

Accelerating action against child labour

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

# Accelerating action against child labour

Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration  
on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

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## Preface

**T**his Global Report comes at a critical juncture. Looking back to 2008–09, the world has had to cope with the impact of a financial and economic crisis. Ahead lies the challenge of sustaining recovery and building an employment-oriented framework for strong and balanced growth. This defines the context for future action to end child labour. The task is enormous; our commitment must not waver and it must be reflected in deeds.

Four years ago, in the second Global Report on child labour, I underlined the fact that a breakthrough in the fight against child labour was possible. That Report showed that child labour was declining. Public awareness had increased; indifference and denial were no longer possible. The commitment of member States was reflected in the high ratification of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the very rapid ratification of the Worst Forms of Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), which came into force ten years ago. Legislative reform was proceeding apace, new approaches were being applied. There was a widespread mobilization across governments, employers' and workers' organizations, enterprises and consumers, and members of the general public.

Given these developments, we were optimistic enough to set the goal of ending the worst forms of child labour by 2016. The challenge we set ourselves was to raise our game and ensure that we would continue to give effective leadership at all levels in the world movement against child labour.

Substantial progress has been achieved throughout the world. This Global Report highlights important national achievements. Tripartism and social dialogue have been important assets and major means of promoting sustainable approaches to the prevention and elimination of child labour. The social partners are deploying their comparative advantages

within the workplace, and have been active in global and national policy development.

Yet the picture which emerges from this third Global Report and the recent monitoring of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is mixed. There is cause for some concern. On the positive side, there is a welcome decline of child labour among girls and among children in hazardous work. We are also within sight of universal ratification of Convention No. 182. These are significant achievements.

But overall, indications are that progress is uneven: neither fast enough nor comprehensive enough to reach the goals that we have set. This Report describes a slowing down since 2006 of the global pace of reduction. Child labour among boys and young people in the 15–17 age group has risen. In sub-Saharan Africa progress has stalled – this is disappointing. Africa had been identified as a region needing particular attention in our last Report. The bottom line is that some 215 million children across the world are still trapped in child labour.

The persistence of child labour is one of the biggest failures of development efforts. And now there are concerns that the global economic downturn will put a further brake on progress towards the 2016 goal for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour and render the challenge of achieving the MDGs all the more difficult. The economic downturn cannot become an excuse for diminished ambition and inaction. Instead it offers the opportunity to implement the policy measures that work for people, for recovery and for sustainable development.

The Global Jobs Pact adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2009 applies the Decent Work Agenda to the crisis. It offers an integrated portfolio of tried and tested policies centred on employment and social protection measures that



are indispensable for a “working out of poverty” approach. The measures protect and empower vulnerable people while also helping to sustain aggregate demand. Such policies can mitigate the impact of the crisis on families living in poverty, keep children out of child labour and help to stand them in good stead for a future free from child labour. The UN system crisis initiatives developed by the UN Chief Executives Board, specifically those relating to jobs and social protection with which the ILO is closely involved, offer another avenue to advance this approach.

New and large-scale efforts are needed in order to re-establish our hope of attaining the 2016 target. The situation today calls for a re-energized campaign against child labour. We must scale up action and move into a higher gear. At this time, the ILO’s leadership in keeping up the momentum for the elimination of child labour is all the more critical.

The directions for the future are clear. Mutually reinforcing action is required in the following areas: confirming and enlarging access to universal basic education; building a basic social protection floor; and promoting productive employment opportunities for parents in order to set families on the route out of poverty and children out of child labour. This integrated approach is key to securing significant and lasting impact. There must also be a greater focus on agriculture which accounts for the majority of child labourers. Africa calls for special attention.

Social dialogue is a key vehicle for progress. Through reinvigorated advocacy, the tripartite ILO must be a central actor and a powerful advocate in the movement against child labour. It will need to extend and reinforce coalitions for the cause, tapping the potential of new media for this purpose.

Since the early 1990s the International Labour Organization has played its role in bringing child labour to the global agenda. The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has been on the ground since 1992, and in the 2008–09 biennium it was operational in over 90 countries. Drawing on the Decent Work Agenda and the integrated approach it advocates, IPEC provides support to our constituents to mainstream child labour in key policy areas and to promote laws and practices to fight child labour, starting with its worst forms. Increasingly, Decent Work Country Programmes have become the framework for our engagement. The ILO’s participation in the UN Reform process has led to new opportunities to advance the goal of decent work and, as part of it, the elimination of child labour.

IPEC is approaching its 20th anniversary. This Report calls for a shift of focus towards knowledge development, evidence-based analysis of policies and dissemination. The ILO’s influence and value added will be very much linked to the quality of insights and the knowledge that we are able to generate. At the same time, many countries still need assistance in scaling up their programmes to achieve the necessary impact. International solidarity – including the commitment of resources – will continue to be indispensable to support these lines of action.

These are testing times for the realization of our values and commitments. Progress is fragile. Countries too are fragile in the face of endemic conflict and natural disasters. We must rekindle the vision, the conviction and the courage to make the changes that can transform the lives of children and their families. We will not get there with a “business-as-usual” approach and fragmented and piecemeal initiatives.

In the 1990s when the child labour issue came of age, countries and communities rallied strongly to the cause. We must recapture the sense of urgency. It is time to re-energize the campaign that drives the fight forward and to chart a road map that can keep us all on course towards the goals we have set.

The impetus for action will be given a boost at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference in May 2010. Hosted by the Government of the Netherlands and supported by the ILO, it follows the milestone Conferences held in Amsterdam and Oslo in 1997 which were instrumental in paving the way for the global consensus on action against child labour.

In the last few years South–South cooperation has gained ground as an engine for action on global issues including child labour. Brazil has been a leader. Such initiatives are to be encouraged in keeping with the spirit of Article 8 of Convention No. 182, which calls for member States to take appropriate steps to assist one another in addressing the worst forms of child labour.

We cannot abandon our responsibility towards the world’s children for whom child labour is a matter of survival. We must now reassert our conviction that a world without child labour is possible; within reach. The world cannot grow weary of the cause when 215 million children are losing their childhood and the chance of a better future. With the will, the means are there to do better and to do more.

Juan Somavia  
*Director-General of the ILO*





## Executive summary

In 2006 the International Labour Organization set a visionary target – to bring to an end all the worst forms of child labour by 2016. With the target date drawing closer, the global campaign to end child labour is at a critical juncture. There are clear signs of progress but also disconcerting gaps in the global response. As things are today, the pace of progress is not fast enough to achieve the 2016 target. A flagging in the worldwide movement, a certain “child labour fatigue”, must be prevented.

The challenge is to deliver on the ambitious agenda endorsed by the ILO’s Governing Body in 2006 by mobilizing the political will to prioritize children in national budgets and development efforts. There is no reason or excuse for commitments to fall victim to shifting priorities during the global economic and employment crisis. A world without child labour is within grasp. Many countries are on the right track, and they are experiencing success. Yet there needs to be a reawakened sense of urgency so that the elimination of child labour becomes a world-wide reality.

The focus of this third Global Report on child labour under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work is about honouring the commitments made in 2006 with the adoption of a Global Action Plan. The Action Plan set out time-bound targets for the elimination of child labour. Important obligations and commitments were entered into by ILO constituents. Four years is a short time to ensure major change, but it does, however, permit the Organization to take stock and gauge progress. In particular we need to know whether the world is on track to meeting the target of eliminating all the worst forms of child labour by 2016.

To this end, this Global Report adopts the same four-part structure as the two previous Reports.

Part I presents a dynamic global picture, updating global trends introduced in the 2006 Global Report and setting out progress in the ratification of ILO standards. Part II reviews the progress made in implementing the Global Action Plan. From this review, Part III examines key challenges and gaps that remain and how these can be addressed. Finally, Part IV sets out an agenda to accelerate progress towards meeting the 2016 target.

The new global estimates presented in Part I of the Report have benefited from refinements embodied in the Resolution Concerning Statistics of Child Labour adopted by the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2008. Additionally, valuable data from over 60 new national surveys conducted between 2004 and 2008 have been included.

A rather nuanced picture emerges from the new global estimates. Child labour continues to decline, but only modestly, as 215 million children are still affected. There are also fewer children in hazardous work, a measure of which is often used as a proxy for the worst forms of child labour. The overall pattern from four years ago has been maintained: the more harmful the work and the more vulnerable the children involved, the faster the decline. Nevertheless, a staggering number of 115 million children are still exposed to hazardous work.

The Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean regions continue to reduce child labour, while sub-Saharan Africa has witnessed an increase in both relative and absolute terms. The region also has the highest incidence of children working, with one in four children engaged in child labour.

Global child labour trends are distinguished by age and sex. There have been increases in child labour among boys but considerable and welcome decreases among girls. Most of the global decline

in child labour has been due to reduced numbers of working girls. Alarmingly, there has been a 20 per cent increase in child labour in the 15–17 years age group – from 52 million to 62 million. The largest sector for child labour remains agriculture, where the majority of children work as unpaid family members.

Much progress has been made in the ratification of ILO standards in many parts of the world, accompanied by concrete action for their implementation. After a decade, the world is close to universal ratification of Convention No. 182. At the same time, Convention No. 138 has benefited from the rapid pace of ratification of Convention No. 182. Impressive as this global picture is, it masks important qualitative gaps, with several countries still to ratify the ILO child labour standards, particularly Convention No. 138. A significant proportion of the world's children are still not covered by these fundamental Conventions.

Global Reports provide an important opportunity to reflect on progress over the preceding four years. Part II of the Report examines progress in implementing the 2006 Global Action Plan. The Global Action Plan is a ten-year plan on how the ILO can support a global process leading to the realization of the 2016 target. It follows a three-pronged approach: supporting national responses; deepening and strengthening the worldwide movement; and promoting further integration of child labour within overall ILO priorities.

Nations are not condemned to child labour. Governments have options when it comes to policy choices and budgetary allocations. Political commitment is therefore central to tackling child labour. The Report provides a number of examples where the ILO's technical cooperation, in particular through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), has supported national commitment through mainstreaming child labour concerns in key policy areas and at all strategic levels. The Time-bound Programme (TBP) approach, grounded in Convention No. 182, has been an important vehicle for national efforts and for ILO support to them, as have the many knowledge products made available, including through training activities. What is particularly encouraging is the number of leadership initiatives. This is especially noteworthy given that mobilizing and sustaining support to the worldwide movement was viewed four years ago as perhaps the most important challenge. There have also been significant initiatives in advocacy; in enhanced partnerships in combating the worst forms of child labour; in support of corporate social responsibility; with the Education for All (EFA) movement; and in data collection and research. Moreover,

2010 is the year of a major international conference on child labour at The Hague, an event called for in the second Global Report. Child labour continues to be addressed centrally in the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and is included as a priority outcome in many if not most Decent Work Country Programmes. A number of important initiatives have been taken as part of a life-cycle approach to better integrate child labour and youth employment. At the same time, practical tools and studies have been developed to explore the gender dimension in the ILO's child labour work, for instance through the selection of the World Day theme for 2009.

Perhaps the most important step forward in recent years has been the overwhelming global consensus in support of Education for All. Indeed, beyond the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of universal primary education by 2015, there is increasing and convergent understanding that the aim must be, at least, *basic* education for all – primary plus two or three years of secondary education. That is required for two key reasons. First, to ensure that youth can enter the workforce with the basic skills required to pursue a decent working life. Second, because if the minimum school leaving age is lower than the national general minimum age for entry into employment, child labour will be an inevitable result.

Education is not the sole solution, but when it is free, full time, compulsory and of quality, it is the most important part of the sum. A key ILO contribution to the global debate has been the clear message that this equation is straightforward: *we will not eliminate child labour without universal education and, conversely, we will not ensure every child is in school unless we bring an end to child labour, in particular its worst forms.*

The 2006 Report set the end of 2008 as an interim step for member States to put in place appropriate time-bound measures to reach the 2016 target. Though the response to the 2008 target in Latin America has been on the whole positive, there has been a less encouraging response in Africa and parts of Asia. What can be reasonably concluded is that, in many if not most cases, the 2008 target has not been met in any meaningful way. The intention to focus on Africa has likewise met with a mixed response. Though efforts have been made to design a specific strategy focused on supporting countries in developing National Action Plans, the majority of countries have yet to complete the process. International support for Africa remains critical as does the generation of an Africa-wide movement in support of the elimination of child labour.

Part III of the Report examines the remaining challenges in a more systematic way. In the broader context of progress on the MDGs and, in particular, the pace regarding universal primary education, the signs are not too encouraging. The world is not currently on track to achieve the MDGs on the worst forms of child labour by the ILO's 2016 target. The Report calls for a greater policy focus on the elimination of child labour. There is still a long way to go in creating the political and institutional environment that prioritizes combating child labour when it comes to the formulation of national budgets and the highest reaches of policy-making.

Greater national ownership and ambition supported by employers' and workers' organizations is urgently needed if we are to get on track for 2016. A re-energized worldwide movement is necessary to create a political climate for enhanced national efforts. The ILO's social partners continue to contribute significantly to the global campaign against child labour either explicitly or by performing their mainstream role as good employers and effective trade unions. Global union federations have been actively working against child labour in the education, agriculture, building, mining, and garment sectors, among others. The social partners are most effective when they deploy their considerable comparative advantages in pursuit of decent work for adults, ensuring decent livelihoods and secure incomes for working people and their families. A stronger involvement of the social partners in the development of National Action Plans, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and in sectoral, workplace and community activities could further enhance capacity, and strengthen and re-energize the worldwide movement, as could better-targeted and more ambitious advocacy efforts.

Important programming gaps also remain. Meeting the 2016 target and the ultimate goal of the effective abolition of child labour requires a breakthrough in agriculture, where most child labourers work. Most of the worst forms of child labour are neglected because children are the hardest to reach by conventional means. However, there are signs that responses to and in the informal economy are picking up, not least through the recent success of rural

workers' organizations in the recruitment of millions of new members.

Set against these many challenges, there are considerable opportunities. The United Nations reform process offers the prospect of a coherent international support approach at national level. Increasing South–South cooperation provides the potential to work with new and more powerful global child labour champions, not least in supporting a “focus on Africa” strategy. However, the critical fight against child labour has to be won in South Asia, where the greatest numbers of child labourers are to be found. Often it is the poverty of policy rather than poverty itself that keeps the mass of children out of school and in child labour.

Part IV does not present a new detailed action plan as the Global Action Plan contained in the 2006 Report continues to be valid. Rather, in this concluding section of the Report an attempt is made to clarify the key elements of a future agenda. This analysis is set alongside the likely impact of the recent financial and economic crisis which has the potential to impede or roll back progress. The Report argues that the global crisis nevertheless offers many opportunities to redouble efforts and arrive at innovative solutions, not least in fashioning new financial instruments.

Finally, the Report outlines a series of key steps to ensure accelerated progress towards the 2016 target. It concludes with specific action for the ILO in providing intellectual leadership, support to the worldwide movement, strengthening the social partners, and setting and implementing regional priorities.

The simple message is this: If we are to achieve our immediate shared goal of the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016, the ILO's constituents and the international organizations have to step up both policy and action. We need effective social dialogue and tripartite national ownership of coherent policy, supported by consistent and enhanced international support and cooperation, which deliver decent work and education for all. Project-based interventions may demonstrate good practice, enhance capacity in member States, and may help hundreds of thousands of children. But now is the time for all constituents to keep their promises to the world's 215 million child labourers.

## List of abbreviations

ACT/EMP	ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASI	Anti-Slavery International
BGMEA	Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association
BIC	Brazil, India and China
BRIC	Brazil, Russian Federation, India and China
CCT	Conditional cash transfer
CEACR	Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
CEART	Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CHODAWU	Conservation, Hotels, Domestic and Allied Workers Union (United Rep. of Tanzania)
CIETT	International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies
CONAETI	National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labour (Argentina)
CONTAG	Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura (Brazil)
COTU	Central Organization of Trade Unions (Kenya)
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EFA	Education for All
ETI	Ethical Trading Initiative
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FNPAIA	National Federation of Employers in Agriculture and Food Industry (Republic of Moldova)
FNPETI	Fórum Nacional de Prevenção e Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil (Brazil)
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFA	Global framework agreement
GIVAS	Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GNP	Gross National Product

GTF	Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All
GUF	Global Union Federations
HMS	Hind Mazdoor Sabha (India)
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IBSA	India-Brazil-South Africa Trilateral
ICEM	International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions
ICFTU	now the ITUC
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICMM	International Council on Mining and Metals
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFAP	International Federation of Agricultural Producers
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILO-EAST	Education and Skills Training for Youth Employment
INDUS	India/United States Child Labour Project
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
ITGLWF	International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
IUF	International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Study
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MERCOSUR	Southern Cone Common Market
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MNE	Multinational enterprise
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NFE	Non-formal education
NOTU	National Organization of Trade Unions (Uganda)
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PALOP	Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa
PETI	Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil (Brazil)
PIEF	Programa Integrado de Educação e Formação (Portugal)
SAP-FL	Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour
SCA	Svenska Cellulosa Aktiebolaget (Sweden)
SCCI	Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Pakistan)
SCREAM	Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
SNA	System of National Accounts
TBP	Time-bound Programme
TISK	Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations
TUCA-CSA	Regional organization of the ITUC for the Americas
UCW	Understanding Children's Work
UN	United Nations



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UN.GIFT	United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking
UNI	Global Union for skills and services
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UPE	Universal primary education
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WISE	Work Improvements in Small Enterprises
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZCTU	Zambia Congress of Trade Unions
ZFE	Zambia Federation of Employers







## Introduction

1. None of us wants to live in a world where more than 200 million children have to work at the expense of their and our future. In 2000, ILO Convention No. 182 on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour came into force. Six years later, the ILO constituency set out the goal of eliminating all the worst forms of child labour by 2016. The Global Action Plan, endorsed by the ILO Governing Body in November 2006, provides the strategic framework to meet this ambitious target.

2. This Report charts the progress made by the Organization and its partners in this effort. There are many accomplishments to build on. But, as new global child labour estimates show, the pace must be faster and our vision and actions more ambitious if we are to rid the world of the scourge of child labour. Moreover, we face the consequences of a global economic crisis whose full social impact has yet to be assessed. At worst, it could roll back some of the recent achievements made and prevent the international community from keeping its promises to the world's children. We cannot allow this to happen. The effort to restore the global economy must include the necessary political decisions to put every child in school and end child labour.

3. Great causes win the day when people fight for them. Yet a shared agreement that something must be done is not enough to win the fight against child labour if people and governments are not active enough. The global campaign to end child labour *is* a cause worth struggling for. The ILO Governing Body, in endorsing the 2006 Global Action Plan, stated that eliminating child labour is one of the Organization's highest priorities.

4. This is a testing time for our values. Those values and principles were most recently reaffirmed in the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2008.<sup>1</sup> The elimination of child labour is a global cause at the heart of what the ILO stands for, and the very existence of child labour reveals a major gap in achieving the aim of Decent Work. Ensuring that every child is free of the need to work and has a good education is crucial. Combating child labour means breaking the cycle of denied education, uncertain employment for youth, and all too certain household poverty.

5. The work of the International Labour Organization and its partners to eliminate child labour has a profound effect on the daily lives of millions of children and their families in poor communities across the globe. It has removed boys from navigating narrow mining tunnels and ensured that girls are in school rather than walking for hours to collect firewood.

6. Continued support to governments, employers and employers' and workers' organizations to develop and better implement policies and programmes has helped to close the revolving door whereby new children simply replace those withdrawn.

