen, working most often in the small factories with relatively poor working conditions. Legislative restrictions of child labour have not removed the problem from Shenzhen, but merely pushed it into less formal and poorly regulated workplaces."*⁸

The steady flow of media stories and reports on the issue of child labour certainly support this conclusion. Indeed, tracking down and exposing child labour has been a target of China's growing tradition of investigative journalism, fostering much public discussion which is important in itself. On the other hand, media reports focus on the legal and moral issues pertaining to child labour and rarely make reference to the relationship between the employment of children and promotion of Decent Work.

The conditions that give rise to child labour in China

Poverty and the limits of growth

China's model of development has increased per capita income and improved living standards. But there are growing gaps between rich and poor, town and countryside and the South and East of the country with the interior. The differences in the allocation of the nation's wealth and resources are directly related to the increase in child labour in the reform era. The contrast between rural poverty on the one hand and apparently wealthy modern cities on the other is an underlying reason while some families feel that they have no option but to send their children out to work – preferably in the cities. Despite the growth in rural living standards that the reforms initially brought, those left behind are mostly in the more remote areas on the breadline of existence and vulnerable to external shocks beyond their control – be it an earthquake, illness in the family or a global financial crisis. The front-line experiences of our partners working on labour rights and violations indicate that the overwhelming majority of child workers come from poorer central and western provinces.

Education

Rural education is a key – but not unique – factor in the supply of child labour. State investment as a proportion of gross national product (GNP) was just 2.79 per cent in 2004. United Nations Special Rapporteur Tomaševski has drawn attention to the true costs imposed on parents by the education system pointing out that 'the private cost of public education precludes access to school and is the most important reason for non-attendance and school abandonment'⁹). Meanwhile, county governments increasingly bear the primary responsibility for investing in rural compulsory education, and this has added greatly to the financial burden of impoverished counties.

The combination of school fees, low income and sometimes inappropriate curricula also encourages poorer children who are unlikely to make university to drop out of middle school. This usually happens at the age of 14 or 15 when the absence of educational prospects and a child's physical

4) *Xin Kuai Bao* (New Express) 2007, 'Shanxi heiyao shijian xu: laojian bumen she daomai tonggong' (The story of Shanxi's black kilns continued: government labour monitoring agencies involved in profiting from child labourers, 13 June 2007 cited in 'Small Hands' Op.Cit. p3.

5) Guang Xiaofeng and Wang Qian 2008, 'Authorities seek greater enforcement of child labour laws', *China Daily*, 12 June 2008, available at: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-06/12/content_6754284.htm (accessed 22 July 2010).

6) Li Chunling and Wang Daming 1998, 'Zhongguo chujing kunnan ertong zhuangkuang fenxi baogao' (An analysis of the circumstances of disadvantaged Chinese youth), *Qingnian Yanjiu* (Youth Research), 1998, Volumes 5-7 cited in 'Small Hands' Op.Cit. p7.

7) China Labour Bulletin 2007, 'Small hands' Op.Cit., p7.

8) Beaumont, D. 2008, 'Child Labour in China's Informalized Urban Industrial Sector', available at: http://www.amrc.org.hk/alu_article/informalization_of_labour_in_asia/child_labour_in_chinas_informalized_urban_industrial_s (accessed 30/04/10).

9) China Labour Bulletin 2007, 'Small Hands' Op.Cit., p25.

development combine to encourage parents or guardians to pull their children out of school. The decisions facing parents at this stage in their child's development are sometimes intensified by the fact that it is possible to have completed formal education but still be only 15 years of age – whereas the legal minimum age for work is 16¹⁰. Moreover, the ability of better equipped schools to attract the best students leaves 'sink' schools in the more remote rural areas.

Channels to Exploitation

The history of industrialisation tells us that a combination of rapid urbanisation and mass rural-urban migration provides many opportunities for those who wish to profit out of child labour.

Children end up in work via three main channels. The first, and the most common, is through introductions from fellow villagers and townsfolk. Recent years of labour shortages have encouraged employers to offer financial incentives to employees if they can introduce new workers from their home villages. This is likely to increase the number of underage workers who can buy fake I.D. cards in order to get past employers who ask for proof of age.

Another common route is via the abuse of the work-study schemes. A template contract between a vocational school in Guangxi province and the head of households explained how 'organising students to participate in remunerated factory work can help students pay their annual school fees, text book fees, lodging and other costs'¹¹. In 2006 an investigative reporter exposed an organised racket which put children into a shoe factory on 12-hour days earning less than the minimum wage. Liang showed how a teacher at a vocational school persuaded students to enrol on the basis of promises of a vocational middle school experience that included work-study and 'relevant instruction'. The children were then transferred to a factory under the constant supervision of the teacher who arranged for fake I.D. cards where necessary and ensured that the exhausted and sleep-deprived children did not escape until the obligations to the factory had been fulfilled. Television documentaries with footage of exhausted and cowed children who have fallen into similar traps have shocked Chinese citizens in recent years¹². Even when these schemes are fully in compliance with the regulations, the terms and conditions imposed on the children can be harsh with students forbidden from 'running away or leaving the factory... being lazy or failing to complete their tasks'¹³.

