Safety and Ethics of Employment: Child labour[1]

Introduction

The year 2007 marked the fifteenth year of operation for the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). The child labour situation world-wide, although having improved according to ILO's 2006 Global Estimates, continues to be a serious problem. IPEC's overall mission - to contribute to the elimination of all child labour, and its worst forms as a priority - continues to be a key objective of the Organization. While much remains to be done, IPEC's fifteenth anniversary should also give rise to considerable optimism: much has been achieved in the last fifteen years.

The international community now recognizes the paramount need to eliminate child labour, as illustrated by the many steps taken against it by individual countries, the continued strong support of the donor community to IPEC's work, the growing integration of child labour issues in global policy frameworks, and the work of key United Nations Agencies and international financial institutions.

Today, an extensive body of knowledge and experience is available and has shown that the fight against child labour can be won, and is being won, thanks to the commitments and work of national governments, employers and workers, non-governmental actors, the UN and development communities, and individuals.

1. IPEC and the effective abolition of all forms of child labour

IPEC's work is grounded in the following ILO's fundamental Convention protecting against child labour: Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age Convention on Admission to Employment and Work (1973) and Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999) with guidance from the ILO Recommendations No. 146 and No. 190.

It should be noted that the elimination of child labour is one of the four fundamental principles and rights at work of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and is a key element of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.

IPEC activities are increasingly integrated in Decent Work Country Programmes (DWPCs). The 2006 Global Report on Child Labour and its accompanying Global Action Plan are helping to focus IPEC's strategic operational direction at the country, regional and global levels. In endorsing the Global Action Plan, the

Governing Body reconfirmed its commitment to the elimination of child labour as one of the Organization's highest priorities.

More specifically, the Global Action Plan outlines key actions to be taken over the years to 2010. In particular, the plan calls for the adoption of time-bound targets to meet the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 - and eventually all its forms - and identifies various means by which the ILO can support this process.

This target would parallel and contribute to both the Millennium Development Goals on education and poverty, and to the effective abolition of all forms of child labour, which is a fundamental goal of the ILO.

2. Europe and Central Asia

Child labour estimates cited by the 2006 Global Report suggested a decline in the number of children working in the transition economies in Europe and Central Asia. Economic growth and poverty reduction linked with political commitment to combating child labour have led to significant progress.

Europe's rate of ratification of the child labour Conventions has been very encouraging. All but two of the 51 European and Central Asian countries have yet to ratify ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182. Governments in Europe, Central Asia and Turkey have recognized that the problem of child labour exists in their countries and are committed to taking action to combat it. IPEC has been providing governments in an increasing number of countries of the region technical and financial assistance in the implementation of child labour Conventions. The IPEC strategy has been to develop models of intervention to combat child labour throughout sub-regions and for the participating countries at national level. In collaboration with other relevant ILO departments, IPEC is implementing a number of major sub-regional and country specific technical cooperation programmes in the region. As at the end of 2006, IPEC in Europe and Central Asia had some 200 action programmes and other activities under implementation by the national implementation partners across the region.

Despite the overall positive picture, there are still areas where child labour is endemic. Thus, in Central Asia and the Caucasus, many street children fall victim to the worst forms of child labour and many rural children perform hazardous work in agriculture. In addition, children from rural areas are commonly trafficked to urban centres or other countries for labour exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation. The informal economy and informal sector activities are very significant in the sub-region; the transition to a market economy without proper legislation in place has led many businesses to operate outside the formal sector.

With the expansion of the European Union, the promise of a higher living standard continues to lure people across borders in search of employment. The high rate of migration plays a role in weakening social support for children, either because they are left behind without proper supervision or because they are

exposed (with or without their parents) to the risks of irregular migration, smuggling or trafficking.

3. Child Labour Data Collection

Since its inception in 1998, the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) – the statistical arm of the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour - has provided technical assistance to over 50 countries in the collection, processing and analysis of child labour data and information.

SIMPOC has supported more than 250 child labour surveys, 60 of which were national in scope. Support was also provided to baseline, school and work place surveys as well as to a host of rapid assessments. SIMPOC data enabled the ILO to publish global and regional child labour estimates for 2000 and 2004 as well as a first-ever analysis of child labour trends for the 2000-04 period.[2]

Despite this significant progress, a number of countries remain without reliable data on child labour essential for guiding policies and operational activities. Information on certain worst forms of child labour constitutes a particularly vital gap.