7. This Report shows how strong political commitment, translated into policy choices and actions and backed by adequate knowledge, capacity and resources, can ensure a large-scale impact on the problem of child labour. Upscaling the elimination of child labour – the theme of this Report – requires knowing what works and having the will and the means to act on it.

1. ILO: Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 97th Session, Geneva, 10 June 2008.

8. The Report builds on the foundations of the first and second Global Reports on the effective abolition of child labour under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The first Report, *A future without child labour* (2002), was comprehensive in scope and highlighted the key issues to be addressed if progress was to be made in the global effort against child labour. The report introduced a three-pillar strategic approach: reinforcing the work of IPEC; strengthening the worldwide movement; and integrating child labour concerns across the ILO's Decent Work Agenda. The second Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach* (2006), was the first report to document global child labour trends. These positive global trends encouraged the Organization to set the target of eliminating all the worst forms of child labour by 2016; as an interim step, all member States would design and put in place appropriate time-bound measures by the end of 2008.

9. The action plan in the second Global Report set out clear commitments and responsibilities for the ILO under the three strategic pillars. First, to support national responses to child labour, particularly through more effective integration of child labour concerns into development policy frameworks. Second, to help deepen and strengthen the worldwide movement in support of national action. Finally, to better integrate child labour within the ILO's overall Decent Work Agenda.

10. This action plan transcended the usual four-year cycle of ILO Global Reports and indeed has had significant resonance beyond the Organization. As we approach the midpoint towards the 2016 target, the present Report takes stock of the progress the world has made over the last four years in responding to its commitments and identifies the main hurdles

impeding progress and factors that might keep countries from reaching the target.

11. The focus of the Report is on honouring the commitments made in 2006 and encouraging all ILO constituents to live up to their responsibilities to make the vision of bringing an end to child labour a reality for millions of working children. Significantly, this means raising the level of ambition as an Organization by scaling up our efforts. To this end, the Report uses the same four-part structure as the previous reports.

12. Part I presents a dynamic global picture, updating global trends and setting out progress in the ratification of ILO standards. It highlights the progress being made in reducing child labour and in the ratification and application of ILO instruments.

13. Part II reviews responses to the 2006 Global Action Plan by the ILO and its partners under the three strategic pillars. There have been considerable achievements in each of the three areas, particularly as regards the worldwide movement. This is encouraging given that strengthening the worldwide movement was viewed four years ago as perhaps the major challenge.

14. Drawing on that review, Part III examines key challenges and gaps that remain and how these might be translated into opportunities to make further progress. Such an analysis necessarily requires revisiting some themes examined earlier in the report, but from a fresh angle, whilst new themes are introduced.

15. Finally, Part IV sets out future scenarios and strategic elements before putting forward a series of key steps and specific action for the ILO that can accelerate progress towards meeting the challenge of the 2016 target.





## Part I

# A dynamic global picture

### New global estimates on the nature and extent of child labour

#### *Progress in child labour statistics*

**16.** Over the last decade the ILO has become the world's most important source of child labour-related statistical information. Through the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), established in 1998, the ILO has supported more than 300 child labour surveys, 66 of which have been national in scope. It is this technical and financial capability that has enabled the ILO to publish global and regional child labour estimates for the 2000 and 2004 reference years and underpin those for 2008 presented below. An important outcome of this technical capability has been closer ties with key partners, especially through the inter-agency Understanding Children's Work (UCW) programme, launched in 2000 in collaboration with the World Bank and UNICEF. As a result, more countries have information on the nature and extent of child labour, serving as the basis on which to plan and act. National capacity to collect and analyse data has also been strengthened significantly.

**17.** One of the main objectives of ILO Global Reports is to provide a dynamic global picture of the problem worldwide. The 2006 Global Report presented, for the first time, trends in child labour. The estimates revealed that child work was declining and that the more harmful the work and the more vulnerable the children involved, the faster the decline. The data also provided a gender dimension to types and incidence of child labour.

**18.** The new estimates presented in this Report have benefited from:

- the resolution concerning statistics of child labour adopted by the 18th International

Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2008, which lays down statistical standards for the measurement of child labour;

- more and richer data from national household surveys conducted between 2004 and 2008;
- an integrated approach of estimating the broader category of "children in employment" and the narrower band of "child labour"; and
- an improved extrapolation and estimation methodology, which is fully compatible with previous exercises.

#### *Main findings*

**19.** Our estimation of child labour trends for the period 2004 to 2008 shows the following:

- Globally, child labour continues to decline, albeit to a lesser extent than before. There are still 215 million children caught in child labour.
- The number of children in hazardous work, often used as a proxy for measuring the extent of the worst forms of child labour, is declining, particularly among those below 15 years of age. The overall rate of reduction, however, has slowed. There are still 115 million children in hazardous work.
- Children's work is declining in the Asia-Pacific region and in Latin America and the Caribbean, but it is increasing in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Among girls there is a significant decrease. Among boys and older children (age 15 to 17), however, the trends show some increase.
- Most child labourers continue to work in agriculture. Only one in five working children is in paid employment. The overwhelming majority are unpaid family workers.

**Box 1.1**  
**New ICLS resolution and statistical definitions of children's work**

- The International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) is responsible for setting international standards in the world of labour statistics. The 18th conference, meeting in Geneva in November–December 2008, was a crucial event in that it examined and established directions for the statistical measurement of child labour. The resulting resolution concerning Statistics of Child Labour adopted at the meeting set forth the definitions that will guide all subsequent statistical work, and which are the basis for the estimates in this Report. These international standards include provisions for a broad statistical definition of child labour, encompassing children between 5 and 17 years old who, in the reference period, have been engaged in any activity falling within the general production boundary as defined by the System of National Accounts (SNA). These are referred to as *children in productive activities*.
- Under this broad definition, child labour measurement includes *children in employment* and *children in hazardous unpaid household services*, i.e. unpaid household services performed (a) for long hours; (b) in an unhealthy environment, involving unsafe equipment or heavy loads; (c) in dangerous locations, and so on.
- Due to data restrictions and in order to maintain comparability with earlier ILO global estimates, the main estimation process was based on the concept of *children in employment* in conformity with the SNA production boundary.
- Consequently, in the new estimates, we distinguish between three main forms of working children: children in employment, children in child labour and children in hazardous work. Based on the above resolution, these categories are statistically defined as follows.
- *Children in employment* are those engaged in any activity falling within the production boundary in the SNA for at least one hour during the reference period. This refers to the economic activities of children, covering all market production and certain types of non-market production (principally the production of goods and services for own use). It includes forms of work in both the formal and informal economy; inside and outside family settings; work for pay or profit (in cash or in kind, part time or full time), or for domestic work outside the child's own household for an employer (with or without pay).
- *Children in child labour* under the SNA production boundary is a subset of children in employment. It includes those in the worst forms of child labour and children in employment below the minimum age, excluding children in permissible light work, if applicable. It is therefore a narrower concept than “children in employment”, and excludes all those children who only work a few hours a week in permitted light work and those above the minimum age whose work is not classified as “hazardous work” or among other worst forms of child labour.
- *Hazardous work by children* is any activity or occupation that, by its nature or type, has or leads to adverse effects on the child's safety, health and moral development. In general, hazardous work conditions include night work and long hours of work, exposure to physical, psychological or sexual abuse; work underground, underwater, at dangerous altitudes or in confined spaces; work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads; and work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health. Hazardous work by children is often treated as a proxy category of the worst forms of child labour. This is for two reasons. First, reliable national data on the worst forms other than hazardous work, such as children in bonded and forced labour or in commercial sexual exploitation, are still difficult to come by. Second, children in hazardous work account for the overwhelming majority of those in the worst forms (at least 90 per cent).

### Overview of child labour trends

**20.** The ILO's child labour estimates and trends are broken down by age, sex, region, status in employment and sector of work. The following tables and charts show these results.

**21.** Table 1.1 takes the total number of children in the age group 5–17 and compares it with the three main categories of working children. This

comparison helps us see the proportion of children in the different categories. In short,

- *all children* (the age group 5–17) = 1.586 billion  
This is 20 million more than in 2004 and a 1.3 per cent increase in the age cohort.
- *children in employment* = 306 million  
These are children, age 5–17, who are doing some kind of work. Some of this work is permissible according to the ILO Conventions and

national law (see statistical definitions in box 1.1 on p. 6). Although there are registered cases of children under 5 years working, almost all child labour occurs in the age group 5–17. The number of 306 million is 17 million fewer than the 323 million children in employment in 2004 and represents a 5.3 per cent decrease.

- *child labour* = 215 million

These children, roughly 70 per cent of all “children in employment”, are classified as child labourers because they are either under the minimum age for work or above that age and engaged in work that poses a threat to their health, safety or morals, or are subject to conditions of forced labour. The number of children in child labour has continued its declining trend, falling by 3 per cent between 2004 and 2008. The corresponding incidence rate declined from 14.2 per cent to 13.6 per cent.

- *children in hazardous work* = 115 million

A little more than half of all child labourers are doing hazardous work. The number of children within this category has declined by 10 percent.

**22.** The subgroup of younger children (5–14 years old) shows a slightly different and more optimistic pattern than the figures for the group as a whole (see table 1.1). For the 5–14 age group, 176 million children are estimated to be in employment, 153 million were classified as being engaged in child labour and an estimated 53 million (i.e. about one-third) are in hazardous work.

**23.** Figure 1.1 presents a graphical overview of child labour trends, considering differences between

the 5–14 age group and the 15–17 age group. Two trends stand out.

**24.** First, among 5–14-year-olds, the involvement of children in work has declined across the board over the last four years – both in absolute and in relative terms (table 1.1 and figure 1.1). The number of children in child labour in this age group declined by 10 per cent and the number of children in hazardous work fell by 31 per cent over four years. This downward trend is in line with the previous estimates and confirms that child labour declines faster in its worst forms and among the more vulnerable.

**25.** Second, the encouraging trends for the younger age group seem to have reversed in the case of older children, 15–17 years old. The results indicate that child labour in this age group has increased from 52 to 62 million (table 1.1), corresponding to a change of 20 per cent from 2004 to 2008 (figure 1.1).

#### *Child labour by age group*

**26.** The data indicate that the relative number of children in child labour or in hazardous work increases with age (see table 1.2). The patterns of both are quite similar except that with regard to child labour there seems to be very little difference between the two older age groups (12–14 and 15–17 years old): 17 per cent of children 12 years and older are involved in child labour, compared to 11 per cent for those under 12.

**Figure 1.1. Percentage changes in child population and working children, 2004–08**



Table 1.1. Global estimates of the number of children in employment, child labour and hazardous work, 2000, 2004 and 2008

Age group (years)		Child population			Children in employment			Child labourers			Children in hazardous work		
		2000	2004	2008	2000	2004*	2008	2000	2004*	2008	2000	2004*	2008
5-17	Number ('000)	1 531 400	1 566 300	1 586 288	351 900	322 729	305 669	245 500	222 294	215 269	170 500	128 381	115 314
	Incidence (% of age group)	100.0	100.0	100.0	23.0	20.6	19.3	16.0	14.2	13.6	11.1	8.2	7.3
	% change (2000-04)	-	<b>2.3</b>	-	-	<b>-8.3</b>	-	-	<b>-9.5</b>	-	-	<b>-24.7</b>	-
	% change (2004-08)	-	-	<b>1.3</b>	-	-	<b>-5.3</b>	-	-	<b>-3.2</b>	-	-	<b>-10.2</b>
5-14	Number ('000)	1 199 400	1 206 500	1 216 854	211 000	196 047	176 452	186 300	170 383	152 850	111 300	76 470	52 895
	Incidence (% of age group)	100.0	100.0	100.0	17.6	16.2	14.5	15.5	14.1	12.6	9.3	6.3	4.3
	% change (2000-04)	-	<b>0.6</b>	-	-	<b>-7.1</b>	-	-	<b>-8.5</b>	-	-	<b>-31.3</b>	-
	% change (2004-08)	-	-	<b>0.9</b>	-	<b>-10.0</b>	-	-	-	<b>-10.3</b>	-	-	<b>-30.8</b>
15-17	Number ('000)	332 000	359 800	369 433	140 900	126 682	129 217	59 200	51 911	62 419	59 200	51 911	62 419
	Incidence (% of age group)	100.0	100.0	100.0	42.4	35.2	35.0	17.8	14.4	16.9	17.8	14.4	16.9
	% change (2000-04)	-	<b>8.4</b>	-	-	<b>-10.1</b>	-	-	<b>-12.3</b>	-	-	<b>-12.3</b>	-
	% change (2004-08)	-	-	<b>2.7</b>	-	-	<b>2.0</b>	-	-	<b>20.2</b>	-	-	<b>20.2</b>

\* The data for Latin America and the Caribbean for the benchmark year 2004 have been retrospectively adjusted because new available data for this region reveal that the 2006 estimate of the decline in the number of children in employment proved to be an overestimate. This revision of the 2004 estimates of children in employment in Latin America and the Caribbean slightly affects the corresponding global estimate as well as the global estimates of related variables. All 2004 estimates have thus been retrospectively adjusted. Further methodological details are provided in a separate technical publication.



**Table 1.2. Global estimates of children in employment, child labour and hazardous work, 2008**

	Total children	Children in employment		Child labourers		Children in hazardous work	
	('000)	('000)	%	('000)	%	('000)	%
<b>World</b>	<b>1 586 288</b>	<b>305 669</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>215 269</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>115 314</b>	<b>7.3</b>
Boys	819 891	175 177	21.4	127 761	15.6	74 019	9.0
Girls	766 397	129 892	16.9	87 508	11.4	41 296	5.4
5–11 years	852 488	91 024	10.7	91 024	10.7	25 949	3.0
12–14 years	364 366	85 428	23.4	61 826	17.0	26 946	7.4
(5–14 years)	1 216 854	176 452	14.5	152 850	12.6	52 895	4.3
15–17 years	369 433	129 217	35.0	62 419	16.9	62 419	16.9

**Table 1.3. Global trends of children in employment, child labour and hazardous work by sex, 2004–08 (5–17 age group)**

		Child population		Children in employment		Child labourers		Children in hazardous work	
		2004	2008	2004	2008	2004	2008	2004	2008
World	Number ('000)	1 566 300	1 586 288	322 729	305 669	222 294	215 269	128 381	115 314
	Incidence (% of age group)	100.0	100.0	20.6	19.3	14.2	13.6	8.2	7.3
	% change (2004–08)	–	1.3	–	–5.3	–	–3.2	–	–10.2
Boys	Number ('000)	804 000	819 891	171 150	175 777	119 575	127 761	74 414	74 019
	Incidence (% of age group)	100.0	100.0	21.3	21.4	14.9	15.6	9.3	9.0
	% change (2004–08)		2.0		2.7		6.8		–0.5
Girls	Number ('000)	762 300	766 397	151 579	129 892	102 720	87 508	53 966	41 296
	Incidence (% of age group)	100.0	100.0	19.9	16.9	13.5	11.4	7.1	5.4
	% change (2004–08)	–	0.5	–	–14.3	–	–14.8	–	–23.5

*Child labour by sex*

**27.** Most of the observed decline in child labour is in the number of girls (see table 1.3). There were 15 per cent (and 15 million) fewer female child labourers in 2008. The number of girls in hazardous work has declined altogether by 24 per cent. For boys, on the other hand, an increase has been noted, both in terms of incidence rates and in absolute numbers. There were 7 per cent more male child labourers in 2008 than four years earlier, i.e. 8 million more. The extent of hazardous work among boys remained relatively stable, however (74 million in total).

**28.** Overall there are 40 million more boys in child labour than girls (128 million boys compared to 88 million girls). The difference becomes more pronounced with increasing age and danger faced at the workplace (figures 1.2a and 1.2b). For instance,

among children in hazardous work in the 15–17 age group, boys outnumber girls by two to one.

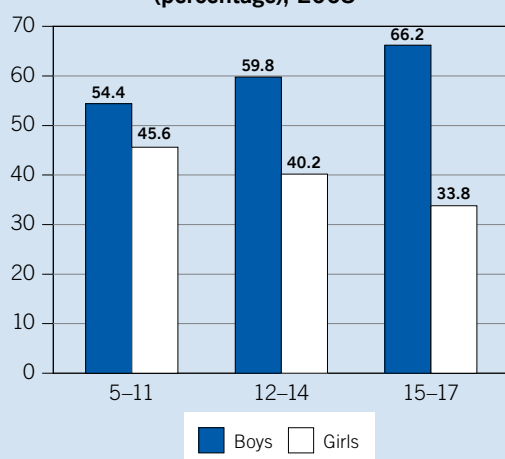
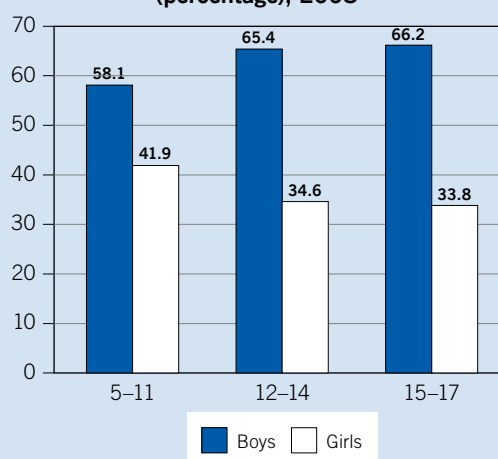
*Regional estimates*

**29.** For the first time the available data permit an inter-regional comparison of child labour, as opposed to previous regional estimates which were possible only for children aged 5 to 14 years in employment.

**30.** Table 1.4 shows that the largest number of child labourers is in the Asia-Pacific region (113.6 million), followed by sub-Saharan Africa (65.1 million) and Latin America and the Caribbean (14.1 million). In terms of relative extent, sub-Saharan Africa presents the most alarming picture. One in four children are child labourers in the region, compared to roughly

**Table 1.4. Regional estimates of child labour, 2008 (5–17 age group)**

	Total children (‘000)	Children in employment		Child labourers		Children in hazardous work	
		(‘000)	%	(‘000)	%	(‘000)	%
<b>World</b>	<b>1 586 288</b>	<b>305 669</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>215 269</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>115 314</b>	<b>7.3</b>
Asia and the Pacific	853 895	174 460	20.4	113 607	13.3	48 164	5.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	141 043	18 851	13.4	14 125	10.0	9 436	6.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	257 108	84 229	32.8	65 064	25.3	38 736	15.1
Other regions	334 242	28 129	8.4	22 473	6.7	18 978	5.7

**Figure 1.2a. Child labour, distribution by sex and age group (percentage), 2008****Figure 1.2b. Children in hazardous work, distribution by sex and age group (percentage), 2008**

one in eight in Asia-Pacific (13.3 per cent) and one in ten in Latin America and the Caribbean.

**31.** A somewhat different pattern emerges with regard to incidence levels of hazardous work, a proxy for the worst forms of child labour. While 15 per cent of all sub-Saharan African children are in some form of hazardous work, only 5.6 and 6.7 per cent are exposed to hazards in Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, respectively. The latter region has fewer than 10 million children in hazardous work.

### Regional trends

**32.** For comparative purposes, regional trends are limited to children in employment in the 5–14 age group since the previous regional estimates did not cover either child labour or hazardous work by children aged 15 to 17 years old.

**33.** The data presented in table 1.5 and figure 1.3 show that all regions experienced a decline in the

number of children in employment, in both absolute and relative terms, from 2004 to 2008, except for sub-Saharan Africa where the number of children in employment actually increased sharply from 49.3 million in 2004 to 58.2 million in 2008 (with an increase in the activity rate from 26.4 to 28.4 per cent).