A yet more sinister route is via the markets in child labour that have emerged in recent years as organised crime and individuals have specialised in the supply of children to employers often running unregistered, illegal factories. One such market in the city of Dongguan was exposed in the media after a journalist posing as a client managed to interview a trafficker. The article revealed direct links

between Liangshan in Sichuan and Dongguan in Guangdong, the 'contact point' (*judian*) for its child labourers. From Dongguan the children were supervised by criminals who boasted 'absolute authority over the children' and were dispersed via the market to various industrial centres in Guangdong such as Shenzhen, Huizhou, Jiangmen and Guangzhou¹⁴.

This and other cases demonstrate that human traffickers have taken advantage of flexible labour markets and the growth of the informalised 'grey' economy including the sex industry. Gangs have switched their activities from kidnapping young women – for marriage – and infant boys – for sonless couples – to transporting children for exploitative labour. There has been a significant rise in trafficking of girls aged 16-18 into prostitution and younger children to work as flower sellers or beggars in organised groups¹⁵.

Reducing Child Labour and Promoting Decent Work

Intervention in child labour is undoubtedly complex. It requires cooperation across ministries and departments including law enforcement agencies, labour bureaux, schools and education agencies working with non governmental organisations such as trade unions, women's organisations and children rights NGOs. In China, government intervention in cases of child labour remains largely based on legalistic measures. Children are rescued and sent home and employers are fined or in more serious cases prosecuted and imprisoned. However these measures do little to keep children from returning to another, perhaps worse workplace and do not address the conditions that induce child labour.

However, the anti-trafficking initiative CP-Ting, managed by the ILO and the All China Women's Federation (ACWF), has worked on developing evidence-based strategies based on a participatory model that address both the causes and prevention of child labour. Taking the ILO's 'Safe Migration for Decent Work' programme as a guide, CP-Ting has attempted to set-up a comprehensive inter-agency approach. Crucially, these programmes include cooperation with NGOs including informal labour networks, advocating international

10) Of course, this is not to argue that the minimum age for labour should be lowered. The observation is made to illustrate an anomaly in the education system that is open to abuse.

11) From a template contract between a county vocational school in Guangxi province and household heads obtained by the author and dated 4 April 2006.

12) For example 'Jinji ban xiaoshi' (Economics half-hour), China Central Television (CCTV), broadcast on 10 June 2006.

13) Template contract, Op.Cit.

14) Nanfang Dushi bao 2008, 'Dongguan tonggong maimai' (Dongguan's child labour trade). Available at: http://epaper.nndaily.com/A/html/2008-04/28/content_452688.htm accessed 29/04/10.

15) ILO and All China Women's Federation 'Situation analysis for trafficking in girls and young women for labour exploitation within China', ILO Beijing, 2005.

labour standards, facilitating peer-to-peer support networks – a crucial source for identifying child labour – and working with employers and workers associations.

Child labour is a union issue

In China, the transition to a market economy with multiple forms of ownership and a growing informal sector has presented serious challenges to the only legal trade union, the state-led All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU).

In larger state-owned unionised factories, the enterprise-level unions can affect working conditions and this combines with other economic factors to exclude child labour – notwithstanding some notable exceptions. However, as the factories in China that employ children tend to be relatively small privately-owned factories with poor working conditions, the removal of children does not equate to an automatic improvement in working conditions. This would require wider constraints on trade union representation in the workplace – chiefly enterprise trade unions' dependency on employer cooperation – to be addressed at the same time. Nevertheless, employers do benefit from the lower wages and poorer conditions that characterise the employment of children. Quoting a State Council research report, the ITUC's International Hong Kong Liaison Office explains that in one location the average wage of children is around 400-600 Yuan while the official monthly wages of many migrant workers is around 500-800. Children, being illegally employed do not need medical or social security payments and neither do they complain of long hours or underpayment. Most are too scared to complain and most feel the need to remain at work to help support their families¹⁶.

Article 10 of the Trade Union Law awards the ACFTU a legal monopoly on trade union activities – a position it has held for 60 years. The absence of alternative trade unions leaves the ACFTU open to pressure from government policy, aimed above all, at employment creation – sometimes at the expense of compliance with labour laws. At the local level this can translate into the ACFTU and government officials choosing to either overlook the presence of clusters of child labour unless it is reported in the media or becomes too big a problem to ignore. This appeared to be the case following the aforementioned Liangshan scandal was exposed. The Dongguan Federation of Trade Unions (DFTU) told the web-based media outlet Baidu that they were following the situation online and that they had interviewed the reporter responsible for exposing the case 'in the hope that

he could provide more clues'¹⁷. Moreover, the absence of alternative trade unions and fully independent NGOs weakens checks and balances on bribery and corruption in the activities of some government officials.