In 2006, the SIMPOC Strategy Note outlined five priority areas of work for the period 2006-08:

1. Successful adoption of a resolution on child labour statistics at the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians.
2. Capacity building of national partners.
3. Mainstreaming of child labour statistics.
4. Regular trend reporting; and
5. Selected survey assistance.

In line with the above, SIMPOC has been intensifying its efforts to build national capacity in the generation and use of child labour data. To this end, a large-scale programme of regional and sub-regional training for national counterparts was conducted in the course of 2006-07.[3]

SIMPOC technical and financial assistance contributed to the implementation of child labour surveys in the African region, Asia, the Arab states, Europe and Central Asia, and in Latin America.

Since its creation, SIMPOC has provided technical and financial assistance in preparing and implementing the national Child Labour Surveys in the

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[2] F. Hagemann, Y. Diallo, A. Etienne and F. Mehran: *Global child labour trends 2000 to 2004*, op. cit.; and ILO: *The End of Child Labour: Within Reach*, op. cit.

[3] A series of regional training courses took place in Lima (February 2007), Cairo (May 2006), Phnom Penh (January 2006), Tanzania (April 2005), Senegal (July 2005) and Bangkok (November 2004).

following countries of Europe and Central Asia: Azerbaijan, Estonia[4], Georgia, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Portugal, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine[5].

The period 2006-07 saw further progress on the methodological front.

First, SIMPOC's model questionnaires were thoroughly revised and expanded. For countries committed to developing a national child labour survey with relatively advanced data collection and processing capabilities, new comprehensive standard questionnaires were elaborated. For other countries, a shorter questionnaire is recommended that facilitates the collection of essential child labour data. For researching the various worst forms of child labour, rapid assessment and baseline survey questionnaires are available. The SIMPOC Manual on Methodologies for Data Collection through Surveys contains sample questionnaires for the various types of child labour surveys.

Second, more specific approaches to sampling in the child labour area were developed, resulting in a soon-to-be-published comprehensive manual on the subject.

Third, work was successfully started to elaborate data collection methodologies which would allow countries to estimate the extent of the worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work at the national level. This concerns, for instance, the measurement of forced labour of children or flows of trafficking within and between countries. In early 2007, SIMPOC organized an international workshop in Istanbul to present some preliminary progress in this challenging area and discuss how to scale up some of its hitherto more experimental surveys.

SIMPOC's long-standing expertise and methodological output will be taken to another level of international expertise at the end of 2008, when the conceptual framework, definitions and methods of child labour data collection will be discussed at the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS).

The Conference is the authoritative body to set international standards in labour statistics. The18th ICLS will be held in Geneva from 24 November to 5 December 2008. One of the Conference's major objectives will be to discuss and adopt a Resolution concerning child labour statistics, making it possible to reliably compare relevant child labour statistics across countries and over time.

With the above in mind, during the last two years, SIMPOC has been preparing the ground for the adoption of the Resolution starting with comprehensive background research into some critical issues, such as the measurement of non-economic activities of children, a series of national and international consultations were undertaken to discuss successive drafts of the instrument to be discussed at the Conference. Also, the Understanding Children's Work (UCW) - an inter-agency research cooperation project on child labour between the ILO, World

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[4] Rapid Assessment Report.

[5] For the metadata and statistics of the Child Labour Surveys conducted in Azerbaijan, Estonia, Portugal, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine see:
http://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/Questionnairessurveysandreports/lang--en/index.htm

Bank and the UNICEF – provided essential analytical support to the standard setting endeavour.

Efforts were also stepped up to better disseminate SIMPOC tools, methodological guidelines and the findings of IPEC-supported data collection. In mid-2007, the new SIMPOC website was launched. The aim is to continuously upgrade the site and add a number of user-friendly inter-active data request features to it.

4. IPEC's Reporting on Results Based Indicators

As documented above, IPEC's work is guided by the principles enshrined in the ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age Convention on Admission to Employment and Work (1973) and Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999). IPEC contributes to the strategic and operational objectives of the ILO as a whole, specifically those concerned with fundamental principles and rights at work[6].