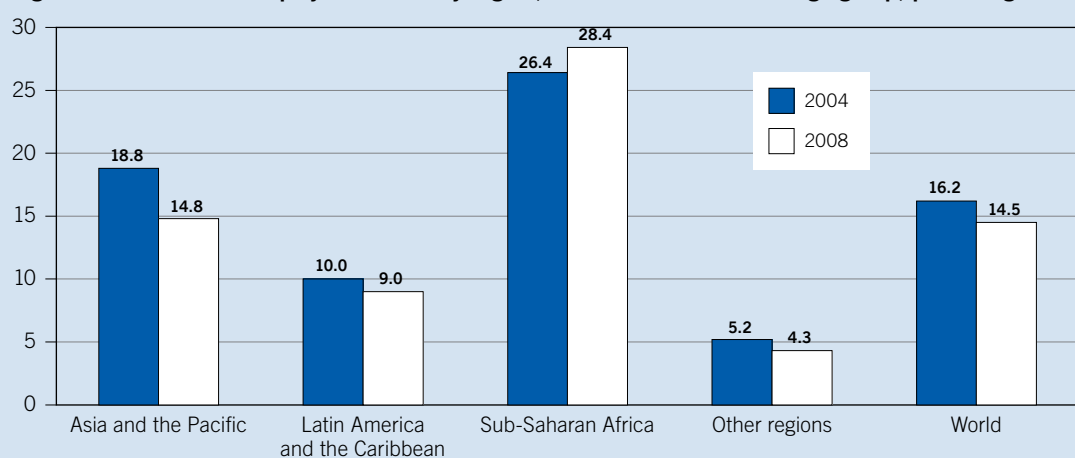
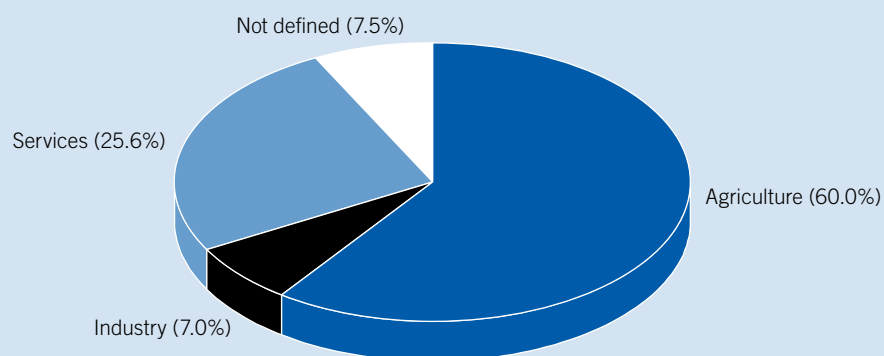
### Child labour by economic sector

**34.** Data are available on child labour in three broad groupings of economic activity: agriculture, industry and services. Most child labourers aged 5 to 17 years old are in agriculture (60 per cent), compared to some 26 per cent in services and 7 per cent in industry (see figure 1.4).

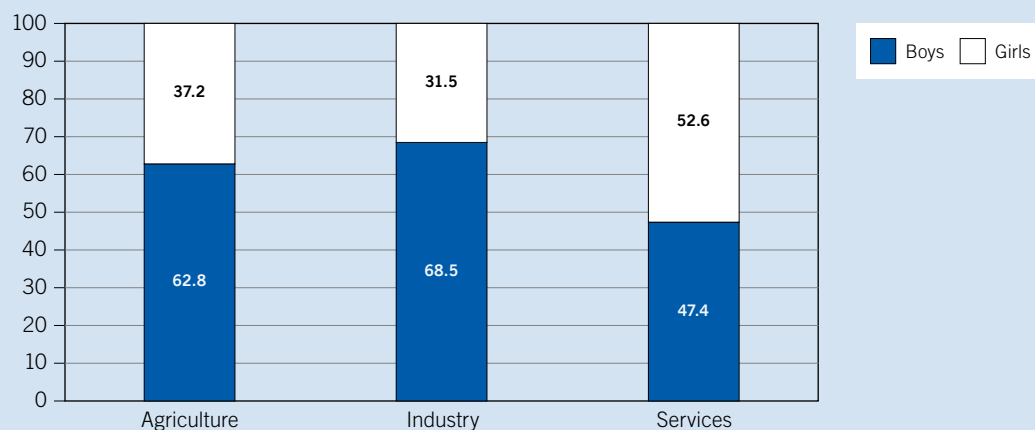
**35.** While boys are more likely to undertake activities in agriculture and industry, girls outnumber boys in services (figure 1.5).

**Table 1.5. Global trends in children's economic activity by region, 2004 and 2008 (5–14 age group)**

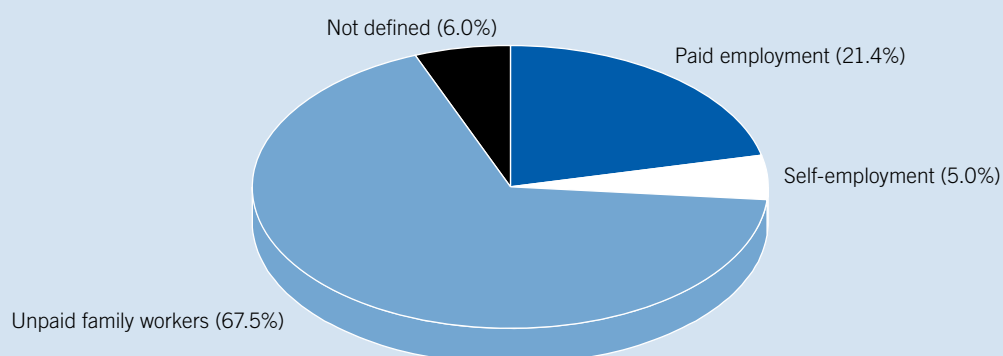
Region	Child population ('000)		Children in employment ('000)		Activity rate (%)	
	2004	2008	2004	2008	2004	2008
Asia and the Pacific	650 000	651 815	122 300	96 397	18.8	14.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	111 000	110 566	11 047	10 002	10.0	9.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	186 800	205 319	49 300	58 212	26.4	28.4
Other regions	258 800	249 154	13 400	10 700	5.2	4.3
<b>World</b>	<b>1 206 500</b>	<b>1 216 854</b>	<b>196 047</b>	<b>176 452</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>14.5</b>

**Figure 1.3. Children's employment rates by region, 2004 and 2008 (5–14 age group, percentage)****Figure 1.4. Child labour, distribution by economic activity (5–17 age group)**

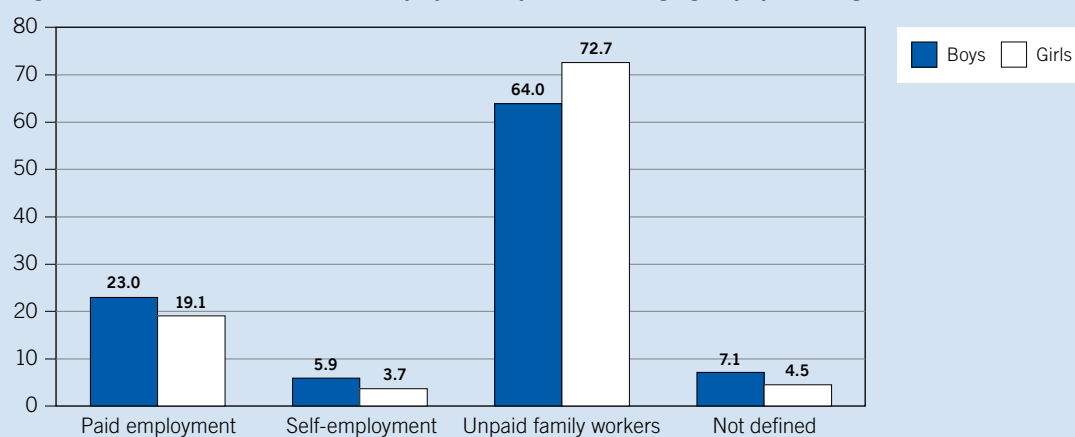
**Figure 1.5. Child labour, distribution by branch of economic activity and by sex (5–17 age group, percentage)**



**Figure 1.6. Child labour, distribution by status in employment (5–17 age group, percentage)**



**Figure 1.7. Child labour, status in employment by sex (5–17 age group, percentage)**



*Child labour by status in employment*

**36.** Data are available on the types of employment, whether paid employment, self-employment or unpaid family workers.<sup>1</sup>

**37.** Two-thirds of child labourers in the age group 5 to 17 years old are unpaid family workers (64 per cent for boys as against 73 per cent for girls). Paid employment and self-employment account respectively for 21 and 5 per cent of all the child labourers in the same age group (figures 1.6 and 1.7).

*Methodology and underlying data*

**38.** Some 60 national data sets were used for the 2010 round of the ILO global estimation of child labour. Data are derived from national household surveys carried out between 2004 and 2008. In all, 50 countries from all the major world regions were covered by the surveys. Some countries provided multiple data sets across different years.

**39.** The data sets used in the estimates go back to specialized surveys on child labour (ILO/SIMPOC); national labour force surveys or other national household surveys such as the UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) or the World Bank Living Standards Measurement Studies (LSMS).

**40.** On the basis of the 60 data sets, two samples of countries were constructed for the purpose of global estimation. The first is called the *full sample*, the second is the *matched sample*. The full sample contains the latest data sets of the 50 countries, i.e. the data sets closest to 2008. It was used to construct a direct estimate of child labour in the world for the year 2008. The matched sample, consisting of 27 countries for which data sets were also available in the 2006 round of global estimates, helped to control variability and contributed to improving the accuracy of the estimates.

**41.** Since national household surveys on child labour often differ with regard to (i) age groups covered; (ii) types of questions asked; (iii) response categories included in the questionnaires; and (iv) the extent of missing values, data had to be harmonized prior to the estimation exercise.

**42.** A “composite estimation” approach was then employed in order to arrive at the results presented

above.<sup>2</sup> The approach is fully comparable with the one used in the 2006 round. It involved three basic steps: (i) an estimation based on the full sample or the “direct estimation”, (ii) an estimation based on the matched sample or the “indirect estimation”, and (iii) a “composite estimation” based on the full and matched samples together. The latter maximizes the advantages and minimizes the drawbacks associated with the direct and indirect estimates.

*Child labour standards and their ratification**Historical background*

**43.** The elimination of child labour has only recently been recognized as an issue of human rights at work together with freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, the abolition of forced labour and non-discrimination in occupation and employment. Child labour was already recognized as a priority issue in the 1919 Constitution, but it was dealt with more as a technical matter of setting a minimum age for employment. Since the first International Labour Conference, this then led to a string of sectoral Conventions, which culminated in 1973 in the Minimum Age Convention, No. 138. Although that Convention allowed for flexibility due to different levels of development, it came to be perceived as complex and difficult to ratify. When child labour was introduced into the list of core labour standards for the first time, by the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, this Convention was the only relevant point of reference. Although it was not then recognized as a priority Convention for reporting purposes, and had approximately 50 ratifications, it was included in the ILO’s campaign for the ratification of fundamental Conventions.

**44.** The core labour standards debate of the early 1990s pointed to the need to have a specific standard on what then were called exploitative or unacceptable forms of child labour.<sup>3</sup> This raised the question as to whether a possible new standard was needed to revise or complement Convention No. 138. Although by 1994 there had still been no agreement in the Conference on a position on child labour (see the Report of the 1994 Conference Resolutions Committee),

1. Based on the resolution concerning the international classification of status in employment, adopted by the 15th ICLS (1993). Paid employment consists of employees; self-employment comprises employers, own-account workers and members of producers’ cooperatives; unpaid family workers include all the contributing family workers.

2. A separate technical publication will provide a full account of the estimation methodology and underlying data, and will present results in greater detail.

3. See, for instance, the child labour-related debate at the 81st Session of the International Labour Conference, 1994.

in 1996 a resolution was adopted which, inter alia, called on governments to:

“develop formal policies and set priorities so as to immediately proceed to put an end to the most intolerable aspects of child labour, namely the employment of children in slave-like and bonded conditions and in dangerous and hazardous work, the exploitation of very young children, and the commercial sexual exploitation of children”.<sup>4</sup>

**45.** This proved to be useful when the consensus for a new standard led, in 1999, to the adoption of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, No. 182. This Convention was carefully crafted so that its aim, that of urgent action, was realistic and achievable through tripartite cooperation irrespective of levels of economic development and strength. The preamble to Convention No. 182 respected the aims of the Minimum Age Convention, No. 138. In practice, both Conventions have provided the framework for interventions and promotion by the ILO, especially through IPEC.

**46.** Ratifications of Convention No. 138 increased soon after the Copenhagen Summit campaign started (see figure 1.8), which shows that better focus and explanation can demystify an instrument despite its reputation of being complex. In 1996 ratifications totalled 50; in 1999 they had reached 115. At present the Convention has 154 ratifications, slightly more than Convention No. 87 on the Freedom of Association (currently 150).

**47.** The ratification of Convention No. 182 has been the fastest ever in the history of the ILO. The Convention took only two years to reach 100 ratifications and three more to get to 150. The current figure is 171 out of 183 ILO member States, 15 more than at the time of the previous Global Report on child labour.

### Remaining challenges

**48.** Universal ratification of Convention No. 182 is feasible. A number of new member States will no doubt ratify it in the not too distant future. The situation in a few States would require internal political consolidation so that ratification could be feasible.

**49.** As to Convention No. 138, given that it has already been ratified by over 80 per cent of member States, it is to be ardently hoped that the major

OECD countries – Australia, Canada, Mexico, New Zealand and the United States – will find a way to join the rest of the world both in law and practice.

**50.** The ratification of these fundamental ILO Conventions would put an end to a situation where one-third of the world’s children still live in countries that have not fully committed to the abolition of child labour.

### From words to action

**51.** Ratifying a Convention is an important step, but putting that commitment into action is a greater challenge. With high levels of ratification, the focus has inevitably shifted to implementation. The application of Conventions is monitored by the ILO’s supervisory mechanism, namely, the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) and the Committee on the Application of Standards of the International Labour Conference, where child labour is frequently discussed so as to bring about progress in the countries concerned. The ILO supervisory system and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – supervising the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – complement one another, for example, through referencing information received under their respective reporting systems as well as through comments made. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, when it examines periodic country reports, has been urging States parties to ratify Conventions Nos 138 and 182 if they have not already done so. The outcome document of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children in 2002<sup>5</sup> also recommended that countries ratify both these ILO Conventions, and confirms their status as part of the international architecture promoting children’s rights.

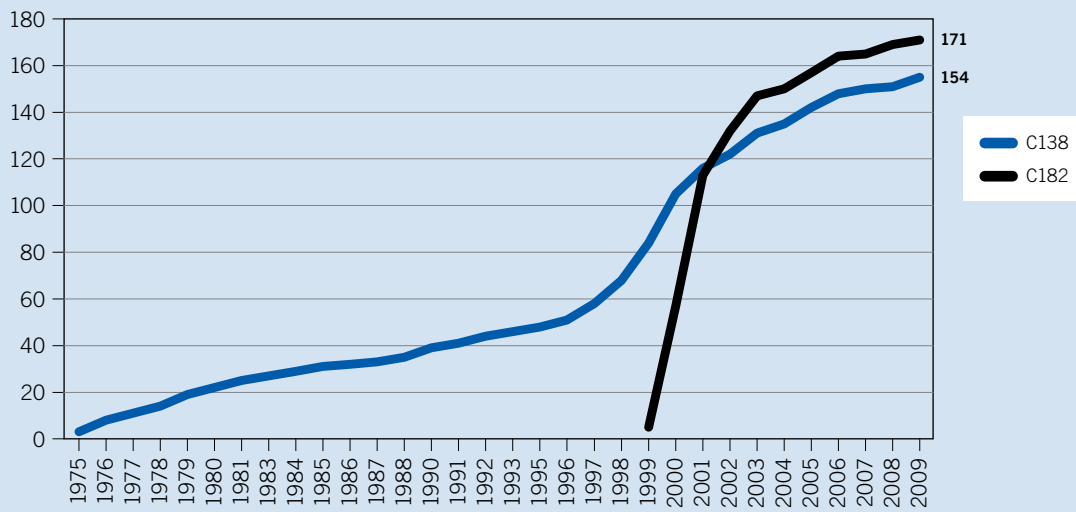
### Impact of ratification of child labour Conventions on national action

**52.** In the previous Global Report an assessment was made of the extent to which the commitment of countries through ratification was translated into concrete action. Similarly, this present assessment was based on an examination of the reports member States had submitted to the ILO’s Committee of Experts on

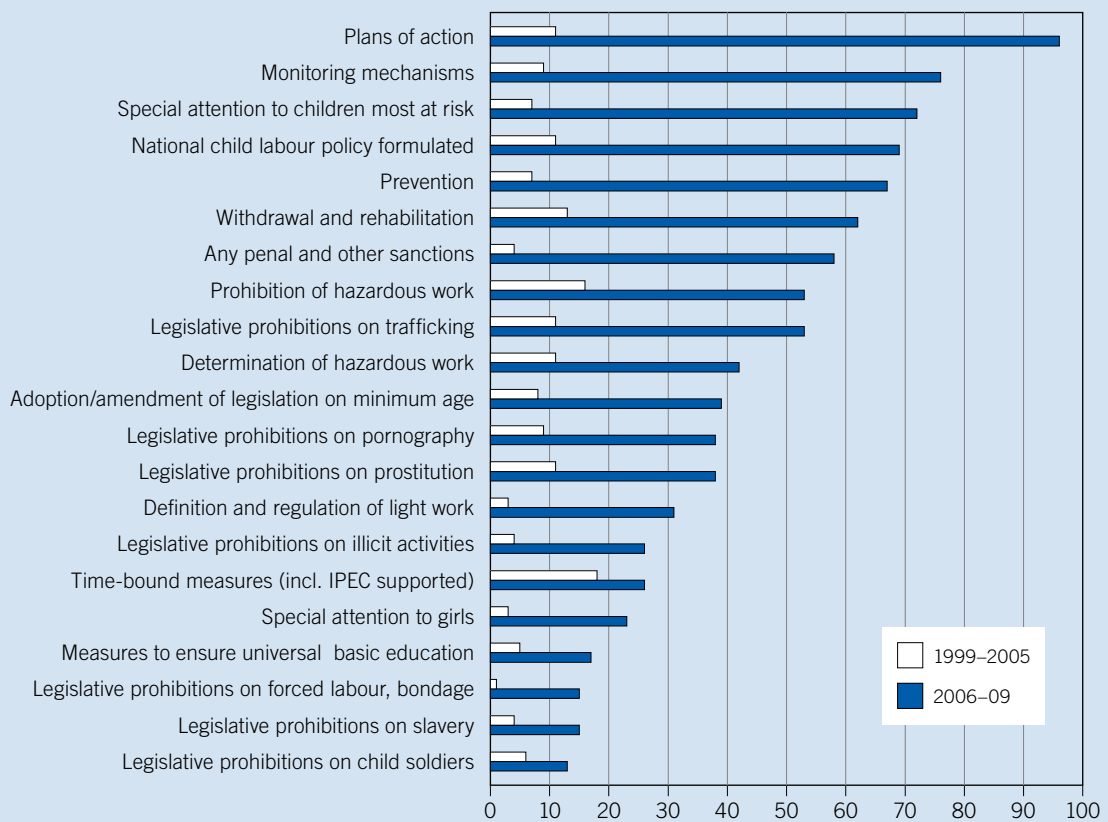
4. Resolution concerning the elimination of child labour, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 83rd Session on 18 June 1996.