The ACFTU's primary-level unions remain very weak in the private sector in which most children are employed. Enterprise-level unions are largely unable to challenge employers and collective bargaining is almost non-existent. Noting the absence of freedom of association and the concomitant weakness of private sector trade unions the ITUC annual report states that 'few of them [migrant workers] them would seek assistance from the trade union in cases of rights abuse'¹⁸. This scepticism with regard to the union capacity in the workplace extends to the issue of child labour. Thus, while children in the workplace undoubtedly weaken workers' collective capacity to uphold working conditions across a given factory, sector or area, the unions' role in addressing the presence of children in the workplace is marginalised.

Of course, we are not suggesting that the freedom of association is the key to solving child labour. However, strong representative trade unions are, by default, a core part of the struggle for Decent Work, a goal that is inseparable from keeping children out of the workplace.

Conclusion

This paper has summarised the conditions that give rise to child labour in the China context and examined some of the obstacles to effective intervention. We have discussed the problems with exclusively legislative and/or punitive solutions and advocated an integrated inter-agency response. We have pointed to paucity of reliable data and consequent absence of a database of best practices in intervention. Finally, and above all, we have tried to illustrate how child labour has a negative effect on workers collective ability to improve pay and conditions – ultimately the key to eliminating child labour in the 21st Century.

16) IHLO 2007, 'Child labour and "work experience" in China: the blurred lines of illegality'. Available at: <http://www.ihlo.org/LRC/W/020807.html> (accessed 20 July 2010)

17) Sina Online 2008, 'ACFTU pays close attention to the child labour case and launch joint departmental investigation' (quan guo zong gonghui guanzhu tonggong shijian xiangguan bumen jieru diaocha), available at: <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2008-04-29/040915449618.shtml>.

18) ITUC 2010, 'annual survey of violations of trade union rights', available at: <http://survey.ituc-csi.org/+China+.html>, (accessed 12 July 2010).

Child labour: a trade union priority

The foundations of trade unionism are the principles of solidarity and social justice. These foundations, combined with the duty to act as responsible citizens, are enough to justify trade union action against child labour, but other reasons related to the protection of adult workers lead us to the same conclusion. As children are an abundant source of cheap labour that is easy to exploit, their presence in the labour market acts as unfair competition with adult workers. Child labour contributes to keeping wages low and weakens trade union capacity to negotiate better working conditions. It also increases unemployment among adults, particularly among young adults, because children can do the same work for lower pay. If children are deprived of an education and adults are denied work, it is the future of society as a whole that is at stake.

By their presence at all levels of the world of work, trade unions have an impressive list of instruments of struggle against child labour at their disposal. Without trying to be exhaustive, we present a few of these instruments below.

A) With regard to employers

Collective bargaining. During collective bargaining, trade unions can negotiate clauses banning the employment of children in the company or sector concerned and also in the supply chain. Such clauses can also stipulate that products manufactured by such-and-such a company cannot be sold by children. This is useful, for example, for all products sold on the street, especially by itinerant street vendors.

Document cases of child labour and ensure monitoring. By their presence at the workplace, trade unions are well placed to gather information about the exploitation of children. Collection of such information and reporting to the authorities or competent authorities can help to develop effective policies and actions against child labour. Trade unions must ensure that these policies and actions are not limited to the exclusion of children from the workplace, because this would risk driving children into other, and sometimes worse forms of exploitation. They must on the contrary promote the enrolment of children in school or vocational training programmes or their return to school if they have dropped out. If it is clear that employers have knowingly employed children, they could be asked, for example, to pay for the education of those children.

B) Workers and the general public

Raise awareness by everyday contact with workers and the public. The negative effects of child labour are far from clear to all workers. Many parents who have not them-

selves had the opportunity to go to school are unaware of the opportunities offered by education and therefore balk at making the effort that is sometimes necessary to send their children to school. By virtue of their proximity to workers and the spirit of comradeship and trust characteristic of trade unions, the latter are in a good position to raise the awareness of parents about the importance of education.

Organise campaigns directed at the general public. The usual trade union campaign methods (marches, demonstrations, the display of banners, information stands at strategic places) lend themselves to raising the awareness of the general public about the negative effects of child labour. They can arouse the interest of the media and reach a larger audience rather than only workers. Cooperation with NGOs engaged in the fight against child labour can strengthen the impact of these campaigns.

C) Government

Enforce and develop legislation. Put pressure on the national authorities to enforce legislation on child labour and compulsory education and on local authorities to monitor the families whose children do not go or who have dropped out of school. Many countries have excellent laws on the minimum working age and compulsory education, but they are not put into practice. The authorities only punish employers for using child labour in the more extreme cases and do not put pressure on parents who neglect to send their children to school. If legislation is not able to promote an effective fight against child labour, for example, if there is no appropriate social security provision, the trade unions can use social dialogue at the national level to promote the development of such legislation.

Fight for free compulsory and quality public education for all. If parents and children do not believe that education is useful, if schools are too far away from their homes, if going to school is too onerous, there is a significant risk of pupils disengaging from school and ultimately dropping out of school. This is almost always the first step towards child labour. Part of this struggle could consist of lobbying the authorities to provide lunch at school because this would represent a significant incentive to attend school.