Interventions that member States carry out to implement the two fundamental ILO Conventions on child labour serve as indicator of progress towards achieving the key outcome that concerns IPEC. These interventions can be related to the time-bound programme approach, legal reform, formulation of specific child labour policies and programmes, mainstreaming of child labour concerns into development policies, data collection, or the introduction of child labour monitoring mechanisms. Some examples of such interventions are given below:

- The adaptation of the legal framework to the international standards, including the definition of a list of hazardous occupations for children.

- The formulation of WFCL-specific policies and programmes, considering the special situation of girls and setting time-bound targets.

- The inclusion of child labour concerns, considering the special situation of girls, in relevant development, social and anti -poverty policies and programmes.

- The collection and analysis of data on the child labour situation.

Fifty-one countries have collected and analysed data on the child labour situation. For example in Ukraine, a rapid assessment survey in six sectors of the informal economy was carried out in two pilot regions of Donetsk and Kherson. Findings of this survey will be used to build a knowledge base on existing forms of child labour and for policy formulation. In Mexico, a study on child domestic work has been conducted in the Federal District using the Rapid Assessment methodology.

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[6] Adopted in 1998, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work commits Member States to respect and promote principles and rights in four categories, whether or not they have ratified the relevant Conventions. These categories are: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, **the abolition of child labour** and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

- The establishment of a credible and comprehensive child labour monitoring and reporting mechanism.

Thus, trade unions and employers organizations in Turkey have concentrated their efforts on children working in industry, street trades and in seasonal agriculture work. They have set up a child labour bureau in Adana through which information on working children in the industrial sectors they represent is collected. This information has been used to design policies to offer better training opportunities to apprentices, remove children from unsuitable work, and direct child workers to formal education where possible.

5. Reporting on other indicators of importance to IPEC

In order to provide a fuller picture of the Programme's reach and impact, besides reporting on the interventions listed in the previous section, IPEC is required to report on three additional indicators. These concern: (i) the increase in the number of constituents that use ILO methodologies, research or good practices to eliminate child labour; (ii) the number of new ratifications of Conventions No. 138 and No. 182; and (iii) the number of children who directly or indirectly benefit from ILO projects or those of its partners.

The use of ILO-produced methodologies, approaches, research and good practices on child labour is widespread. Thus, according to the information available, only in 2006-07 close to 175 instances of specific use of tools and methodologies by member States and constituents were reported.

Research studies, data collection, baseline studies, school-based surveys, rapid assessments, policy studies, evaluation reports (particularly thematic evaluations), good practices compendiums, desk reviews, progress reports and other documents remain key sources and means for building and sharing knowledge.

6. Child Labour Data Country Briefs[7]

Some time ago, SIMPOC started compiling a series of publication where it put together data from its national surveys and enriched it with information on national legislation relevant to children's work as well as material on the worst forms of child labour. The resulting national *Child Labour Data Country Briefs* are intended to encourage more in-depth research and help raise further awareness of child labour.

It is well-known that the use of non-harmonized indicators for similar surveys makes cross-country comparisons often rather difficult. For this reason, one of the objectives of the collection of Country Briefs is to provide a framework for international comparison based on a core set of child labour indicators.

Since Child Labour Data Country Briefs are based on statistics collected from various

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[7] See: ILO, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. *Child Labour Data Country Profiles: Technical note*. Geneva 2004.

countries, the following information should serve as a short technical guide to each volume of the series.

SIMPOC national child labour surveys

These are household-based national sample surveys whose target respondents are parents or guardians and children living in the same household. The surveys are carried out as stand-alone surveys or as modules attached to other national household-based surveys such as the labour force surveys.

Data generated from these surveys cover both economic and non-economic activities (such as household chores) of children; demographic and social characteristics of household members; working hours; the nature of activities carried out by children; health and safety issues including injuries at work as well as perceptions of parents about children's work. With regard to the worst forms of child labour, the national surveys usually capture information on occupations targeted by Convention No. 182 as "hazardous work".

General background of the country

Below are definitions of selected socioeconomic indicators employed in the *Child Labour Data Country Briefs*. Data populated in this section are derived from the relevant *UNDP*

Human Development Reports.