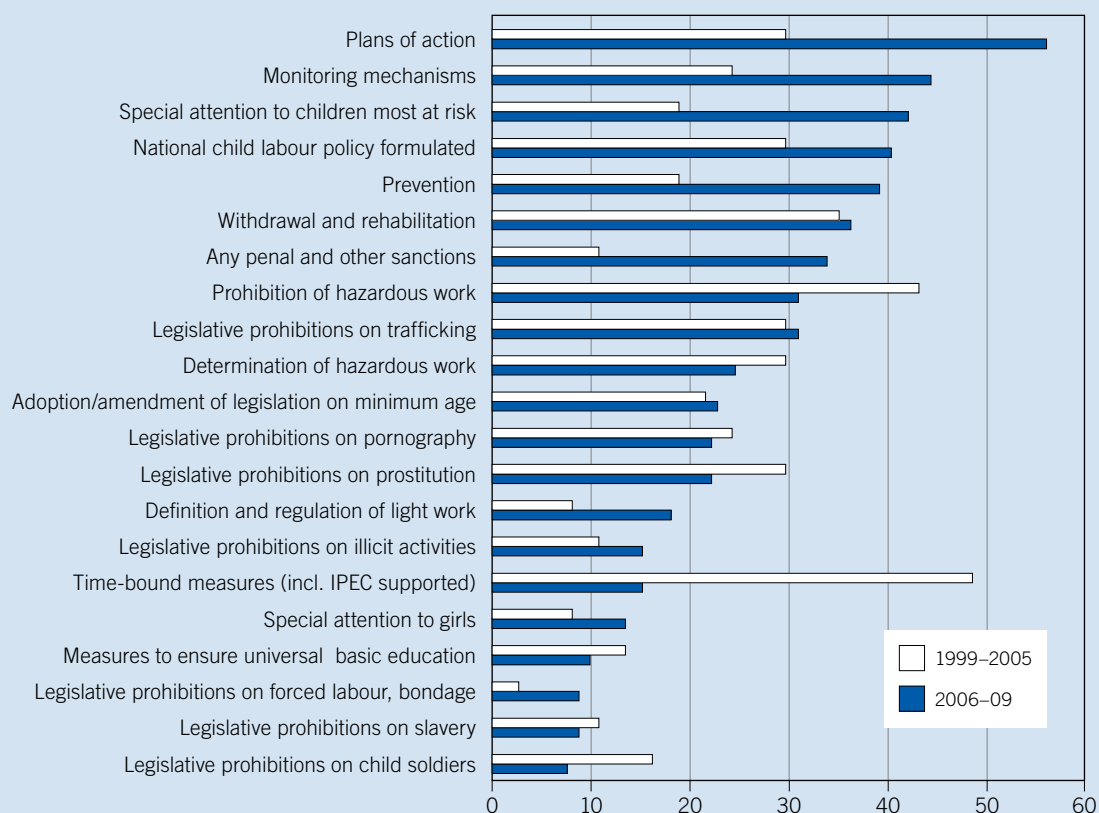
5. United Nations General Assembly resolution S-27/2, A world fit for children, New York, 10 May 2002.

**Figure 1.8. Number of ratifications of Conventions Nos 138 and 182, by year**



**Figure 1.9. Number of actions reported under Conventions Nos 138 and 182, by type (1999–2005 and 2006–09)**



**Figure 1.10. Relative number of member States which took action in different areas\***

\* Some of these actions, such as the determination of hazardous work, may have taken place already in the 1999–2005 period, which may in part account for the lower figure for 2006–09.

the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. Since 1999, more than 250 first reports and numerous subsequent periodic reports have been received by the ILO on the application of the two Conventions, the majority of which have been examined by the Committee. The 2006 Global Report covered the period 1999–2005. The present Report provides the same assessment for the period 2006–09.

**53.** It has to be noted, however, that the assessment does not sufficiently capture all actions taken by countries, as they often do not report on all related actions in the field of education, for example, or poverty reduction measures. These actions have thus been captured in other ways. Additionally, it does not include all the contributions made by the social partners and other civil society actors that may have not been included in the Government reports. The reports tend to focus on government activities and often do not elaborate much on the depth of underlying tripartite consultations necessary to develop and inform public policy.

**54.** With these caveats, the overall picture presented in figures 1.9 and 1.10 is one of vastly increased actions by member States, which can only partly be due to a greater number of countries reporting. In addition to a significant level of activity in formulating national policies, many countries have adopted plans of action to tackle one or more categories of child labour, which is encouraging. Likewise, many countries have established or designated monitoring mechanisms. There has also been heightened activity to prevent the worst forms of child labour. Legislative action against trafficking has increased significantly and there has been a high level of activity in adopting legislation against hazardous work.

**55.** However, relatively few countries have adopted effective legislative prohibitions against forced labour, bonded labour, slavery, or the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, particularly in relation to the drugs trade. Worryingly, girls are still not regarded as especially vulnerable in many policy frameworks and action plans. The number of



countries setting time-bound objectives (which may use a variety of policy vehicles) against one or more of the worst forms of child labour remains very low and is a cause for concern, given the requirements of Convention No. 182 and the target of 2016.

**56.** The ILO has over the years compiled a great body of information about national law and practice in the countries that have ratified the Conventions.

That unique information resource was consolidated in 2007 in the publication *Modern policy and legislative responses to child labour*.<sup>6</sup> The technical guide provides examples of responses by countries to child labour, its worst forms and issues such as children not benefiting from schooling, and their law enforcement responses. The guide has become a major resource for training and technical cooperation activities.

6. IPEC (Geneva, ILO, 2007).





## PART II

# Important achievements on the road to 2016

**57.** This section of the Report reflects on progress made in implementing the 2006 Global Action Plan. It was the 2006 Global Action Plan that set out the first time-bound global targets towards the elimination of child labour. Important obligations and commitments were entered into by the ILO constituents. Though four years is in many ways a very short time to show major changes, it is, nevertheless, important to gauge progress. In particular, it is important to have indications of whether and which countries are on track to meeting the 2016 target of the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

### IPEC: Twenty years in the making

**58.** IPEC was created to enhance the ILO's response to its long-standing goal of the effective abolition of child labour. The announcement in September 1990 by the Government of Germany of a special annual contribution, over a five-year period, led to the launching of IPEC two years later. Since then, IPEC has grown to become the biggest dedicated child labour programme in the world and the largest technical cooperation programme within the ILO with over US\$60 million expenditure in 2008. By 2008, IPEC was operational in 88 countries in all regions of the world. From one government donor supporting six participating countries in 1992, the Programme had attracted a further 23 donors by 2008.<sup>1</sup> During the 2006–07 biennium, IPEC activities benefited almost half a million children directly and over 33 million indirectly.<sup>2</sup>

**59.** While experiencing, since its inception, a rapid expansion in programme size, scope, and forms of

interventions, IPEC's mission remains to support efforts for the elimination of all child labour, and the worst forms as a matter of urgency. IPEC needs to be dynamic and self-adapting in order to meet the needs and demands of ILO constituents. The programme is also mandated to support countries in meeting the target of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by the year 2016. Moreover, the intermediate objective of ensuring that countries have time-bound measures in place to help realize this 2016 target, requires that IPEC has the necessary capacity to provide policy advice and training and that States are developing the capacity to deliver the necessary services to children.

**60.** To meet these challenges, in 2008 IPEC set out its vision for the next five years.<sup>3</sup> IPEC aims to:

- consolidate its position as the leading centre of knowledge and expertise on action against child labour, to which governments, employers and workers, international actors and others can turn for policy advice and capacity building;
- maintain and further strengthen its research and data collection capacity, which form the basis for both targeted interventions and policy advice;
- continue to be the central technical cooperation programme for action against child labour;
- facilitate country-to-country technical cooperation within regions and across continents;
- strengthen and reinvigorate the worldwide movement against child labour and assume a leadership role for the ILO in the movement;
- continue the integration of IPEC activities within ILO programming, most importantly within Decent Work Country Programmes.

1. IPEC: *Action against child labour: IPEC highlights 2008* (Geneva, ILO, 2009), pp. 34–36.

2. IPEC: *IPEC action against child labour: Progress and future priorities 2006–2007* (Geneva, ILO, 2008), p. 59.

3. *ibid.*, pp. 17–18.

## The 2006 Global Action Plan

**61.** The 2006 Global Action Plan called on ILO member States to pursue the effective abolition of child labour by committing themselves to the elimination of all worst forms of child labour by 2016. Furthermore, all member States would, in the light of Convention No. 182, design and put in place appropriate time-bound measures by the end of 2008. Towards this end, IPEC has promoted the design of National Action Plans (NAPs) and other anti-child-labour strategies and policies.

**62.** In pursuit of the above, the ILO would strengthen its efforts to develop coherent and comprehensive approaches to abolishing child labour worldwide using a three-pronged strategy:

- supporting national responses to child labour, in particular, through effective mainstreaming of child labour concerns in national development and policy frameworks;
- deepening and strengthening the worldwide movement; and
- promoting further integration of child labour concerns within overall ILO priorities.

**63.** In pursuing this Global Action Plan, two important factors were highlighted. First, all three pillars needed backing up by solid research, particularly regarding the relationship between child labour and other relevant aspects of the development process. In this regard, the ILO was committed to becoming *the* centre of excellence of knowledge on child labour. Second, there needed to be a special focus and a greater effort in Africa where the least progress was being made.

## ILO action

**64.** The 2006 Global Action Plan is a ten-year plan on how member States can, with ILO support, realize the 2016 target. It would not, therefore, be appropriate to follow a tick box approach under each heading and subheading of what was a very detailed plan. Rather, the aim should be to take stock of the extent to which there has been movement towards the ILO working “in a more focused and strategic way” as part of “a re-energized global alliance in support of national action”.<sup>4</sup> This broad aim was seen as the major challenge over the four-year period.

**65.** Using the three-pillar approach of the Global Action Plan, this section of the Report identifies the major achievements since 2006.

## Supporting national efforts

**66.** The ILO has supported national action against child labour in several ways. Specific actions highlighted in the 2006 Global Action Plan included:

- mainstreaming child labour concerns in national development and policy frameworks;
- the development of knowledge, tools and capacity; and
- resource mobilization.

## Time-bound Programmes

**67.** The commitment of governments is the driving force for the elimination of child labour. The Time-bound Programme (TBP) approach, grounded in Convention No. 182, was designed to assist governments put in place a framework for coordinating their efforts. TBPs are a set of integrated and coordinated policies and programmes to prevent and eliminate a country's worst forms of child labour within a defined period. They are, by definition, country-owned programmes, in which IPEC and other development partners play a support role. TBPs emphasize the need to address the root causes of child labour, linking action against child labour to national development efforts, particularly in the area of poverty reduction and free, compulsory and universal education. In 2008, 21 countries benefited from IPEC projects to support TBPs, pursuant to Article 7 of the Convention. This was slightly down from 2007 (23 countries) and somewhat up from 2005 (19). TBPs are also major vehicles for integrating child labour into education and poverty reduction policies, and they are increasingly being expressed in terms of NAPs. In the course of 2009, IPEC developed guidelines for NAPs on Child Labour (government policy documents), and for mainstreaming child labour into national development efforts. These were validated through regional workshops with the full involvement of the social partners.

4. ILO: *The end of child labour: Within reach*, Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 95th Session, Geneva, 2006, p. 90.

*Policy choices key to eliminating child labour*

**68.** Countries are not condemned to have child labour. They have options when it comes to policy and budgetary investments. Political commitment is therefore key to tackling child labour. This is one of the lessons from history and it is equally true today.

**69.** Below is a selection of national case examples that illustrate this central point. It is far from a complete list, but the countries set out below are positive examples of how ILO technical cooperation has supported national commitment to end child labour through mainstreaming in key policy areas and at strategic levels.

*Supporting national efforts in Brazil*

**70.** Child labour remained an important feature of the labour market in Brazil and indeed appeared to be growing in intensity in the 1980s, in part due to the high rate of population growth. By 1992, children aged 5–17 comprised 29 per cent of the population. Additionally, the education system was often ineffective in keeping children at school.

**71.** However, the late 1980s also saw a growing response to the problem of child labour. The time was ripe for action following the restoration of democracy and the adoption of a new Constitution in 1988. Specific legislation protecting children and youth followed in 1990 with the enactment of the Statute on Children and Adolescents. The Statute included ten sections on child labour and made it plain that child labour and the right to education were incompatible. The Statute also established an implementation mechanism at local, municipal and national levels in the form of Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents.

**72.** It was against this background that Brazil joined IPEC in 1992 as one of the original participating countries. The next decade saw impressive developments as Brazil moved towards the tipping point in action against child labour. The activity rate for the 10–17 age group fell by 36.4 per cent from 1992 to 2004. The decline was sharper in the 5–9 age group, falling 60.9 per cent in the same period. In 1992, a total of 636,248 children were working, compared to 248,594 in 2004. The rate of child labour for the age group 5–15 decreased from 13.6 per cent to 5.8 per cent between 1992 and 2008. In the same period the rate for the age group 5–9 years dropped from 3.6 per

cent to 0.9 per cent.<sup>5</sup> Experience showed that it was more efficient to strengthen local institutions to develop their own solutions rather than simply finance the withdrawal of children from work.

**73.** Consistent with these developments, Brazil ratified Conventions Nos 138 and 182 in 2001 and 2000 respectively. In response to the latter, Brazil established in June 2008 a new list of hazardous occupations prohibited to persons under 18 years. The IPEC project in support of the TBP provided technical support to the consultation and drafting process. Brazil has also prepared a national plan of action in conformity with the 2008 target and set 2015 as the goal to eliminate the worst forms of child labour and 2020 for all forms, in accordance with the Hemispheric Agenda on Decent Work in the Americas, adopted at the ILO 16th American Regional Meeting in Brasilia in May 2006.

**74.** Many reasons have been put forward to explain this breakthrough in the fight against child labour in Brazil from the mid-1990s. One factor is the high level of social mobilization in Brazil with strong social partners and a vibrant civil society committed to children's rights. This includes the media, but also, for example, a rural workers' union (CONTAG), that covers approximately 14 million agricultural workers and small farmers under collective agreements. A national forum for the prevention and eradication of child labour (FNPETI) was established in 1994. It gathered representatives from a range of government ministries, trade unions, employers' organizations and NGOs, in a "tripartite plus" approach. The new Constitution made eight years of education compulsory and this was extended to nine years in 2006. This has been accompanied by a conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme set up in 1996 – *Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil* (Programme for the Eradication of Child Labour, or PETI) – targeting poor rural areas. Such schemes have radically cut child labour in states such as Bahia. An important feature of PETI is its after-school programme, *Jornada Ampliada*, which is working towards keeping children at school twice as long, thereby limiting the time available for work.<sup>6</sup> Bahia is also promoting the child labour-free state as part of its Decent Work Agenda adopted in April 2007, when a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with the ILO. This is a pioneering initiative in crafting a subnational decent work programme incorporating child labour and education issues.<sup>7</sup> It also linked to

5. Ministério do Trabalho e Emprego au Brasil: *Combate ao trabalho infantil no Brasil* (undated).

6. IPEC: *IPEC action against child labour: Highlights 2006* (Geneva, ILO, 2006), pp. 59–60.

7. See Governo da Bahia: *Agenda Bahia do trabalho decente* (undated).

the overall TBP of Brazil and creating models for the elimination of child labour for State-level action.

**75.** At the same time that Brazil was establishing the social programmes that ensured effective alternatives to child labour, it expanded its ability to monitor child labour and enforce child labour laws. The Labour Ministry's Mobile Inspection Units were critical here. They provided annual reports that were important inputs into child labour and education policy-making. These units have contributed to the virtual elimination of child labour in whole sectors, such as sugar cane production and harvesting.

**76.** Through this experience and political commitment to social equality and inclusion, Brazil has in recent years turned from solely a beneficiary of technical support through IPEC, to becoming a provider of assistance to others through a South–South initiative that started with Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa in 2006. In December 2007, Brazil and the ILO launched an initiative to promote specific South–South technical cooperation projects and activities that contribute to eliminating child labour, which also embraces South Africa and India. Brazil has also been active within the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All (GTF).

**77.** IPEC has acted as facilitator in the sharing of experiences within this emerging South–South forum, which offers a complementary model in international cooperation expressed in Article 8 of Convention No. 182 and the United Nations process aimed at “Delivering as One”. At the 2009 International Labour Conference, the ILO and Brazil signed an MOU on promoting social protection worldwide that includes an important child labour dimension.

### *Supporting national efforts in India*

**78.** In many respects, India has the most challenging task to end child labour. Indeed, this has been recognized since the inception of the ILO and the first achievements in international standard-setting to combat child labour. The ILO has therefore a long association with India regarding technical assistance on combating child labour. Prior to independence, the ILO provided assistance in the 1920s for the revision of legislation for the protection of children.<sup>8</sup> Since independence in 1947, the Government of India and all state governments have advocated

the ending of child labour and establishing compulsory education. Both goals were reaffirmed in 1979, the International Year of the Child, when the Indian government appointed a commission to inquire into the state of India's children. In addition, the Ministry of Labour established a special committee on child labour. During this period the ILO conducted a technical assistance mission in 1984, providing advice on a global child labour strategy. Revised legislation was passed in 1986 in the form of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act. A national policy and programme followed through the flagship National Child Labour Projects launched in 1987. These projects have had non-formal education at their core, making India one of the largest experimenters in this area in the world.

**79.** The State of Kerala has become a model for the rest of India in how to promote social development. Founded in 1956, Kerala set out to prioritize land reform, food security, education and health. Kerala's performance in promoting mass education and gender equality has had profound implications for political mobilization and levels of child labour. Kerala has achieved universal literacy. Literacy is a foundational feature of Kerala's political culture, and is crucial in the creation of public awareness and political mobilization around social goals.

**80.** Kerala has consistently spent a higher proportion of government expenditure on primary education than most other states, and most primary school-age children go to state-run or state-supported schools. Already in the early 1960s, Kerala was spending 35 per cent of state revenues on education, considerably more than richer states. This meant that by the early 1970s the work participation rate of children in Kerala was 1.9 per cent, as compared to the all-India figure of 7.1 per cent.<sup>9</sup> Almost all children in the 5–15 age group attend school in all districts of the state. Kerala has achieved universal basic education, based on gender parity, and, without the specific intention or any specially targeted efforts from the State government, seems to have reduced much of child labour.

**81.** What is special about this achievement is that Kerala was at one stage in its history known for severe caste discrimination. However, the social movement of the scheduled castes and tribes and other background classes placed a remarkable emphasis on universal education for all boys and girls. Moreover, Kerala was one of the poorest states.

8. M. Weiner: *The child and the state in India: Child labor and education policy in comparative perspective* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 79.

9. *ibid.*, p. 175.

**82.** For over 20 years, the Government of India has committed substantial resources to eliminating child labour. India was one of the first six countries to join IPEC in 1992. Thus far, the Indian Government has launched approximately 150 projects to provide educational and other services to children withdrawn from hazardous work. Non-formal education (NFE) has been a staple of this national programme. The programme covers 250 districts and has a budgetary allocation of about US\$130 million. Starting in 2004, the Government of India embarked on a major push to eliminate the worst forms of child labour under the INDUS (India-US) Child Labour Project, with ILO-IPEC and US Department of Labor support. INDUS, a US\$40 million initiative, covered 20 districts in four major states, plus Delhi with a target group of 40,000 children 9–13 years old.

**83.** INDUS brought together the two key departments of labour and education. The Department of Labour had set up the National Child Labour Projects in areas of concentration of hazardous work. The Department of Education had *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, a much larger campaign to achieve universal education from grades 1–8. Additionally, INDUS has supported vocational training for child labourers in the 14–17 age range that are withdrawn from work, thereby helping to fill a gap identified by the project in the Government’s response whilst also meeting the need for a trained workforce. INDUS has initiated two vocational models: through public–private partnerships and through attachment with employers.