Ratify and respect international standards. ILO Conventions and Recommendations are among the most important instruments in the fight against child labour. The most recent and complete ILO standards on child labour are Convention 138 on the Minimum Age and the accompanying Recommendation 146 and Convention 182 on the

Trade unions in the countries where child labour is not a major problem have a role to play in the fight against child labour at the global level. For example, they could:

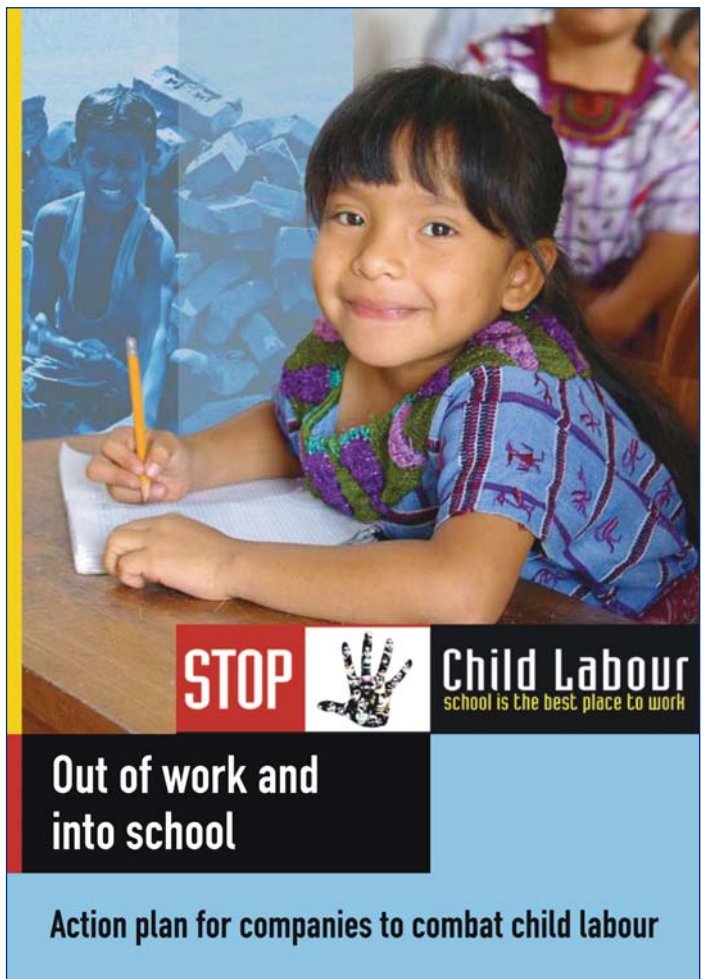
- Support the anti-child labour programmes of trade unions in countries where this scourge is widespread.
- Lobby their governments to include child labour considerations in their trade policies, especially through the inclusion of respect for core labour standards in their trade agreements.
- Pressure their governments into prioritising the fight against child labour in their development cooperation policies. For example, Education International encourages members to put pressure on their government to allocate at least 0.7% of their GDP to development aid and to increase the proportion of aid allocated to quality public education.
- Pressure the head offices of transnational companies to not only eliminate child labour from their supply chains, but to guarantee the payment of living wages.

Worst Forms of Child Labour and the accompanying Recommendation 190. The trade unions have an important role to play in promoting the universal ratification of these standards and their implementation through effective laws and programmes. If law and/or practice do not conform to ILO Conventions in a country that has adopted them, trade unions can report this to the ILO and the international organisations to which it is affiliated as a way of putting pressure on the government in question.

Stop Child Labour – School is the best place to work

FNV is a committed partner of the campaign Stop Child labour - School is the best place to work. The Stop Child Labour campaign is a joint lobby, education and awareness raising campaign that seeks to eliminate all forms of child labour through the provision of full-time formal education.

One of its recent publications is The Action Plan for Companies to Combat Child labour. More information on this and other publications can be found on www.stopchildlabour.eu



Lessons and conclusions

The fight against child labour can create decent jobs for adults

It is going too far to claim that the withdrawal of a child from the workplace automatically creates a job for an adult, but the programmes described in this study show there is a clear link between the massive presence of children in the labour market and the lack of decent work for adults. For example, in India, the trade union APVVU has observed that in the kind of agricultural work that takes place in the state of Andhra Pradesh, the withdrawal of two children from the workplace creates one job for an adult. In the same state, the non-governmental organisation MVF compared the wages paid to adults in two villages near to cotton plantations where there was a major reduction in child labour between 2005 and 2009 and two other villages where child labour has remained at more or less the same level. During these four years, the pay of adults in this sector increased by 151.9% in the first two villages and by only 51% in the other two.

In some other child labour programmes, the withdrawal of a child from the workplace does not result in their replacement by an adult because no adult worker would accept such poor employment conditions. This is the case with domestic work in Tanzania, where the employers of children are often quite poor themselves and do not have the means to employ adult domestic workers, who are in a better position to demand payment of the minimum wage.