- **Population**

Definition: Total population is based on the de facto definition of population, which counts all residents regardless of legal status or citizenship, except for refugees not permanently settled in the country of asylum, and who are generally considered part of the population of their country of origin.

- **Literacy** (% of ages 15 and above)

Definition: The adult literacy rate is the percentage of people ages 15 and above who can, with understanding, read and write a short, simple statement on their everyday life.

- **Net primary enrolment** (% of relevant age group)

Definition: Net enrolment ratio is the ratio of the number of children of official school age (as defined by the national education system) who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age. Primary education provides children with basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills along with an elementary understanding of such subjects as history, geography, natural science, social science, art, and music. This is based on the International Standard Classification of Education, 1976 (ISCED76) and 1997 (ISCED97).

- **GDP per capita, PPP** (current international $)

Definition: Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita based on purchasing power parity

(PPP). PPP GDP is gross domestic product converted to international dollars using purchasing power parity rates. An international dollar has the same purchasing power over GDP as the U.S. dollar has in the United States. GDP at purchaser's prices is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources. Data are in current international dollars.

- **Human Development Index**

Definition: The human development index (HDI) measures the average achievement of a country in basic human capabilities. The HDI indicates whether people lead a long and healthy life, are educated and knowledgeable and enjoy a decent standard of living. The HDI examines the average condition of all people in a country: distributional inequalities for various groups of society have to be calculated separately.

Child labour indicators based on SIMPOC national household surveys

Below is the list of child labour indicators which has been provided if the underlying datasets permit it.

- **Children's activities**

Children by sex, type of activity and residence.

This indicator depicts what children in the country do and how they combine their activities. The different categories used for classifying children's activities (excluding housekeeping) are: (i) work only (economically active not attending school); (ii) study only (attending school not economically active); (iii) work and study (economically active and attending school); and (iv) neither (not economically active, not attending school). These are the four mutually exclusive categories.

It should be noted that the notion of working children is based on the concept of economic activity. To be counted as economically active, a child must have worked for at least one hour on any day during a seven-day reference period. The term "study" refers to children actually attending school during the reference period

"Economically active children" is a statistical rather than a legal notion, as defined by the UN System of National Accounts (1993 Rev. 3). The quantitative measures of working children include:

- Persons in paid employment (paid in cash or in kind);
- Self-employed;
- Own-account workers;
- Apprentices who receive payment in cash or in kind; and
- Contributing family workers who consume or produce economic goods or services for
  their own household consumption.

The above definition excludes (i) daily chores undertaken in the child's own household; (ii) activities that are part of schooling; and (iii) children seeking work for which they are

available if it is offered.

- **Child involvement in household chores**

Percentage of children involved in household chores

Child involvement in household chores refers to the proportion of all children who perform household chores for at least one hour per day in their own homes.

- **Characteristics and conditions of child labour**

Employment by industry

Distribution of working children by industry, age group and sex

The information on industry presents the economic sector in which children work. It breaks down employment into three broad groupings of economic activity: agriculture, industry and services.   This is based on the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (Rev. 2 and Rev. 3).

The agricultural sector comprises activities in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing. The industry sector comprises mining and quarrying, manufacturing, construction and public utilities (electricity, gas and water). The services sector consists of wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels, transport, storage and communications, finance, insurance, real estate and business services, and community, social personal services.

- **Intensity of economic activity**

Working children: average weekly working hours, by age and sex

The intensity of economic activity is measured by the average weekly hours spent carrying out economic activities among working children.

- **Child labour and children's education**

School attendance: children in economic activity versus children not in economic activity

It refers to the proportion of economically active and non economically active children attending school, where school attendance is defined as children actually attending school during the reference week.

- **Children's activity status and household income level**

Regarding the household income level, we use the quintile-based method, which offers a simple but effective way of analyzing trends in characteristics of households across the expenditures distribution of the population in a given country. It avoids calculation of the poverty line. It also provides a more disaggregated analysis with a better contrast between the poorest and the other poverty quintiles. It is to be noted that the first quintile represents lowest expenditure category and the fifth quintile the highest.

Cross-tabulating income quintiles with child activities cannot establish causalities, but can help detect important correlations between household poverty (according to income quintiles) and child activities.

By way of illustration, the "Ukraine: Child Labour Data Brief" is attached to this report as Annex 1.

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