**84.** The INDUS project was a contribution, through a programme of transitional education, to achieving the national goal, first expressed in the Indian Constitution (1950) that “the State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years ... for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years” (article 45). That goal has proven elusive and had to be repeatedly deferred and is now targeted for 2010. In 2005 there were two important initiatives in support of that goal. The Right to Education Bill (draft) set out the right to free and compulsory education for all children aged 6–14 years, which was also affirmed in the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act, article 21A, adopted in 2009.

**85.** In addition, India has taken other major initiatives that strike at the heart of child labour. In 1976, it became the first country in the South Asian region to enact legislation against bonded labour. Child bonded labour remains one of the priorities for urgent action. For the first time the formulation of India’s 11th five-year plan was assisted by the setting up of a working group on child labour. In 2007, the Ministry of Labour also revised the list of hazardous occupations under the 1986 Act to include domestic work and work in restaurants and small tea shops in the schedule of occupations and processes prohibited to children under the age of 14 years. Diving was added to the list in 2008, showing India’s commitment to continuously revising the list of hazardous work.

**86.** India has recognized that decent livelihoods for families are also an essential component of child labour elimination. The national rural employment guarantee scheme that was launched at the beginning of 2006 provides 100 days of work to the rural poor and has been extended to all districts of the country since 2008. The scheme is the largest public works programme in the world, creating a safety net for more than 40 million poor households. The programme has been credited with directly reducing the incidence of child labour for both girls and boys.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, a key law – the Unorganized Workers Social Security Bill – provides cover for the 93 per cent of the workforce, or around 400 million workers, depending on the informal economy.<sup>11</sup> Taken together, these government initiatives are important indirect contributions to combating child labour in India. They are also reflected in the growing activity of the Indian trade union movement in the informal rural economy.

**87.** These actions have contributed to the decline in the incidence of child labour reported in India. The National Sample Survey estimated the total number of child workers of between 5 and 14 years of age to have been 13.3 million in 1993–94 and 8.6 million in 2004–05. They constituted about 6.2 per cent of children in that age group in 1993–94 and 3.4 per cent in 2004–05.<sup>12</sup>

**88.** Moreover, further development over the next four years of the “Convergence Model”, begun under INDUS and supported by ILO-IPEC with funding

10. See V. Uppal: *Is the NGRS a safety net for children: Studying access to the national rural employment guarantee scheme for young families and its impact on child outcomes in Andhra Pradesh* (Oxford, Oxford University, Department of International Development, Young Lives Student Paper, May 2009).

11. T. Haque and S. Varghese (eds): *The path of deliverance: Organizing and empowering rural informal economy workers* (New Delhi, ILO, 2007), p. 18.

12. See: *Report on conditions of work and promotion of livelihoods in the unorganized sector* (New Delhi, National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector, Aug. 2007), p. 100.



from the US Department of Labor, could serve as a replicable model for other countries, focused as it is on the economic rehabilitation of families with children who are child labourers, through the delivery of integrated services and strategies.

**89.** India has also created child labour-free zones, such as in the Industrial Area of Uppal, Hyderabad, and has been active in other areas of child protection with the establishment of a national commission for child protection and the development of a protocol to target migrant child labourers.

**90.** In summary, India has done a great deal to develop policies and programmes and to enact legislation that contributes very substantially to ending child labour. As part of the South–South initiative, India has the additional potential not only to transmit some of its expertise and experiences to partner countries but also, in return, to benefit from the experience of, for example, Brazil in tackling child labour. Moreover, former controversies are giving way to an increasingly robust tripartite-plus alliance in which the various actors are able to contribute their different but complementary roles.

#### *Supporting national developments in Romania*

**91.** Romania is another founding member of the ILO. The change in Romania towards a market economy and democracy after the overthrow of the Ceaucescu regime in 1989 brought drastic changes in the economic, social and political environment of the country. As a result of these rapid changes, unemployment and poverty levels increased, forcing many Romanians to migrate. These shocks had a direct impact on children. The numbers missing out on school and social services increased and thousands were left in the care of government institutions. The plight of these children, especially those who were abandoned by their parents, attracted international attention. Child labour began to emerge as a problem needing urgent measures to combat it.

**92.** In this context, IPEC began to provide technical assistance to the Government of Romania and local partners in the framework of a country programme launched in 2000. This had a number of components and phases, culminating in the completion of direct IPEC assistance in September 2009.

**93.** With funding support from the US Department of Labor and the Government of Germany, programme interventions focused on the worst

forms of child labour, particularly trafficking, where Romania was part of a subregional effort. Within this framework, a considerable number of activities were developed, embracing 16 action programmes and 13 studies. Furthermore, 16 national tripartite consultations and workshops were conducted that have contributed to a growing awareness of the child labour issue and helped forge a national response to the problem.<sup>13</sup>

**94.** There have been very considerable achievements. One of the most important has been the political commitment shown by the Government and social and civil society partners. This is evidenced by a number of important legislative, policy and institutional developments. Membership criteria to join the European Union also played a part. Romania ratified Convention No. 182 in 2000. A law preventing and combating trafficking was passed in 2001 in conformity with European and international law. A child labour monitoring system was established in 2002 and applied by local authorities and partners at the national level. Romania extended the period of compulsory education to ten years in 2003. In 2004, the Government established a National Steering Committee on Child Labour incorporating the social partners and approved a national plan of action. The following year child labour was included for the first time in national law, namely the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child. A child labour unit was identified within the national authority for the protection of child rights. The hazardous work list was revised and updated in 2009.

**95.** Budgetary allocations from national and local resources for policies and programmes addressing the worst forms of child labour and the services for the affected children have increased gradually but significantly. Through political commitment, effective social partnerships, awareness-raising strategies and mobilization of local resources, Romania has gained considerable experience and technical skills that can also be put at the disposal of other countries in the region.

#### *Supporting national efforts in the United Republic of Tanzania*

**96.** The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania in 2001 set its own time-bound target to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2010. A central part of this effort has been the

13. IPEC: *The Government of Romania and the International Labour Organization: A decade of cooperation on the elimination of child labour 2000–09* (Geneva, ILO, 2009), p. 15.



implementation, with ILO support, of a TBP which went through a second phase between 2005 and 2009. The United Republic of Tanzania was one of the first three countries to work with the ILO on such a programme. Technical cooperation with the ILO has also embraced support for national child labour surveys, rapid assessments and baseline surveys. Additionally, the United Republic of Tanzania's Decent Work Country Programme for 2006–10 makes the elimination of child labour a priority.

**97.** Mainstreaming the elimination of child labour into development efforts lies at the heart of the national strategy. The country has been guided by Conventions Nos 138 and 182, which it ratified in 1998 and 2001 respectively, making the question of child labour a part of its child development and protection policy and its poverty reduction strategy.

**98.** Education has been accorded a high priority with a special effort under way to reduce the number of out-of-school children through the expansion of its complementary basic education programme. Primary school enrolment has dramatically improved in the last decade, reflecting increased investment, the abolition of primary school fees, and a strengthened commitment to equity.<sup>14</sup> The United Republic of Tanzania now has the goal of universal primary education by 2015 within reach, demonstrating that governments have the option of altering their course and choosing a different future.<sup>15</sup>

**99.** The ILO's supportive work has established effective collaborative linkages with other international agencies through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and its various theme groups. Great emphasis has also been placed on establishing district and local-level policies, programmes and structures such as child labour committees.

#### *Supporting national efforts in Turkey*

**100.** Child labour in Turkey is on the way out and so quite naturally is IPEC's direct support to the country. Figures released by the National Statistical Institute indicate a progressive drop in the proportion of children aged 6–14 years who are working, from 15.2 per cent in 1994 to 5.9 per cent in 2006.<sup>16</sup> Girls, in particular, showed a remarkable decline in economic activity. This did not happen by accident.

**101.** Turkey's significant progress in combating child labour is by design. Turkey joined IPEC in 1992 as a mark of its political commitment to ending child labour. This political commitment has been sustained over time at different levels. It extends into employers' and workers' organizations that have developed effective partnerships. This has been given institutional expression in the setting up of child labour units that have provided a critical platform for policy and programme development, alliance building and advocacy.

**102.** There has been a high degree of national ownership expressed through legislative efforts to protect children and policies and programmes that address the root causes of child labour. The Government took a major step forward in 1997 when it passed an education law mandating a minimum of eight years of education for every child. During the decade 1995–2005, an average of 10 per cent of government expenditure was allocated to education.<sup>17</sup>

**103.** Turkey ratified Convention No. 138 in 1998, increasing the minimum age of employment to 15 years, and Convention No. 182 in 2001. In 2002, it adopted a National Time-bound Policy and Programme Framework and set 2014 as the target to eliminate all the worst forms of child labour. The elimination of child labour was further affirmed in the Partnership Agreement with the European Union in May 2003. It also features in the Ninth Development Plan (2007–13) and in Turkey's MDGs.

**104.** IPEC in Turkey has supported the combating of child labour as a key component of development policies so that it has become a national policy objective of the Government and the social partners. Technical support has been provided to policy development and to national surveys, starting in 1994. Over 600 labour inspectors have been trained on child labour issues and more than 200 labour inspectors have worked full time on child labour projects, withdrawing thousands of children from hazardous work and placing them in education. Awareness raising and advocacy formed one of the most important components of IPEC's strategy and, in particular, forged a close working relationship with the media which created the public interest environment that acted as a stimulus for politicians to take action. But activism needs to be across the board, not "just-in-time". Trade unions in Turkey built a vocal constituency at local and national levels

14. UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009: *Overcoming inequality: Why governance matters* (Paris, 2009), p. 67.

15. *ibid.*, p. 65.

16. IPEC: *Ending child labour: A comprehensive review of the Turkish experience* (Geneva, ILO, 2009), p. 5.

17. UNICEF data. See UNICEF: *The state of the world's children 2008: Child Survival* (New York, 2007), p. 140.

for education as a preventive measure against child labour. Working with political leaders such as Governors and creating Provincial Action Committees proved critical to ensuring sustainability following the IPEC phase-out. The ILO, however, will continue to provide technical advice. With the support of IPEC, ACT/EMP and the Turkish Confederation of Employers' Associations (TİSK), for instance, jointly organized an Inter-Regional Conference on Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learnt on Child Labour, in 2007 in Istanbul.

### *Data, knowledge and capacity building*

**105.** Strengthening national statistical and analytical capacity for data collection and improvement of the knowledge base on child labour is a central objective of ILO efforts. Moreover, one of the ILO's priorities is to enhance its role as the main international centre of labour statistics and standard-setting on statistical indicators. The 18th ICLS, held at the end of 2008, was a significant contribution to this, resulting as it did in an important resolution regarding child labour.<sup>18</sup> The resolution provides an innovative approach to extending the traditional "production boundary" to include methods for measuring unpaid household chores, as well as illicit activities.<sup>19</sup> This important development also has consequences for revaluing the work of girls, as the impact of household chores has not received much international attention.

**106.** The Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) played an important role in preparing for the ICLS. Launched in 1998, SIMPOC surveys have marked the beginning of a sustainable process of child labour data collection in many countries – a key outcome. For example, of all the countries in the Asia and Pacific region that have carried out a SIMPOC survey, 50 per cent have replicated this in a further survey, an important indicator of the sustainability of the ILO's work in this area. Over the last decade, SIMPOC has provided technical assistance to more than 60 countries in the collection, processing and analysis of child labour data. More than 300 child

labour surveys have been supported, 66 of which were national in scope. Most surveys have been carried out in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa.

**107.** SIMPOC has developed a series of training manuals covering different aspects of collection, processing and analysis of child labour data. Training national partners is a core strategy built into assistance to national surveys. Regional support is also provided. SIMPOC's experience in providing technical assistance on child labour statistics across the globe has resulted in the development of a wide range of survey instruments. These include both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. As an outcome of these technical assistance activities, national capacity to design and conduct child labour surveys and analyse child labour data has been significantly enhanced.

**108.** The more hours that children work the less likely they are to benefit from schooling. SIMPOC national survey data has been a rich resource for extracting evidence of the impact of child labour on education: school attendance, grade repetition, drop-outs, literacy achievements and overall human capital accumulation.<sup>20</sup> With the help of the inter-agency project Understanding Children's Work (UCW), the ILO is also gaining deeper knowledge of the rapid decline of child labour set out in the last report. A national tool to calculate the cost of eliminating the worst forms of child labour has been developed in Cambodia, also in association with UCW but with wider applicability.<sup>21</sup> The impact of child labour on adult wage rates was also explored in a number of countries.<sup>22</sup>

**109.** Moreover, SIMPOC has supported methodological development for the worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work such as forced labour.

**110.** New research on girls in child labour was presented in the report for the World Day Against Child Labour in 2009. The report found that 100 million girls were working. Of these, approximately 53 million were estimated to be in hazardous work, identified as among the worst forms of child labour. Of these, 20 million girls were less than 12 years old.<sup>23</sup> The majority of economically active girls aged between 5 and 14 years (61 per cent) work in agriculture. A comprehensive and gender-sensitive

18. ILO: *Child labour statistics*, Report III, 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, Geneva, 24 November–5 December 2008.

19. See P. Bollé: "Labour statistics: The boundaries and diversity of work", in *International Labour Review* (Geneva, ILO, 2009), Vol. 148, Nos. 1–2.

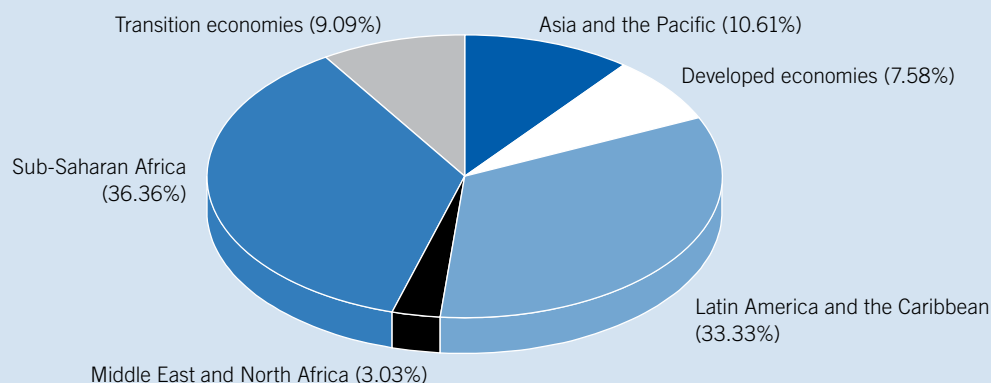
20. F. Blanco and F. Hagemann: *Child labour and education: Evidence from SIMPOC surveys*, Working Paper (Geneva, ILO, 2008).

21. UCW: *Towards eliminating the worst forms of child labour in Cambodia by 2016: An assessment of resource requirements* (Rome, 2009).

22. IPEC: *Child labour wages and productivity: Results from demand-side surveys* (Geneva, ILO, 2007).

23. ILO: *Give girls a chance: Tackling child labour, a key to the future* (Geneva, 2009).

**Figure 2.1. Regional distribution of SIMPOC-supported national child labour surveys**



picture of children's work has to take into account the performance of unpaid household chores. The ICLS in 2008 established that the broadest concept related to the measurement of child labour is that of children in "productive activities", falling within the general production boundary. This includes both children in employment and children in other productive activities for a household member within their own household, that is to say "household chores".<sup>24</sup> If household chores are taken into account, girls work more hours than boys.

### *Sharing and translating knowledge into policy advice*

**111.** In nearly 20 years of operation, IPEC has acquired extensive knowledge of what works and what does not from its field projects. IPEC knowledge has also been distilled and presented in the form of knowledge products, such as resource kits and good practice digests, that support the training of national policy-makers in areas such as agriculture, children in armed conflict, trafficking, education, monitoring, and policy and legislative responses. In 2008 alone there were 14 training activities at the international level using these IPEC tools and products, and over 400 high-level policy staff received training.

**112.** Since 2008, IPEC has focused greater attention and resources on training its staff in knowledge-sharing techniques and tools, bringing IPEC and non-IPEC specialists together to share good practices

and experiences, and facilitating networks and developing communities of practice involving ILO constituents in areas such as trafficking.

**113.** The impact of capacity-building and knowledge-dissemination activities is notoriously difficult to assess. In this context, IPEC is currently piloting various approaches to gauge the effect on policy development and programme design.

**114.** The Impact Assessment Framework approach that IPEC is working on contributes to this process by helping to identify the outcomes required at different levels and then to select relevant methodologies and approaches to assessing the overall impact as well as the impact of specific policies and interventions.

**115.** Methodologies range from national or sectoral estimates of the incidence of child labour to studies that, *ex post*, attribute changes in child labour to a range of policies and interventions. The Framework includes individual impact evaluations of specific interventions, in order to analyse the degree to which these have contributed to change, as well as studies that identify broader and longer-term changes for specific target groups through a trace over time.<sup>25</sup> The choice of impact assessment methodology has to be related to (i) the intended impact and outcomes; (ii) the required accuracy of results; (iii) the availability of capacity; and (iv) the context of the interventions. No single methodology in itself will be sufficient. Rather, a set of complementary methodologies is often required.

**116.** Many policies and interventions that have a bearing on child labour often do not deliberately

24. Based on the global estimates published in the 2006 IPEC/SIMPOC *Global child labour trends 2000 to 2004*.

25. Over 15 such tracer studies will have been done by 2011, providing a solid comparative knowledge base on the long-term changes for target groups of IPEC models of intervention.

**Box 2.1****Conditional cash transfers review: A promising tool against child labour**

Conditional cash transfer (CCT) programmes typically provide a certain amount of cash to poor households on a regular basis on condition that the beneficiaries fulfil certain obligations aimed at human development, such as sending their children to school. Pioneered by Brazil and Mexico in the mid-1990s, CCT programmes have been most prevalent in Latin America where they have proved successful in poverty alleviation. This success has led to the take-up of CCTs in other regions. However, only relatively few countries have sought to integrate child labour concerns from the start, for example Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Ghana. A review, conducted by IPEC and presented in 2008, on the potential use of CCTs in contributing to the elimination of child labour, suggested a number of proposals for future action that will be set out in Part III of this Report. One such follow-up has been the inclusion of a child labour component in the CCT programme of Indonesia, launched in 2007, which can contribute to promoting school enrolment and has the potential of reaching half a million households. CCTs are also designed to close gender gaps in education, as their use demonstrates in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Mexico and Pakistan, for example.

target it. They include CCTs; other social protection programmes; youth employment promotion measures; or poverty reduction schemes that comprise, among other strategies, the promotion of decent work in communities from which child labour is drawn and, more generally, which also generate the tax revenue needed to fund the public services children need. Ensuring that these policies and programmes target and assess the impact on child labour, through mainstreaming child labour indicators and analytical tools, is an essential part of the progressive elimination of child labour and of any meaningful impact assessment framework approach.

**117.** A fundamental purpose of the impact assessment framework is to identify which type of interventions work, how these work and in what context. Evaluations at all levels<sup>26</sup> are key for providing the data required to develop a sound knowledge base through the establishment of consolidated guidelines and model approaches that can inform policies and interventions and be the basis of the technical assistance and advice provided by IPEC.

### **South–South cooperation**

**118.** In recent years, the United Nations has emphasized again the importance of South–South cooperation in complementing the traditional schemes of North–South cooperation. The South–South modality strengthens ties between developing countries (or middle-income countries in the Global South and developing countries) and has now increasingly been promoted for action against child labour.