The fight against child labour strengthens trade unions and can, in the long term, help them to win pay rises

All the trade union child labour programmes described in this study strengthen the trade unions. This can take the form of a spectacular increase in members, as in the case of the Albanian and Moroccan teachers' unions and the BWI projects in the Indian and Nepalese brickworks sector. BWI affiliates that have been involved in the fight against child labour for a long time have experienced an increase in membership so great that it has helped them to negotiate better pay for adult workers. This improvement in pay gives trade union activists another argument to use in their attempts to persuade workers to let their children benefit from a normal education.

Elsewhere, as with the case of the CGT in Colombia, trade unions are strengthened because of the improvement in their public image. Most trade union leaders we met while conducting this study emphasised that trade unions often used to have a bad public image. The public saw unions as mainly organisers of strikes, or of being too close to political parties or of only being interested in protecting their

own members. Involvement in the fight against child labour changes these negative perceptions and opens the way for trade unions to develop.

Trade union activists have many urgent problems to deal with and do not necessarily understand the importance and usefulness of practical involvement in the fight against child labour. In countries where there is a high turnover of trade union activists, it is necessary to provide awareness raising on the subject on a regular basis.

Trade union action against child labour has a 'snowball' effect

Many of the people responsible for organising the programmes we studied as part of this research are very modest about their achievement. In fact, in addition to the measurable quantity of children helped (number of children returning to school in Albania; participation in vocational training programmes in Tanzania; numbers helped by trade union educators in Colombia, etc.), there is often a much greater number of child beneficiaries because of a 'snowball' effect. For example, parents persuaded of the importance of education by activists working in these programmes persuade other parents in their communities without telling the programme administrators. Moreover, governments have opened their eyes to the exploitation of children partly because of the denunciations made by trade unions and non-governmental organisations and as a consequence are allocating more resources to deal with the problem.

Poverty is not an excuse to justify child labour

It is not always necessary to resort to sanctions or to increase family income by very much in order to reduce the incidence of child labour. The programmes reviewed here do not provide significant financial or material aid to the parents. It is through dialogue, persuasion and an appeal to good sense that activists succeed in changing the attitude of the parents of child workers. Parents eventually agree to make big sacrifices so that their children can at least have a basic education.

The introduction of social security provisions helps prevent the exploitation of children

Many of the children we met while conducting the study go to work because of the very difficult situation of their family – for example, children whose mother finds herself head of the household after separation or after the death of her husband; children whose family have suffered from alcoholism or drug use; children whose parents can no longer

work because of illness, etc. In many cases, the existence of social security provision could help to prevent children from being sent to work. Effective social security provision could include unemployment pay, health care, child care for very young children at accessible rates (in order to prevent parents withdrawing their children from school in order to look after their younger brothers and sisters).

The issue of migration

A child migrating alone is, by definition, a child extremely vulnerable to all forms of exploitation, including by labour. But children are also often victims of the seasonal migrations of their parents as explained in the case of the APVVU action in India. If the children accompany their parents into town, it is often to help them at work rather than to attend school. One of the reasons for this is that it's quite difficult to register in a new school each time the parents move (specially if they move to regions where another language is used). If they stay in the villages, it is usually to carry out tasks that their parents cannot do, for example, help their younger brothers and sisters and keep watch on livestock. The children therefore do not have time to attend school. Civil society organisations such as the trade unions may raise the awareness of the workers on those issues, but it's the responsibility of the Governments to ensure access to free education for all the children, wherever they are, and to put pressure on all the parents so that they enrol their children at schools.

Let the unions organise!

The presence of a union at a workplace is often the best guarantee against the use of child labour. Union representatives will denounce the exploitation of children, persuade parents to send their children to school and negotiate decent wages that will help adult workers to support their family. This research has shown that this also applies to countries like China, where there is no real freedom of association and only one "workers" organisation is recognised in law, the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU). Child labour is rare in larger state-owned and unionized factories, but the ACFTU remains very weak in the private sector, in which most children are employed.

Compulsory free quality public education for all is key to the fight against child labour

Several programmes described here try to compensate for the deficiencies of government education policies, for example, those run by the CGT in Colombia, the SNE in Morocco, the Albanian trade unions FSASH and SPASH and the BWI affiliates in India. All have managed to promote a spectacular revival of interest in education and significant falls in dropout rates by using simple and inexpensive projects that any government could implement at national level: support for pupils who do not get good marks; improved communication between parents and teachers; refurbishment of schools; initiatives encouraging ethnic minority children to attend school.

Child labour free zones

Child labour free zones are (geographical) areas where all children are systematically withdrawn from work and (re)integrated into formal, full-time schools. No distinction is made between different forms of child labour because every child has the right to education. The process of creating child labour free zones involves all stakeholders like teachers, parents, children, unions, community groups, local authorities and employers. Such zones have been created in India and Nepal, while various organizations in Albania, Africa and South America have also embraced the concept. In India for example, MVF (Mamidi Venkatarangaiya Foundation) has created 830 child labour free villages in the state of Andhra Pradesh where all children up to 14 are going to school. India affiliates of BWI (Building and Wood Workers' International) have also concluded agreements to declare 95 child labour free villages and 614 child labour free brick kilns.

Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016



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Outcome Document

The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010
Towards a World without Child Labour
Mapping the Road to 2016

Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016

Preamble

- i. A new momentum is necessary if the world is to attain the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 as agreed upon by the ILO tripartite constituents in the Global Action Plan.¹ Around the world, 215 million boys and girls² are engaged in child labour.³ One hundred and fifteen million of these children are exposed to its worst forms.⁴ Removing these children from the worst forms and offering them a future without child labour is an urgent priority.
- ii. **We**, participants at the *Global Child Labour Conference 2010. Towards a world without child labour – Mapping the road to 2016*, representatives from governments, employers' and workers' organizations, non-governmental and other civil society organizations, regional and international organizations, have gathered in the Hague, the Netherlands, on 10 and 11 May 2010, to take stock of progress made since the adoption of the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), to assess remaining obstacles and to agree on measures to accelerate progress towards the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016, while affirming the overarching goal of the effective abolition of child labour, which is reflected in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and ILO Convention, 1973 (No. 138) to which ILO Convention, 1999 (No. 182) is complementary, and
- iii. **Considering** that action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour is most effective and sustainable when it is situated within action to eliminate all child labour, including through area-based and sector-based programmes, and
- iv. **Acknowledging** that the effective abolition of child labour is a moral necessity and that all ILO members have an obligation to respect, promote and realize that principle; that it can yield high social and economic returns, and that eradicating child labour - and providing the alternative of education and training, and decent work for adults and children of working age - contributes to households breaking out of the cycle of poverty, and helps countries advance human development, and
- v. **Recognizing** that the international community has identified child labour as a significant impediment to the realization of children's rights, national development⁵ and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to poverty alleviation, education, gender equality and HIV/AIDS, and recognizing furthermore that the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 190) reflect a global consensus that immediate and effective measures are required to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency, and
- vi. **Noting** that over the past decade action against the worst forms of child labour has been implemented in all parts of the world and that this has led to significant progress; that this demonstrates that the fight against child labour can be won with sound policy choices and substantial national and international resource commitments, and when capitalizing on new opportunities, such as the G-20 summits and the Global Jobs Pact, and
- vii. **Acknowledging** the available data concerning the incidence of child labour, by sector, with the highest incidence of child labour in agriculture (60%), and 26 % in services,⁶ while recognizing the need for more data collection covering hard-to-reach children including in domestic work, slavery, sexual exploitation and illicit activities, and
- viii. **Agreeing** that with six years remaining until the target date of 2016 for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, it is imperative to substantially upscale and accelerate action, given the overall pace of progress and that the global economic crisis puts recent progress at risk, and

- ix. **Recognizing** further that now, more than ever, political leadership is needed to achieve the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, and that governments in partnership with all other relevant actors need to act swiftly and with determination in this endeavour, particularly in the informal economy where most child labour occurs, and
- x. **Acknowledging** that international cooperation and/or assistance among Members for the prohibition and effective elimination of the worst forms of child labour should complement national efforts and may, as appropriate, be developed and implemented in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations,
- xi. **Declare** that we will substantially increase efforts to ensure that we achieve the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 and **we agree** to this Roadmap, and **we urge** the international community to substantially increase its efforts in this regard.

Part I – Principles and Action

Guiding principles

1. Governments have the primary responsibility for enforcing the right to education for all children, and the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. The social partners and other civil society organizations, and international organizations have important roles in promoting and supporting such action.
2. Government responsibility should be assumed at the highest level and with the best interests of children in mind, taking into consideration the views of children and their families, and should include due attention to the most vulnerable children and the conditions that create their vulnerability. In doing so governments should assess the impact of relevant policies on the worst forms of child labour, taking into account gender and age, put in place preventive and time-bound measures and make adequate financial resources available to fight the worst forms of child labour, including through international cooperation.⁷
3. In a globalized economy, government responsibility includes developing and strengthening policies and programmes, in consultation with social partners, that address child labour issues, in particular the worst forms, in international supply chains.
4. Government actions to combat child trafficking, prostitution, production of pornography and the trafficking of drugs should where necessary include international cooperation.
5. Governments should consider ways to address the potential vulnerability of children to, in particular, the worst forms of child labour, in the context of migratory flows.
6. All actors should work towards strengthening the world wide movement against child labour, including by using traditional and new media. They should – according to their expertise – raise awareness and sensitize the public on the rights of children to be free from child labour, the value of education and training, and the longer term costs of child labour, in terms of health, employment opportunities, persistent inequalities and intergenerational poverty.
7. There is no single policy that by itself will end the worst forms of child labour. However, evidence has shown that targeted action that simultaneously addresses the implementation and enforcement of legislation, the provision and accessibility of public services (including free, quality compulsory education, training and non-discriminatory social protection services), and the functioning of labour markets, yields high returns in the fight against child labour, including its worst forms. The elimination of child labour should therefore be integrated in broader policy frameworks at national and sub-national levels, and policy coordination should be strengthened through appropriate inter-ministerial mechanisms.