**119.** Brazil initiated South–South cooperation programmes in the field of child labour in 2006, by financing a project on combating the worst forms of child labour in Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa (PALOP). With this project, Brazil became the first developing country to make funds available for IPEC technical cooperation programmes. An MOU, signed between the ILO and the Government of Brazil in December 2007, launched a new international initiative to promote specific South–South technical cooperation projects and activities that contribute to the 2016 target. The aim is to foster horizontal cooperation between countries by sharing successful experiences in the fight against child labour, for example within the framework of regional groups such as the Andean Pact, MERCOSUR (Southern Cone Common Market), the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Trilateral (formed in 2003 to promote South–South cooperation and exchange among the three emerging economies), and groups of countries united by a common language. As an example of South–South cooperation, in 2007, Brazil provided technical assistance to the government of Ghana in the design of a pilot social grants scheme along the lines of *Bolsa Família* (CCT scheme). In the same year, and as part of the same process, tripartite representatives of the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa undertook a study tour to Brazil, in partnership with the US Department of Labor. In 2008, IPEC launched a new project, financed by Brazil, to assist the Government of Haiti as well as its workers' and employers' organizations in making tangible progress in the effective elimination of child labour.

**120.** At the International Labour Conference in 2009, the MOU between Brazil and the ILO on

26. In 2008–09, IPEC implemented 52 evaluation or external reviews, with a similar number expected in 2010–11.

### Box 2.2

#### The Zambia Congress of Trade Unions develops a national policy on child labour

In February 2009, the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) officially adopted its National Policy on Child Labour. The purpose of the policy is to assist and give guidance to the ZCTU and its affiliates in respect of children's rights in the world of work. This policy complements other stakeholders' policies and programmes including the TBP, National Child Policy, Draft Child Labour Policy (when adopted by the Government) and the Employment of Young Persons and Children (Amendment) Act (2004).

The policy was drafted by a Steering Group with representatives of ZCTU affiliates who shared their technical knowledge about child labour in specific sectors of the Zambian economy, such as agriculture and small-scale mining. The formulation of the ZCTU National Policy on Child Labour was built on a comprehensive consultative and social dialogue process with stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE) and civil society organizations.

Key contributions during the drafting process also came from sister African workers' organizations, in particular the Kenyan Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) and the Ugandan National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU). The ZCTU and both COTU and NOTU had focal points trained on social dialogue and child labour under the partnership with ACTRAV and IPEC in 2007. In this case child labour issues represented an area of concern uniting workers across borders in a spirit of South–South cooperation.

South–South cooperation was extended to cover social protection activities as part of the Decent Work Agenda. This, as noted above, also offers further opportunities for child labour activities. In 2009, three new projects in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay were financed by Brazil to complement, in a triangular way, USDOL-funded IPEC projects.

**121.** Cooperation in the spirit of South–South solidarity has also proved effective among social partners, as is illustrated in box 2.2.

#### Deepening and strengthening the worldwide movement

**122.** The 2006 Report identified the most pressing challenge as the strengthening of the worldwide movement, which was the principal catalyst for child labour efforts. It highlighted a number of steps that were necessary in this regard, not least of which was engaging the ILO's constituents more forcefully in committing themselves to the cause of the elimination of child labour, as well as forming new alliances.

**123.** The Global Action Plan more specifically emphasized the importance of putting child labour on the international human rights and development agenda, of enhancing the role of the social partners on the global stage, and of greater strategic targeting of advocacy efforts. Among the specific measures identified were:

- promoting child labour as an indicator in the monitoring systems of the MDGs and Education for All (EFA);

- preparing a technical report and draft resolution for the 18th ICLS;
- strengthening advocacy on child domestic workers;
- developing closer collaboration with other UN agencies, particularly UNICEF;
- promoting an international review conference as a follow-up to Oslo 1997.

**124.** What is particularly encouraging is the number of important leadership initiatives from the ILO since 2006 that can be reported under this strategic pillar. Many of the initiatives set out below have led to more and more solid platforms for the worldwide movement.

#### ILO report on the worldwide movement

**125.** Today, IPEC is by far the largest technical co-operation programme in the ILO. Twenty years ago this development would have been unimaginable. It is worth reflecting that, even at the end of the 1980s, the ILO had only just launched its *first* field project tackling child labour and had only one dedicated official at headquarters dealing with the issue. How did this remarkable change come about? The growth of IPEC is part of a larger story told in the ILO report *The worldwide movement against child labour: Progress and future directions*, published in 2007.<sup>27</sup> This was the first systematic study to appear on this important subject and its material in part helped inform the 2006 Report.

27. A. Fyfe: *The worldwide movement against child labour: Progress and future directions* (Geneva, ILO, 2007).



**126.** By tracing the evolution of the international campaign against child labour, the study provides a significant and timely contribution to the ILO's intellectual history. The study reveals that the call for an international campaign to combat child labour goes back to the 1860s within the international labour movement based in Britain. The first international discussion on child labour took place among worker delegates, presciently, in Geneva in September 1866 at the initial congress of the International Working Men's Association, the First International.<sup>28</sup> The year 2016 will therefore mark the 150th anniversary of that historic event, which indicates that the interrelationship between decent work and the elimination of child labour has long been understood.

**127.** Though the roots of the international child labour campaign go back to the nineteenth century, it was not until the 1980s that a more systematic movement against child labour began to emerge, when concern and action appeared at all important levels from local, to national to international. The explicit policy frameworks that still guide global efforts today also emerged from the ILO at this time, with particular emphasis on making child labour elimination part of broader development efforts in education, employment and poverty reduction.

**128.** A high-water mark of the worldwide movement may have been the late 1990s with the international conferences held in Amsterdam and Oslo in 1997, followed by the unanimous adoption and rapid ratification in 1999 of Convention No. 182. This symbolized a broad international consensus concerning the urgent need and the priority areas for action.

**129.** However, as the study makes plain, though much progress has been made in promoting a worldwide movement in the last decade, many challenges remain. In particular, there is the danger that the international campaign against child labour would be viewed as an event (the ratification of Conventions) and not as a process of deep political engagement with follow-through commitments. Diminished international attention, from its high point in the late 1990s, though perhaps to be expected, has meant that the momentum achieved then has not been routinely sustained. There are some indications that in recent years the child labour issue has dropped even lower on the list of priorities of some key global actors, to a disturbing extent. In the new century, the

worldwide movement is seriously in need of a boost towards an agreed global strategy and commitments and action from key stakeholders.

**130.** However, a number of recent developments, set out below, give grounds for optimism that the challenge can be met. The challenges and opportunities facing the worldwide movement are explored in Part III of the Report.

### Advocacy

**131.** The ILO global evaluation of IPEC conducted in 2004 concluded that there had been substantial achievements in getting the message out and mobilizing others.<sup>29</sup> Media and campaign materials had been effective and timely. In fact, IPEC publications and advocacy materials now total over 2,400 in numerous languages available from the IPEC Programme Database ([www.ilo.org/ipec/informationresources](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/informationresources)), which can be accessed directly from the Information Resource Centre on the IPEC web site ([www.ilo.org/ipec](http://www.ilo.org/ipec)). Electronic dissemination of IPEC publications continues to expand rapidly, reflecting more concerted promotion of IPEC products on the web and through email bulletins. An IPEC newsletter was launched in March 2009 and is sent out to a mailing list of over 1,500 individuals and institutions.

**132.** The World Day against Child Labour has grown in prominence as an advocacy tool since its launch in 2002 to mark the adoption of Convention No. 182. Each year a particular theme is chosen – agriculture in 2007, education in 2008 and girls in 2009. In 2009, the President of the United States issued a statement supporting World Day calling for a renewed commitment to ending child labour “in all its forms”.<sup>30</sup> Increasingly organizations and groups with little or no previous contact with the ILO are taking initiatives on World Day. There are encouraging signs of industrialized countries becoming involved in spreading the message. An extra boost came from social networking sites, with IPEC becoming the first ILO department to experiment with Twitter. Hits on the IPEC web pages of the ILO web site reached a monthly high of close to 100,000 in June 2009, reflecting a strong interest in World Day. Hundreds of activities to mark World Day were held in 60 countries with a strong participation from the social partners and UNICEF. The potential of

28. Fyfe, *The worldwide movement against child labour*, op. cit., p. 7.

29. See ILO: *The end of child labour: Within reach*, op. cit., p. 29.

30. *Statement by President Barack Obama on World Day Against Child Labour* (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 12 June 2009).

**Box 2.3**  
**Youth in action in industrialized countries**

In France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States and a dozen more industrialized countries, thousands of young people – from primary and secondary schools as well as universities – are now involved in SCREAM projects in many different social settings. They are expressing their creativity in music and theatre performances, visual arts, photo exhibits, seminars, debates, interviews and academic projects that deepen their awareness of child labour. This platform provides an important vehicle for children's voices and is an innovative way of engaging education systems in the campaign against child labour. Ministers of education have launched SCREAM national projects to enable educators to reinforce the global effort against child labour by empowering children and youth to become active agents for change. IPEC's SCREAM advocacy and education packages have been used in over 65 countries and are currently available in 19 languages.

World Day as an advocacy tool will be examined in greater detail in Part III of the Report.

**133.** In addition, SCREAM (Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media) continues to offer the ILO the opportunity to access classrooms worldwide and to develop educational and social mobilization activities that have broadened the scope of IPEC's partnerships to embrace arts and youth groups in both developing and industrialized countries. During 2008, using the opportunity of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, SCREAM was instrumental in placing the issue of child labour in the broader context of children's rights, education and the MDGs. Special modules have been created on HIV/AIDS and child labour and on child labour in conflict and post-conflict situations. The 12 to 12 Partnership Initiative and the 12 to 12 Community Portal are important components of IPEC's Global Awareness Campaigns by maintaining the momentum from one World Day to the next. Through these platforms, IPEC has reinforced its advocacy coalition-building strategy facilitating joint efforts within the UN system, with social partners, NGOs, municipalities, the media, academic institutions and the artistic community.

**134.** One offshoot of these advocacy efforts has been the MOU with the World Organization of the Scout Movement signed in 2004 and extended in December 2008 for a further three years.

***Enhancing the role of the social partners***

**135.** In recent years, IPEC has sought to place increased and more appropriate emphasis on strengthening the social dialogue component of its strategy through support to capacity building and targeted interventions and by strengthening the

understanding of labour markets and labour relations within IPEC itself. This has entailed (i) the establishment of a social dialogue unit within IPEC Headquarters; (ii) support for the mainstreaming of child labour in the policies, programmes and activities of the social partners; and (iii) the strengthening of their role in the worldwide movement. These efforts have borne fruit.

***Workers' organizations***

**136.** The ILO has pursued two interwoven tracks in its attempts through training, seminars and capacity assistance to increase its support for workers' organizations to pursue the mainstreaming of child labour concerns in their overall policy and organizing strategies. The strategy reflects the position expounded most recently in the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Mini Action Guide published in June 2008: trade unions have a policy role, as well as an organizing, bargaining and awareness-raising role and an information-gathering role. A special internet video spot produced by the ITUC in June 2009 is one example of trade union awareness-raising work.

**137.** First, starting from the premise that Convention No. 182 (and indeed, in regard to designation of hazardous work prohibited to children, Recommendation No. 190) places tripartite consultation at the heart of the development and oversight of national policy on child labour, IPEC and ACTRAV have together pursued the establishment, through sub-regional and multi-subregional training seminars, of a sustainable global network of trained and committed child labour focal points in national trade union centres who will be key resource persons for their organizations, ensuring that child labour issues are better understood and mainstreamed in policy and action.

**138.** A cadre of national trade union centre focal points from Asia and Africa were trained at a workshop held at Turin the end of 2007. Similar exercises were held in November 2008 in Bahia, Brazil, for South America, then for Central America in the Dominican Republic in March 2009, and for the Caribbean in Barbados in August 2009. As a result of these workshops, trade unions strengthened their collaboration on child labour policies, action plans were submitted to the ILO for financial support and many of these trade union centres took part in World Day activities.

**139.** Second, IPEC's social dialogue strategy recognizes that child labour, whether open or hidden, exists in many workplaces. It occurs primarily, though not exclusively, in agriculture both formal and informal and in the various other sectors of the informal economy. Therefore, its elimination, as with other fundamental rights at work, will not be achieved solely by the development of law but requires action by the social partners at the sectoral, enterprise and workplace levels, not least by the simple strengthening of the general capacity of employers and their organizations and of workers' organizations to perform their central role of representing the interests of their members.

**140.** In this regard, recognizing that the interdependence of fundamental rights at work means that action to support one right should inevitably have beneficial effects on the others, IPEC has made regular references in communications and in training to the so-called "Chennai Agenda". The 2006 Global Report on child labour discussed at the International Labour Conference the same year referred to this outcome of an IPEC/ACTRAV intersubregional workshop, held in Chennai in December 2005, in which numerous national trade union centres from the Asian region had exchanged experiences of how they linked organizing in the informal economy with the struggle against child labour. For some, the struggle against child labour had been a helpful entry point for action, for others their normal recruitment and organizing campaigns had inevitably strengthened their capacity to combat child labour. The Workers' group strongly endorsed that broad organizing approach in the 2006 conference discussion and recognized that the pursuit of the trade union core mandate – independent self-organization of workers for the purposes of collective bargaining (which contributes to greater social equity) – was the most significant workplace contribution that trade unions could make to the struggle against child labour, even if it were not primarily and explicitly directed against child labour and even if, among informal

economy workers, new and innovative types of self-organization emerged. It also maintained the view that organizing was the sole route to the establishment of a collective, democratic voice. While NGOs might play a valuable supporting role in such campaigns, only the elected representatives of workers could have a mandate to represent their colleagues in dialogue and bargaining with employers and public authorities.

**141.** In its work with trade union organizations, IPEC has sought to be guided by that key point stressed by the workers in the 2006 Conference debate: that organized workplaces are inevitably free of child labour and that barriers to freedom of association in those areas of the global economy where child labour is most prevalent – in unprotected, informal work, in domestic service and in agriculture – are also significant barriers to the elimination of child labour. Moreover, as the Workers' group stressed in 2006: adults in decent work will have children in school, so those organizing attempts that lead to formalization, to protection under law, and to decent work were a further sustainable contribution to the elimination of child labour and to enlarged tax bases for national education and other social expenditure.

**142.** Though the Chennai meeting had involved only trade union centres from Asian countries, their experience was common to unions in other regions, where numerous similar examples abound of the interrelationship – explicit or implicit – of organizing agricultural and informal economy workers, in a wide range of sectors, and the fight against child labour: from Costa Rica to Brazil; Ghana and Senegal to the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia; as well as from Pakistan and India to Indonesia and the Philippines.

**143.** This perspective has, of course, implications for IPEC's work both globally and at the national level. It requires, for example, in the implementation of the global agreements on child labour in mining and agriculture signed, respectively, at the 2005 and 2007 International Labour Conferences, a more effective working relationship with the relevant global union federations and their affiliated national organizations. Alongside continued national-level policy work with national employers' organizations and national trade union centres, not least in national child labour steering committees, it also requires the integration in project design of sectoral and geographical child labour-free approaches which can engage the social partners on the basis of their comparative advantage and representative capacity in their sectors, enterprises and workplaces.



**144.** In Karnataka State in India, Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), one of the main national trade union confederations, has been successful in organizing 1,200 informal economy workers with IPEC support. Through the IPEC-supported INDUS project in India, child labour has been taken up by 400 sectoral trade unions as part of their regular work. Another ongoing ILO-ACTRAV project, funded by the Government of Norway since 2004 and covering 646 villages of 12 districts in Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh, aimed to empower informal economy workers, especially rural women through support for self-organization.<sup>31</sup> The project's strategy of poverty reduction among informal economy workers involved organizing them into either trade unions or self-help groups. Part of the focus of the project was on the elimination of child labour. Trade unions entered into social dialogue and obtained collective agreements with employers that they would not employ child labour in agriculture and other activities in the informal economy. Trade unions developed the concept of "child labour-free villages" by entering into dialogue with local leaders and employers. They also approached schools and local administration in assisting dropouts in getting back into regular schooling. As many as 309 collective agreements banning child labour were concluded with factory employers, large landlords and small and marginal farmers. This provides an important model of what can be done to organize the unorganized for the benefit of eliminating child labour.

#### *Employers' organizations*

**145.** Employers have an important role to play on the demand side of the child labour equation. New resource guides for employers, produced in collaboration with the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), were launched by the ILO's Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) in 2007.<sup>32</sup> Funded by the Norwegian Government, the new guides provide an important capacity-building platform for employers' organizations in combating child labour. Two interregional conferences to share experiences in this regard were held in Turkey in 2007 and Azerbaijan in 2008. In October 2008, the ILO held a

conference in Argentina, in collaboration with the IOE, that attracted business leaders from 17 countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean to share experiences and good practices in eliminating child labour from supply chains. The conference also served as a forum for launching the Spanish version of the guides and providing training in their use. Furthermore, throughout 2008, multiple workshops and lectures were held across Argentina to promote the Global Compact and the Enterprise Network against Child Labour (*Red de empresas contra el trabajo infantil*).<sup>33</sup>

**146.** The ACT/EMP–IOE guides provide numerous case studies of where employers' organizations are making a difference in combating child labour. Not surprisingly, countries that have made significant progress in the fight against child labour have often benefited from a very active involvement of the social partners. In Turkey, for instance, employers' organizations have been part of a strong tripartite effort. TISK operates a Bureau for Working Children which, among its activities, has identified hazardous work situations and promotes occupational safety and health. The Federation of Uganda Employers has been active in combating child labour in the coffee, tea, rice and sugar sectors, setting up child labour monitoring committees at the local level. The Mongolian Employers' Federation has taken the lead in a wider alliance to address child labour in the informal gold mining sector. In India, a group of 22 employers' associations in partnership with the state government of Andhra Pradesh has conducted surveys, organized awareness campaigns and provided direct services such as transitional schools. In Ghana, the rubber estates company has provided educational support, including education grants to employees, to keep children away from work and in school. In Bangladesh, employers' organizations are part of a "Smart Business Initiative" alliance that has focused on removing hazardous conditions facing young workers. In Costa Rica, tourism sector employers help to protect children by adhering to a code of conduct. In the Republic of Moldova, a code of conduct on the elimination of child labour was adopted by employers and is being closely monitored by the National Federation of Employers in Agriculture and the Food Industry (FNPAIA).

31. Haque and Varghese, op. cit., p. 50.

32. ACT/EMP–IOE: *Guides for employers on eliminating child labour* (Geneva, ILO, 2007). Available in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese and Mongolian.

33. During the meetings held on the occasion of World Day Against Child Labour 2006 between the National Commission for the Eradication of Child Labour (CONAETI) and representatives of the business sector, the Argentinian employers expressed the need to have a forum to discuss child labour issues. In June 2007, the *Red de empresas contra el trabajo infantil* was created as a result of an agreement between the Ministry of Labour, CONAETI and the first 50 companies adhering to the Network.

*Corporate social responsibility*

**147.** During the 1990s, large business corporations throughout the world came under pressure to pay greater attention to the impact of their activities on the environment, on human rights including labour rights, and on good governance. Promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR) was part of the response by employers to these concerns. Some enterprises sought to develop this response by developing internal codes, others engaged in sectoral or multisectoral multi-stakeholder “voluntary social initiatives”, or sought the expression of their CSR policy through strengthened dialogue with the relevant global trade union federations. Advice to companies regarding CSR has over time become a considerable industry. The ILO sought to respond to the demand for advice from multinational enterprises by establishing the MNE Help Desk, and by pursuing new training approaches in Turin.