Action by governments

8. Government actions should be guided by the following policy priorities:

8.1 National legislation and enforcement:

- 8.1.1 Working towards implementation of the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) and, for states party to the ILO Conventions addressing child labour, full implementation of those conventions, and for states that are not party to those conventions, consideration of ratifications, as well as the optional protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;⁸
- 8.1.2 Adopting and enforcing national legislation against child labour and its worst forms in particular, ensuring that these rights are respected for all children without exception, and ensuring that information on relevant legislation is widely disseminated;
- 8.1.3 Developing and implementing cross-sectoral national action plans to eliminate the worst forms of child labour as a priority, in consultation with social partners and taking into consideration the views of other parties as appropriate. Providing adequate resources to achieve the goals so established;
- 8.1.4 Periodically reviewing and updating national lists of hazardous work prohibited for children in consultation with social partners;
- 8.1.5 Ensuring access to justice by children and their families, including by ensuring that justice systems and processes are child friendly;
- 8.1.6 Enforcing appropriate sanctions against perpetrators of the worst forms of child labour, strengthening the inspection and monitoring machinery that bring these to light, and documenting court cases. Particular emphasis should be given to strengthening labour inspection, including on occupational health and safety.

8.2 Education and training:

- 8.2.1 Extending and improving access to free, compulsory, quality education for all children, with a particular focus on girls, and ensuring that all children under the minimum age for employment are in full-time education, and including where appropriate and consistent with relevant international labour standards, in vocational or technical education;
- 8.2.2 Adopting strategies to remove costs that represent a barrier to education, in particular fees and school supplies;
- 8.2.3 Adopting strategies to (i) encourage and monitor school enrolment, attendance, retention and reintegration, through, for instance, scholarship and school meal programs to help poor families reduce the costs of education,⁹ and (ii) create a child-friendly learning environment, in which children are protected from abuse, violence and discrimination;
- 8.2.4 Developing concrete plans and mechanisms to meet the needs of children engaged in the worst forms of child labour as per ILO Convention No. 182 and support their transition into appropriate education or vocational training.

8.3 Social protection:

- 8.3.1 Implementing strategies, policies and programmes that offer access to and delivery of social and health services to vulnerable and socially excluded households, hard-to-reach children, and children with special needs, where possible including a basic social protection floor;
- 8.3.2 Fighting discrimination that contributes to child labour;
- 8.3.3 Supporting families' capacity to protect their children by working towards a system of social protection through, for instance, cash transfer schemes; public works; access to credit, insurance and savings schemes; strengthening and implementing national protection frameworks to protect children from exploitation;
- 8.3.4 Assisting victims of the worst forms of child labour to prevent their return to child labour.

8.4 Labour market policy:

- 8.4.1 Taking action to foster a well-functioning labour market, as well as access to vocational training for adults and young people of working age that corresponds with the current and future needs of the labour market so as to facilitate the school to work transition;
- 8.4.2 Supporting employment creation and promoting decent and productive work for adults and young people of working age, that is consistent with the fundamental principles and rights at work;¹⁰
- 8.4.3 Working towards regulating and formalizing the informal economy where most instances of the worst forms of child labour occur, including through the strengthening of state labour inspection and enforcement systems and capacities;
- 8.4.4 Creating an environment, together with social partners, that aims to combat child labour in supply chains.

Action by the social partners

9. Social partners should be guided by the following priority actions:

- 9.1 Taking immediate and effective measures within their own competence for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency including through policies and programmes that address child labour;¹¹
- 9.2 Advocating for the effective abolition of child labour, where appropriate in collaboration with other civil society organizations;
- 9.3 Advocating for effective training and education policies and for extended access to free, compulsory, quality education up to the minimum age for admission to employment;
- 9.4 Improving outreach (by workers' organizations) into the economic sectors in which child labour is prevalent, and implementing initiatives in particular sectors;
- 9.5 Working to ensure that effective systems are in place to combat child labour in supply chains, recognising the usefulness of social dialogue in the design and implementation of such systems. Publicising, promoting and learning from successful initiatives to combat child labour and in particular its worst forms, with the support, where appropriate, of governments and international organizations.

Action by non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors

10. NGOs and other civil society actors should be guided by the following priority actions:
- 10.1 Generating support in society for the effective abolition of child labour , including by contributing to knowledge on the extent and impact of child labour, by developing demonstration projects for up-scaling by governments, and by calling upon governments to implement education for all and effective policies against child labour, especially its worst forms;
 - 10.2 Calling upon governments to respect children's rights and ensure that appropriate services are offered to vulnerable children to protect them from child labour, especially its worst forms, and assist those that have been withdrawn from child labour;
 - 10.3 Supporting multi-stakeholder initiatives in sectors of the economy that involve the worst forms of child labour;
 - 10.4 Contributing to monitoring the incidence of child labour and related issues, including through appropriate research and capacity building;
 - 10.5 Engaging children and their families in an inclusive and participatory manner so that policy makers can consider their views when developing policies.