**148.** While the ILO’s contributions to CSR began with the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration) in 1977, corporate social responsibility has become a fast-growing entry point for the ILO’s work on child labour with the business community and with trade union organizations. CSR can broadly be viewed as a way in which enterprises give consideration to the impact of their operations on society, affirming their principles and values both in their own internal methods and processes, and in their interaction with others. While a fundamental obligation of an enterprise is to comply with the law, CSR was conceived as a voluntary expression of commitments that went beyond the minimum requirements of law – most notably in company codes of labour practice, which declared the aim of applying either national law or international standards, whichever provided the greater protection for workers.

**149.** In 1999, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan sought to provide a forum to promote CSR through the Global Compact initiative. As with the other pillars of fundamental rights at work, for several years (and indeed still today) much effort was expended in seeking to ensure that supply chains were free of child labour through developing private social auditing systems, some of them linked to workplace certification or “social labelling” of products. The ILO experience in this field goes back to the Bangladesh garment industry project of 1995 that featured in the 2006 Report. Indeed, the ILO became engaged, through the Turin Centre, in the global efforts to develop benchmarks of competence to improve the quality and credibility of social auditing.

**150.** A most significant development in this regard since the last Global Report on child labour has been the shift in the discourse within important parts of the global CSR community, from a discussion centred solely on the competence of social auditors to one which recognized that, however credible, social auditing was essentially a diagnostic tool. Sustained and sustainable improvement in global supply chains, i.e., the effective implementation of corporate codes of labour practice, required further components that went beyond auditing and consisted of the mainstreaming of CSR and ethical trade approaches into the core business policies and purchasing practices of multinational enterprises; and the use of CSR approaches to promote mature systems of industrial relations.

*Global framework agreements*

**151.** In the relationship between MNEs and their interlocutor sectoral global union federations, the promotion of mature systems of industrial relations as a vehicle to deliver all fundamental rights at work, including the effective elimination of child labour, has increasingly been expressed through the negotiation and implementation of global framework agreements (GFAs). A key difference between corporate codes of conduct and GFAs is that the former rely primarily on internal company social auditing systems while in the latter, the regular monitoring by trade unions affiliated to the relevant GUF is crucial. Almost all of the 84 GFAs, signed between seven of the 11 Global Union federations and 82 manufacturing and service sector companies, including some of the world’s largest, refer to the prohibition of the use of child labour. They make reference to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, to relevant Conventions, and to the labour principles of the Global Compact. Some of them expand further on labour issues. A typical formulation is as follows:

“Child labour shall not be used. Only workers above the age of 15 years, or over the compulsory school-leaving age if higher, shall be employed. (ILO Convention No. 138) Children under the age of 18 shall not perform 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. (ILO Convention No. 182).”

**152.** Wider formulations regarding scope of application, minimum standards beyond national or international law, and remediation are reflected in various

ways. Though it predated Convention No. 182, the total of the various points is well encapsulated in the code of the multi-stakeholder Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), negotiated in 1998 with ETI member companies and development NGOs by the then International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF), the International Union of Food Workers (IUF) and the British Trades Union Congress (TUC). Provision 4 of the ETI Base Code reads as follows:

“Child labour shall not be used

- There shall be no new recruitment of child labour.
- Companies shall develop or participate in, and contribute to, policies and programmes which provide for the transition of any child found to be performing child labour to enable her or him to attend and remain in quality education until no longer a child; (...)
- Children and young persons under 18 shall not be employed at night or in hazardous conditions.
- These policies and procedures shall conform to the provisions of the relevant ILO standards.”

**153.** In some cases (for example the companies Akke, Veidekke and Norske Skog), a GFA commits the enterprise to provide financial support for remediation through education if the child labour provisions of the agreement have been violated by the company. Furthermore, the agreement between Swedish paper company SCA, its European Works Council, the Swedish Paperworkers' Union and ICEM makes explicit reference (as does France Telecom, with slightly different wording) to supporting and respecting the protection of human rights, in particular the effective elimination of compulsory and child labour, *within the company's sphere of influence*, which will be a criterion in the choice and management of relationships with suppliers and subcontractors. Inditex commits to a similar extension of responsibility to its sphere of influence and requires the development of appropriate educational programmes if child labour is detected. The Public Services International (PSI)/Electricité de France (EDF) agreement also extends to subcontractors.

**154.** Wording on minimum age (and the relation to legitimate youth employment) largely reflects and refers to the ILO Conventions and states variously that either the temporary derogation of Convention

No. 138 regarding a minimum age of 14 is acceptable or that 15 should remain the minimum age, or that higher ages set by collective agreements should be respected. PSA Peugeot sets a general minimum age of 18, while in countries or regions whose economies and education systems have not achieved sufficient levels of development and in order to contribute to improving this situation, the minimum age may be set at 16. Some earlier GFAs, for example Statoil, predate Convention 182 and refer only to Convention No. 138. Inditex, in a more recent agreement with the ITGLWF, refers to ILO Convention No. 138 and to the definitions of hazardous work in ILO Recommendation No. 190, but sets a minimum age of 16, extending its agreement to external manufacturers, suppliers and their subcontractors. The Skanska GFA encourages apprenticeship programmes to promote employee training for participants who have reached the minimum age required by law, and Brunel makes a similar provision, with a minimum age of 16. The agreement between the CIETT grouping of private employment agencies and UNI Global Union also reflects a commitment to decent work for youth – an area of co-operation in the worldwide movement against child labour which could bear further exploration.

**155.** The Volkswagen GFA takes into consideration the ILO Conventions concerned and, while prohibiting child labour, states that the minimum age for employment will be observed in accordance with government regulations. DaimlerChrysler commits to supporting the effective abolition of “exploitative child labor” (a term earlier used for the worst forms of child labour which, however, may obscure the issue of minimum age) and to avoiding adverse effects on children's development and health and safety, but makes no reference to minimum age. Carrefour's agreement states that the company has condemned child labour in order to prevent slavery and forced labour, and intends to ensure that the principles established by the ILO are respected by its suppliers.

### *Alliance with the world cooperative movement*

**156.** An important initiative has been the ILO partnership with the International Co-operative Alliance. The joint report *Cooperating out of child labour*, published in 2009, was a first step in helping cooperative enterprises and the cooperative movement as a whole to play a more active role in the worldwide movement against child labour.<sup>34</sup> The

34. ILO: *Cooperating out of child labour: Harnessing the untapped potential of cooperatives and the cooperative movement to eliminate child labour* (Geneva, 2009).

report addresses how cooperatives can be effective in eliminating child labour in the economic sectors and supply chains where they operate, as well as in the local areas and communities where they are based. It highlights the need to move the issue of child labour higher up the cooperative agenda to ensure that child labour is *not* seen as one of the options for staying competitive.

**157.** This call to action for the world cooperative movement to join hands in fighting child labour has enormous potential. Cooperatives are member-owned and member-controlled organizations that are guided in their business, social and cultural activities by a series of cooperative values and principles which naturally lend themselves to tackling child labour. Indeed, the cooperative movement has a 150-year-old commitment to social responsibility, pursuing practical programmes for social justice and has been practising corporate social responsibility long before the term was coined.<sup>35</sup>

**158.** The cooperative movement, as one of the largest organized segments of civil society, can play a crucial role in advancing the cause of Decent Work. The prime purpose of all cooperatives is to meet the needs of their members rather than to make a profit. Part of the surplus earned by cooperative enterprises may be used for social purposes, such as education and gender equality. Through these and a range of other activities, they help people in more than 100 countries better their lives and their communities. Worldwide at least 800 million people are members of cooperatives.

**159.** The cooperative sector is large and diverse. Cooperatives vary in size from the very small to very large businesses. In Brazil they are responsible for 40 per cent of agricultural production, while in Switzerland two consumer cooperatives account for a big share of the retail food market. Moreover, many are business enterprises operating in economic sectors where child labour is found, or purchasing and marketing products from sectors where there is child labour. The elimination of child labour from supply chains therefore makes good business sense for cooperatives, as well as responding to their values and principles of social responsibility.

### ***Violence against children: The United Nations study***

**160.** The United Nations study on violence against children, with a chapter dedicated to child labour produced by the ILO, was launched at the end of 2006.<sup>36</sup> The process of producing the report was instructive for child labour efforts, including as it did governments, United Nations agencies, international NGOs, civil society organizations, research institutions and children themselves. This rich collaborative effort generated expectations of sustained follow-up to the report's recommendations and the process offers an important platform for the world-wide movement to engage with civil society partners, in particular, concerning workplace violence against children. IPEC has continued to support the follow-up process. For example, a more recent piece of research by UCW (2008) in Colombia, El Salvador, Cambodia and Ecuador indicates that abuse in the workplace is widespread for children and that agriculture and manufacturing are two sectors in which this is common.<sup>37</sup> In March 2009, the ILO supported an international conference on violence against children, particularly girls, hosted by the Government of the Netherlands in cooperation with UNICEF. On 1 May 2009, as a follow-up to the 2006 report, the UN Secretary-General appointed a Special Representative on Violence against Children, with whom the ILO will collaborate.

### ***Education for All: The child labour connection***

**161.** The ILO has a long involvement with the world of education and vocational and skills training and has an important role to play in contributing to the achievement of free, compulsory and universal education, which it has viewed for many years, in particular through its standards, as a key intervention in the fight against child labour. Education for all and the elimination of child labour are increasingly seen as interconnected challenges. This relationship now needs strengthening in a number of ways.

**162.** Since 1992, IPEC has built up considerable field experience using education and skills training to tackle child labour using both formal and non-formal channels. A resource kit produced in 2009 distilled this recent experience and provides tools and

35. ILO, *Cooperating out of child labour*, op. cit., p. 23.

36. P.S. Pineiro: *World report on violence against children* (Geneva, United Nations, 2006).

37. F. Blanco et al.: *Violence against children: Preliminary evidence from Colombia, El Salvador, Cambodia and Ecuador* (Rome, UCW, Nov. 2008).



guidance for policy makers and practitioners.<sup>38</sup> The resource kit offers a distinct contribution from the ILO to the task of better connecting the fight against child labour with global efforts to ensure the right to education.

**163.** In addition, the ILO shares a mandate with UNESCO to promote the status and conditions of teachers<sup>39</sup> as a professional group that is central to ensuring quality education outcomes. Here the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART) has been active in developing policies and providing guidance in areas pertinent to child labour. Recent ILO studies of trends in the use of contract teachers and teacher supply issues in relation to universal primary education have an important bearing on the child labour problem and were inputs to the EFA Global Monitoring Report process.<sup>40</sup>

**164.** The ILO continues to influence the Education for All movement that started in 1990 and whose aims include achieving universal primary education by 2015. The ILO has been central to the emergence of one of the newest partnerships in support of EFA. At the fifth High-Level meeting at Beijing in November 2005, the creation of a global partnership, the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All (GTF), was endorsed and launched. The core members of the partnership are the ILO, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank, Education International and the Global March Against Child Labour. Two donor countries, and developing countries with a particular interest in efforts to better connect these two global concerns, are also participating in the partnership. The ILO provides the secretariat for the partnership.

**165.** The main strategy to better connect these two global campaigns has, in the last few years, begun to yield tangible results. An important indicator of progress is the extent to which the annual UNESCO Global Monitoring Reports (GMR) have increasingly identified child labour as a major barrier to achieving universal primary education. This was particularly the case in the reports for 2009 and 2010 – the latter dealing with the marginalized, for which the ILO was asked to provide a working paper. The paper from IPEC highlighted the plight of indigenous peoples, HIV/AIDS orphans and children

affected by conflict, in particular.<sup>41</sup> Child labour is a symptom of societal marginalization, but also contributes to it. The paper concluded with suggestions as to how child labour could be addressed at all levels within education planning and programming. In addition, the World Day focus in 2008 and 2009 helped draw attention to the need to view education for all through a child labour and girls' education lens.

**166.** An important new development in education was the launch in March 2008 of the global project "Tackling child labour through education", supported by the European Commission, which provides technical cooperation up to 2012 in 11 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (Angola, Fiji, Guyana, Jamaica, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Zambia). The project aims to contribute towards poverty reduction in least developed countries by providing equitable access to basic education and skills development to the most disadvantaged section of society. The project is a strong vehicle for supporting knowledge networks on child labour and education through improved advocacy and dissemination of good practices as well as for building institutional capacity to formulate and implement strategies. IPEC is looking to expand the project to other countries.

**167.** There are a number of specific policy areas in child labour and education where the ILO's input can make a difference. First, IPEC has acquired considerable experience in designing educational interventions for child labourers mainly aimed at helping them move into the formal education system. Non-formal education (NFE) has been increasingly recognized as an alternative path by the EFA movement – as a valid "flexible" response to the exclusion of child labourers and other marginalized groups from the education system. However, this endorsement of NFE as a child labour strategy cannot be unconditional. Except in very special circumstances, NFE needs to be viewed as a means, not an end. The last Report drew particular attention to the role of NFE in the response to child labour, indicating that it may have unintended consequences for the formal education system and may be failing in its intention to act as a transition mechanism for working children, i.e., becoming a second best rather than a "second chance" option. IPEC, an important

38. IPEC: *Combating child labour through education: A resource kit for policy-makers and practitioners* (Geneva, ILO, 2009).

39. See ILO and UNESCO: *Recommendation concerning the status of teachers* (Geneva and Paris, 1966).

40. See A. Fyfe: *The use of contract teachers in developing countries: Trends and impact* (Geneva, ILO, 2007); and A. Fyfe: *Teacher shortages and EFA: Financing and recruitment challenges* (Geneva, ILO, forthcoming).

41. F. Blanco and P. Quinn: *Marginalization and child labour* (Geneva, IPEC, 2009).

sponsor of NFE, commissioned a working paper, in 2007, to further explore this issue and to help create a balanced picture.<sup>42</sup>

**168.** Second, the ILO continued to contribute to global debates concerning education responses to the problem of child labour and particularly the important roles that enhancing the status and conditions of teachers and skills training play. Partnerships with Education International, particularly through the Global Campaign for Education and World Day, have facilitated this effort. The ILO continued to advocate an adequate teacher supply to meet the needs of universal primary education in particular, and to press the case for phasing out contract teachers that may be undermining this goal in the long run. These themes will be developed in Part III of this Report.

### *New international partnerships*

**169.** Following the precedent in education, other important partnerships have been forged with important outcomes in terms of influencing international policy agendas to incorporate child labour concerns. This has been backed up with key products for policy-makers and practitioners. These knowledge products, moreover, demonstrate the unique role the ILO has to play in combating child labour.

**170.** A new partnership was launched in agriculture, which was the focus of World Day in 2007, with the signing of a declaration of intent between the ILO and the international agricultural agencies.<sup>43</sup> Joint training courses took place in October 2007 and the partnership was endorsed at the 2008 International Labour Conference. A similar partnership was created in 2007 on the problem of human trafficking, called the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT),<sup>44</sup> in which

the ILO is represented through IPEC and the Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (SAP–FL). The initiative held a Global Forum in Vienna in February 2008 and includes a number of expert groups and regional initiatives. One of these expert groups deals specifically with child trafficking and, led by the ILO and UNICEF, has developed a comprehensive training package to fight trafficking in children.<sup>45</sup> This initiative draws from existing resources, including the IPEC resource kit and lessons learned from a range of field-based projects.<sup>46</sup> The Third World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, which took place in Brazil at the end of 2008, reaffirmed the connection to the 2016 goal. A new compendium of research and tools to fight the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Latin America between 1996 and 2008 was also produced.<sup>47</sup>

**171.** The ILO is making its presence felt in international partnerships that have also been forged in global responses to children associated with armed forces and groups. IPEC has been using a variety of international networks to promote the upgrading of the economic components of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) for children. Through the UN Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR, the ILO has contributed to the development of a common policy since 2005. Within this partnership, the ILO has taken the lead on developing policy guidance on youth.<sup>48</sup> During 2008, together with the ILO-Turin Centre, IPEC started implementation of a European Commission project on freeing children from armed conflict, under which further operational guidance and training tools on economic reintegration are being developed.

**172.** A partnership for global action against child labour in small-scale mining that was launched on World Day in 2005 made a new call to action reinforcing the plight of girls and the responsibility of the industry to put an end to one of the worst

42. A. Fyfe: *Non-formal education and child labour: A caution* (Geneva, IPEC, unpublished paper, 2008).

43. The partnership includes the ILO; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR); the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP); and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF).

44. UN.GIFT partners include the ILO, the International Organization for Migration, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Arab Emirates, UNICEF, UNODC, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

45. ILO, UNICEF and UN.GIFT: *Training manual to fight trafficking in children for labour, sexual and other forms of exploitation* (Geneva, 2009).

46. ILO: *Combating trafficking in children for labour exploitation: A resource kit for policy-makers and practitioners* (Geneva, 2008). See also IPEC: *Meeting the challenge: Proven practices for human trafficking prevention in the Greater Mekong Subregion* (Bangkok, ILO, 2008).

47. IPEC: Publications and audiovisual resources guide for sharing information on strategies for the prevention and elimination of commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents: Latin America 1996–2008 (San José, ILO, 2008). Available in Spanish.

48. United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR: *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards, Module on Youth* (New York, 2006).

forms of child labour.<sup>49</sup> The International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Union (ICEM) and the mining employers' organization, the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) signed an agreement in 2005 calling for an end to child labour in all mining and quarrying activity.

#### *International partnerships in data collection and research*

**173.** The ILO continued its participation in the inter-agency UCW programme that was launched together with UNICEF and the World Bank in 2000, as a follow-up to the Oslo child labour conference. IPEC has benefited from UCW support at both the national and global levels in data analysis, impact assessment, the development of policy tools and recommendations. UCW has also been instrumental in providing support to national statistical offices in terms of upgrading their analytical capacity around the world. An evaluation of UCW, whose findings appeared at the end of 2008, set out a number of options for the future of the inter-agency programme.<sup>50</sup>

#### *World Day against Child Labour*

**174.** The World Day is increasingly "taking hold" and provides an important support to the worldwide movement as it builds recognition beyond the ILO. Activities are now held in around 60 countries. An indicator of this is that a number of social partners and both national and international NGOs now plan for it independently of the ILO. In 2009, employers' organizations were involved in World Day activities in 30 countries and workers' organizations were active in 38 countries. And this is an upward trend. Other United Nations agencies, particularly UNICEF, are also recognizing and promoting World Day – in the case of UNICEF in 23 countries in 2009, as well as on the front page of their web site. The World Day has become *the* key media event in the ILO calendar for child labour – achieving around 40 per cent of annual press coverage. It is also an opportunity to mobilize young people and forge links with the visual and performing arts,

thereby broadening the range of partnerships in support of the ILO's programme on child labour.<sup>51</sup>

#### *Child labour and the United Nations*

**175.** An important development was the adoption by the General Assembly, at the 63rd Session of the Third Committee in November 2008, of a resolution (A/RES/63/241) requesting the Secretary-General to include in his report on the rights of the child to the General Assembly session in 2009, a focus on international efforts and national progress in tackling child labour and in meeting the 2016 target of eliminating the worst forms of child labour. The report was released and discussed in the Third Committee in July 2009.

#### *United Nations reform process*

**176.** Since the last Report there has been a significant opening up of opportunities presented by United Nations reform to promote the elimination of child labour as part of the Decent Work Agenda. The worldwide movement critically depends on the capacity to deploy the full force of the United Nations "Delivering as One". The end of 2006 saw the reinvigoration of the United Nations reform process around the aim of a common strategy in pursuit of one set of goals consistent with the principle of national ownership. These proposals for major changes in the way the United Nations does business were in part aimed at facilitating the achievement of the MDGs. These changes boil down to "four ones" at the country level: one leader, one programme, one budget and one office.<sup>52</sup> This new approach was initially piloted in eight countries, extended to 20 in 2009, 40 by 2010 and the rest by 2012.