Action by international and regional organizations

11. International and regional organizations should be guided by the following priority actions:
- 11.1 Providing technical and where appropriate financial assistance to support governments' efforts to mainstream policies regarding the worst forms of child labour into their development strategies at national and local levels, particularly those directed at poverty reduction, health and education, child and social protection, gender equality and human development;
 - 11.2 Promoting an effective partnership across the United Nations and the multilateral system to address child labour, mainstreaming child labour into international policy and development frameworks and indicators and intensifying cooperation regarding child labour, including through the global task force on education and child labour and other existing partnerships,¹² while recognizing the lead role of the ILO in combating child labour;
 - 11.3 Mobilizing additional financing for the effective abolition of child labour, especially in its worst forms;
 - 11.4 Developing further methodologies and capacity to conduct research on child labour, particularly its worst forms, undertaking systematic impact assessments and evaluations of child labour interventions, including the differential outcomes for girls and boys and different age groups, and improving documentation and knowledge sharing;
 - 11.5 Strengthening efforts (together with governments and other relevant partners) to address hazardous work by children particularly in sectors and occupations where child labour is most prevalent;
 - 11.6 Promoting and supporting the continued development of the worldwide movement against child labour, including by supporting the work of the social partners as well as NGOs and others.

Part II – Promotion of the Roadmap and monitoring of progress

12. The promotion of action and monitoring of progress in eliminating the worst forms of child labour is to be undertaken consistent with, and complementary to the ILO supervisory system and reporting mechanisms, and to enhance progress towards the 2016 goal. Recommended actions include:
 - 12.1 The establishment, by governments, of (i) effective national follow-up mechanisms additional to their obligations under ILO Convention No. 182, to review progress to end the worst forms of child labour domestically – such as annual tri-partite meetings - and (ii) national initiatives to monitor¹³ progress in eliminating the worst forms of child labour, taking into account national action plans and other time-bound measures, and capitalizing on information available through reporting under existing obligations such as international conventions' supervisory mechanisms¹⁴ and national Millennium Development Goal monitoring systems;
 - 12.2 The founding of a “Global Leaders against Child Labour Initiative”, composed of eminent persons in order to promote the Roadmap globally and progress towards the 2016 goal;
 - 12.3 The publication of an annual World Child Labour Report by the “Global Leaders against Child Labour Initiative”, in collaboration with the Understanding Children’s Work Programme¹⁵ reviewing overall progress towards meeting the 2016 goal and analysing trends and developments. The report is to be published for World Day against Child Labour.

The participants express their gratitude to the government of the Netherlands for hosting this conference pursuant to the Global Action Plan, and acknowledge the intention of the government of the Netherlands to bring this document to the attention of the International Labour Conference and the Review Conference on the Implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Adopted by acclamation at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010, 11 May 2010.

(Endnotes)

- 1 This goal has been agreed upon by the ILO constituency of 183 member States and workers' and employers' organizations. It was endorsed by the ILO Governing Body in November 2006.
- 2 This figure is taken from the 2010 ILO Global Report on child labour.
- 3 Child labour is work done by a child who is under the minimum age specified for that kind of work, as defined by national legislation, guided by the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and ILO Convention Nos. 138 and 182.
- 4 The worst forms of child labour are defined in the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182) as:
 - (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 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.

Recommendation 190, accompanying Convention No.182, provides further guidance.

- 5 Including in the following instruments, documents and events:
 - ILO Minimum Age Convention, No. 138 (1973);
 - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989);
 - Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995);
 - International Child Labour Conferences in Amsterdam and Oslo (both 1997);
 - ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998);
 - ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182);
 - World Fit for Children (2002), outcome document of the 2002 UNGASS on Children;
 - Global Action Plan against the Worst Forms of Child Labour (2006);
 - ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008).
- 6 See ILO 2010 Global Report.
- 7 As per article 8 of ILO Convention No. 182.
- 8 The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
- 9 See *Rethinking school feeding. Social safety nets, child development and the education sector*, World Bank, 2009.
- 10 See the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998).
- 11 Employers can make use of the ILO/IOE guides: *Eliminating Child Labour: Guides for Employers*.
- 12 Existing partnerships include the Understanding Children's Work (UCW) Programme, the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All (GTF), the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT), the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture and the International Partnership for the Elimination of Child Labour in Mining and Quarrying, and the United Cities and Local Governments network (that has issued a Millennium Declaration entitled *Bringing the Millennium Development Goals back home*).

- 13 In monitoring, giving special attention to younger children, the girl child, hidden work situations in which girls are at special risk, and other groups of children with special vulnerabilities or needs (as per ILO Recommendation No. 190) and to child labour in agriculture.
- 14 The ILO Conference Committee on the Application of Standards, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- 15 The Understanding Children's Work (UCW) Programme is a joint initiative of ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank.



If I stop working my mother will have a job again

If all the children stop working, there will be millions of jobs available for their parents, and the children can go to school.