**177.** The ILO Governing Body endorsed the ILO's participation in the United Nations reform process in March 2007. Since then, the ILO has been dynamic in seizing opportunities presented by the reform process in promoting the Decent Work Agenda, including the elimination of child labour, within the evolving structures and processes of what is now termed "Delivering as One". The ILO was asked to take the lead in developing a "Toolkit for mainstreaming employment and decent work" that was launched

49. IPEC: *Minors out of mining! Partnership for global action against child labour in small-scale mining* (Geneva, ILO, 2006).

50. F. Breuer et al.: *Evaluation of the Understanding Children's Work (UCW) project* (Berlin, Global Public Policy Institute, 2008).

51. See web site: [www.ilo.org/ChildLabourWorldDay](http://www.ilo.org/ChildLabourWorldDay).

52. See United Nations: *Delivering as One: Report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel* (New York, 9 Nov. 2006).

in April 2007 and includes a section on child labour. The toolkit is an important vehicle of this mainstreaming effort among the United Nations agencies of the Decent Work Agenda. It was adapted for country level application in 2008 and provides a lens through which governments can appraise their efforts in integrating the elimination of child labour within their overall national development framework.<sup>53</sup>

**178.** The involvement of the social partners in the pilot countries appears mixed so far. The opportunities and some of the difficulties of the United Nations reform process in relation to child labour will be examined in Part III of the Report.

### *Global conference on child labour 2010*

**179.** The heightened interest in the child labour issue in the 1990s was marked by the two international conferences held in 1997. A major review conference following the Amsterdam and Oslo meetings of 1997, and the 2002 meeting in The Hague, was specifically called for in the 2006 Global Report. In response to this concern, the Government of the Netherlands announced at the 2009 International Labour Conference that it would host a global meeting to be held in May 2010. The conference is being held in cooperation with the ILO. The main objective of the conference is to strengthen the worldwide movement to achieve universal ratification of ILO Conventions Nos 138 and 182 and to advance efforts to reach the 2016 target. Conference discussions will be structured around five key themes: political awareness and commitment; financing needs; policy integration; tripartite action; and focus on Africa. In addition, the conference will provide a platform for “champion” countries, social partners and others to showcase and discuss good practice in combating child labour. The conference will consider a *road map* on ways and means to help reach the 2016 target.

### *Responding to the global economic and employment crisis*

**180.** The global economic crisis means the world faces the prospect of a prolonged increase in unemployment, deepening poverty and inequality.

Among those that stand to be most affected are the children of the world’s poor and vulnerable families. Increasing unemployment and poverty threatens to jeopardize children’s education, health and welfare. The result could be to halt, or even to reverse, some of the recent global progress in reducing child labour and increasing children’s access to education. In responding to the crisis, the ILO highlighted, in particular, the following concerns:

- reduced living standards could force many poor households to send children to work, or to take children out of school because they can no longer afford the costs of education;
- any reductions in national education budgets could have a significant impact on opportunities for access to education and quality of education;
- declines in remittances could have a negative impact on children in many communities, particularly where families rely on remittances to support children’s education;
- any reductions in aid flows could create problems in countries that rely on such support, with sub-Saharan Africa particularly at risk.<sup>54</sup>

**181.** In June 2009, a Global Jobs Pact<sup>55</sup> was agreed by Governments and Workers’ and Employers’ delegates to the International Labour Conference in Geneva. The Pact outlined strategies to guide a recovery from the current economic and jobs crisis by putting sustainable livelihood recovery at the forefront of all crisis responses. It called for supporting job creation and helping people into work, investing in social protection systems, strengthening respect for international labour standards, and promoting social dialogue.

**182.** In August 2009, IPEC issued a special briefing note highlighting the importance of the Global Jobs Pact and how it could contribute to the fight against child labour. The Pact focuses attention on the need to respond to the crisis by promoting fair globalization and the need to continue the pursuit of the MDGs. It also calls for sustainable social protection systems to assist the vulnerable and stresses the need for continuing vigilance to achieve the elimination and prevention of child labour. The Pact’s emphasis on the importance of increasing equal access and opportunities for skills development, quality training and education to prepare for recovery is also particularly relevant, as these measures obviate the tendency to have recourse to child labour.

53. ILO: *Toolkit for mainstreaming employment and decent work: Country level application* (Geneva, 2008).

54. UNESCO: *Investing out of the crisis through action in education*, Background Paper on UNESCO’s work on assessing the impact of the financial crisis (Paris, 2009).

55. ILO: *Recovering from the Crisis: A Global Jobs Pact* (Geneva, 2009).



**183.** Any reductions in aid flows as a result of the crisis could have a negative impact as regards child labour and broader development concerns. Sub-Saharan Africa is most at risk. There are wide variations across the region, but in a number of countries official development assistance (ODA) as a proportion of GDP is between 10–30 per cent. The Global Jobs Pact also addressed this concern, emphasizing the need to keep commitments to increased aid. It urges the international community to provide development assistance, including budgetary support, to build up a basic social protection floor on a national basis.

**184.** Since its adoption, the Global Jobs Pact has secured widespread international support and it will continue to provide an important framework for efforts to mitigate the impact of the crisis on child labour.

**185.** The ILO submitted a report to the G20 meeting in September 2009 on actions taken by countries in response to the crisis. This noted that not enough attention had been given to additional measures to fight child labour and trafficking. However, it also reported on actions taken in many countries to safeguard employment and extend social protection, measures which could be expected to have a positive impact on the prevention of child labour.

### Further integration of child labour into ILO priorities

**186.** Decent Work Country Programmes will be the ILO's main vehicle for child labour programming in the coming years. Child labour is an important indicator of decent work deficits and therefore an important entry point for Decent Work Country Programmes.

**187.** A review was conducted of the degree to which the 40 current Decent Work Country Programmes effectively integrate child labour elimination and youth employment promotion as priorities in a life-cycle approach. This review in particular explored the extent to which the question of child labour was included as a priority, recognizing that most Decent Work Country Programmes have yet to be finalized and implemented. This is overwhelmingly the case. However, there are situations where child labour has been unfortunately omitted.

**188.** The Decent Work Country Programme for Kenya is a good example of the integration of child labour elimination with the promotion of youth employment. These priority areas are viewed strategically as part of the national development and poverty reduction agenda. The social partners, such as the

Central Organization of Trade Unions, the Federation of Kenya Employers, the Kenyan Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union and the Kenya Union of Sugar Plantation Workers, are central to the design of specific interventions such as income-generating schemes and the broader building of alliances to push through change. Regional partners such as Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania have, in their Decent Work Country Programmes, highlighted the role of education and training in the response to child labour, as part of a time-bound strategy. Cambodia has set numerical targets for reducing the number of working children from 16.5 per cent in 1999 to 8 per cent in 2015. Indonesia has similarly set numerical targets for the elimination of child labour as part of its Decent Work Country Programme, building on the 25 per cent reduction of the incidence of the worst forms reported in 2008.

**189.** The role of the social partners is also important here. As set out below, IPEC has continued to work on the child labour/youth employment interface and to explore linkages between child labour and social protection, given their increasing relevance to the global economic crisis response and United Nations reform processes. IPEC's contribution to the campaign on "Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work" was also an important support to ILO-wide developments.

### Child labour and youth employment linkages

**190.** With support from the Government of Sweden, IPEC was able to undertake a substantial item of work from April 2006 to September 2008 through the project "Child Labour and Youth Employment Linkages". First, a policy-oriented component emphasized the learning aspects of policy work, with the aim of producing data to guide policy on youth employment. A specific aspect of this was the adaptation and implementation of school-to-work transition surveys. Second, a more action-oriented component focused on practical ways to reduce work hazards for 14–17-year-olds and promote safe and legal work. Finally, another action-oriented item centred on developing career counselling for adolescents and former child labourers that would enable them to identify, assess, and prepare for new work opportunities.

**191.** Achievements have included research studies of hazards in supply chains in Pakistan and Indonesia. A tool for training employers in small businesses and informal settings about occupational hazards facing young people was developed. A global workshop linking occupational health researchers with

project managers was held in Pune, India, to identify lessons learned and map out a future agenda in this field. A web-based “community of practice” has been set up on safe work for youth. Inputs have been made to prestigious conferences and journals to spread the message. For example, the International Congress on Occupational Health, which met in March 2009 in Cape Town, provided an opportunity to get child labour on the health agenda and support for a child labour working group. Preparing a “global burden of disease” estimate for child labour would provide an important advocacy tool. The project evaluation in June 2008 recognized the innovative nature of these efforts.<sup>56</sup> Subsequently, relevant technical units of the ILO have worked to build a stronger consensus concerning which approaches can, and should, be used to keep young workers safe, particularly in respect of the role of employers, who carry the prime responsibility for ensuring young workers’ safety.

**192.** In addition, the Asia-Pacific region has launched “APYouthNet”, a community of practice that aims to connect youth experts within the framework of the regional Knowledge Network on Youth Employment. IPEC contributed to the development of *Forging linkages between child labour and youth employment programmes across Asia and the Pacific: Handbook for ILO staff*, produced in the region in 2008, to enhance work on the linkage between child labour and youth employment. This practical tool elaborates four pillars (policy, knowledge, social mobilization and technical cooperation) as the foundation of future developments in linking the elimination of child labour with promoting decent youth employment. The handbook concludes by suggesting a number of ways in which IPEC and the Youth Employment Programme can forge closer collaboration in the future under the four pillars. Furthermore the link between child labour and youth employment is an important theme in the ILO’s efforts to promote decent work in Indonesia. The ILO-EAST (Education and Skills Training for Youth Employment) in Indonesia is a four-year project funded by the Government of the Netherlands that aims at improving the employability and entrepreneurship capacity of young people through education and skills-training opportunities and at contributing to the elimination of child labour in six provinces. Moreover, child

labour has been integrated into the long-standing Work Improvements in Small Enterprises (WISE) network, helping to sensitize employers that young workers must be protected from hazardous tasks, conditions and processes even though they are of legal working age. Finally, for the African regional meeting in 2007, IPEC joined with the ILO’s Employment Sector in presentations on child labour and youth employment, addressing the linkages and pointing towards integrated work and outcomes.

### Special action for girls

**193.** Girls represent approximately 54 per cent of the world’s total out-of-school children and are much more likely than boys never to enrol. One estimate suggests the global cost of *not* educating girls is US\$92 billion a year, just less than the total annual development assistance budget of developed countries.<sup>57</sup> ILO core Conventions on child labour stress the particular risks facing girls, especially some of the worst forms of child labour.

**194.** Since 2000, IPEC has invested heavily in promoting gender equality by important contributions to the UN-wide effort through the 2007 violence study and ongoing support to the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative as part of its partnerships in support of the EFA movement. Gender has featured throughout IPEC’s training activities. A number of practical tools and studies have been commissioned, not least that for World Day 2009 on the plight of girls.

**195.** The theme of “Gender equality at the heart of decent work” was chosen for a general discussion at the International Labour Conference in 2009. The elimination of child labour was reaffirmed in the general discussion in paragraph 35 of the conclusions, which reinforced the need to include gender differences and the special situation of girls in action plans against child labour.<sup>58</sup> The discussion was facilitated by a report and a campaign launched at the 2008 International Labour Conference.<sup>59</sup> Child labour featured in the campaign materials that focused on the role of education, particularly of girls, in building the foundations for decent work. The World Day events of 2008 and 2009 supported this focus.<sup>60</sup>

56. IPEC: *Child labour and youth employment linkages (phases I and II)* (Geneva, ILO, June 2008).

57. Plan International: *Paying the price: The economic cost of failing to educate girls* (Woking, UK, 2008).

58. ILO: Sixth item on the agenda: Gender equality at the heart of decent work. Provisional Record No. 13, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, 2009.

59. ILO: *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, 2009.

60. ILO: *Give girls a chance: Tackling child labour, a key to the future* (Geneva, 2009).

## The 2008 target

**196.** In accordance with Convention No. 182, the 2006 Global Report set the end of 2008 for member States to design and put in place *appropriate time-bound measures* as an interim step to the 2016 goal. This target was broadly drafted and there are several indicators and sources of information that might be used to arrive at a comprehensive assessment. IPEC has placed a great deal of emphasis on supporting the process of developing NAPs as one indicator of this interim target. A monitoring exercise was undertaken for this report, including a questionnaire for governments to help map responses in all countries to developing time-bound measures towards achieving the 2016 target. Progress region by region in developing NAPs was also analysed in the form of a timeline. A variety of other sources, such as article 22, the Declaration and IPEC technical progress reports were also used to build a comprehensive picture of the response to the 2008 target.

**197.** The picture is somewhat complex as there are a number of overlapping potential indicators of time-bound measures. These, additionally, include the TBP that are intended to support national efforts in response to Convention No. 182. Moreover, much like Decent Work Country Programmes, the process necessarily involves a number of phases and takes time.

**198.** What can be reasonably concluded is that in many cases the 2008 target was not met in any meaningful way, as for example through the design and execution of a NAP, but is now on the way to being met. The response in Latin America has been the most comprehensive to date with some 11 countries having implemented NAPs. One significant dimension to this is the development of national “road maps” and a subregional “road map” to make Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic free of child labour. These are to be launched in 2009 and early 2010. In 26 African countries, or just under half of the total, the process is under way while in Asia 11 countries have either NAPs or national TBPs.

## Focus on Africa

**199.** There is every reason to focus on Africa. In sub-Saharan Africa 65 million children, or one in four, are child labourers. Africa is home to the highest proportion of working children and the region

where the least progress is being made in reaching the MDGs, especially that of free, compulsory and universal primary education as an estimated one in three children are not in school. Although it has 19 per cent of the world’s population of primary school age, sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 47 per cent of the world’s out-of-school children.<sup>61</sup> The region suffers from the highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS and of those orphaned by the pandemic. Conflict has also been endemic in some countries, leading to the abuse and exploitation of millions of children.

## 2005 as a crucial year: The gap between promises and performance

**200.** The 2006 Global Report was prepared during 2005, when there was an unprecedented international effort to put the plight of Africa at the centre of the world’s attention. At the time, 2005 was viewed as a breakthrough year for Africa. The focus of this attention was the G8 Summit held at Gleneagles in July of that year. However, the Commission for Africa report that fed into the Summit and the final communiqué failed to mention child labour. Nevertheless, Gleneagles was seen as a window of opportunity to put child labour on the African development agenda. What happened next?

**201.** Gleneagles raised expectations of a sharp increase in aid by 2010 to achieve the MDGs. The 2005 commitments were expected to increase official development assistance from US\$80 billion in 2004 to US\$130 billion by 2010. Half the increase was earmarked for sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, the commitments were made at a time when aid was on an upward trend. Donor performance since then has not met expectations. The ONE Campaign group, which tracks annual progress against the G8’s 2005 Gleneagles commitment to double aid to Africa by the end of 2010, predicted in its June 2009 report that by the end of that year only half of that promise would have been delivered.<sup>62</sup>

**202.** This low performance has been particularly pronounced with regard to support to basic education where aid commitments are stagnating. The Fast Track Initiative is failing to galvanize additional donor support for EFA to the extent required. Globally, there needs to be a tripling of aid to basic education annually to finance EFA.<sup>63</sup>

61. Fast Track Initiative: *Reaching out to out-of-school children: Putting inclusive education on the fast track* (Washington, DC, Mar. 2009), p. 1.

62. ONE: *The data report 2009: Monitoring the G8 promise to Africa* (London, June 2009).

63. UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, op. cit.

**203.** International aid (particularly for Africa) is at the centre of an increasingly polarized debate, as we shall see in Part III of this Report. Aid does make a large difference in education and the elimination of child labour. In Africa, it has strengthened efforts in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania to abolish primary school fees, leading to a significant expansion in enrolment. In the case of Tanzania, development assistance has supported an education sector strategy that has cut the number of out-of-school children by 3 million between 1999 and 2006. In Ethiopia, over the same period the figure is over 3 million.<sup>64</sup>

### *ILO action since 2006*

**204.** In this context, the ILO Governing Body, by endorsing the Global Action Plan in November 2006, specifically supported the focus on sub-Saharan Africa and called upon member States and international development partners to support the efforts of African countries to meet their commitments.

**205.** IPEC has responded by refining its own strategy for the region.<sup>65</sup> As a follow-up, the main strategy of “Focus Africa” by IPEC has been to assist African countries to put in place time-bound measures for the elimination of child labour and especially its worst forms. In 2008, IPEC started to develop country profiles using a range of indicators that have been put into an overall matrix for approximately 30 countries. Additionally, 28 African countries have drafted their Decent Work Country Programmes and a majority have included the issue of child labour among their priorities. SIMPOC has significantly increased its assistance to statistical offices in Africa with regard to child labour data collection and analysis. As a result, two dozen child labour surveys have been carried out. There has been slower progress in promoting time-bound measures in the form of NAPs. In late 2009, 26 countries were in the process of developing or had developed NAPs, leaving the majority of countries still to start the process. Development of an IPEC action plan for Africa and progress in resource mobilization in support of the

Global Action Plan in Africa are also indicators of the extent to which the continent has benefited from a shift in focus. Additionally, the ILO has devoted a significant increase in funding to the region in its Programme and Budget for 2010–11.

**206.** An important part of the support to the region has been in the area of HIV-induced child labour. The eleventh African Regional Meeting of the ILO (Addis Ababa, 24–27 April 2007) made a specific connection between eliminating child labour, creating youth employment, and HIV prevention. IPEC has been working on the linkages between HIV/AIDS, child labour, education and gender since 2001. Nearly two-thirds of those living with HIV/AIDS are found in sub-Saharan Africa and there are thought to be 12 million orphans. In some countries up to 10 per cent of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS are heads of households and many have no option but to seek work.<sup>66</sup>

**207.** IPEC has made significant efforts to improve the knowledge base and identify appropriate responses. Following a series of 12 studies, a plan of action was elaborated during a subregional tripartite workshop held in Lusaka in 2003, leading to the launch of a pilot project the following year. The IPEC project “Combating and preventing HIV/AIDS-induced child labour in sub-Saharan Africa” has developed models of intervention for preventing and combating child labour in Uganda and Zambia by assisting boys and girls who are at risk of entering child labour or who are already engaged in the worst forms of child labour. In addition to helping children affected by HIV/AIDS, the project has supported the integration of HIV/AIDS issues into the work of the social partners and national child labour policies. A number of practical tools and materials have also been developed, including a special SCREAM module,<sup>67</sup> a manual for teachers<sup>68</sup> and an emerging good practices manual.<sup>69</sup> These tools have been disseminated and are to be taken up in Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Senegal, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania.

**208.** Notwithstanding these developments, further donor support is needed as well as high-level commitment from African leaders.

64. UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, op. cit., p. 205.

65. See IPEC: *Child labour in Africa: Priorities for Action*, presented at the Third International Policy Conference on the African Child, 12–13 May 2008, Addis Ababa.

66. A. Amorim and N. Osseiran: “HIV/AIDS and child labour in sub-Saharan Africa” in H.D. Highman (ed.): *The world of child labor: An historical and regional survey* (Armonk, NY, M.E. Sharpe, 2009), pp. 177–184.

67. IPEC: *SCREAM: A special module on HIV, Aids and child labour* (Geneva, ILO, 2007).

68. IPEC: *Training manual on child labour and HIV/AIDS* (Kampala, ILO, 2006).

69. IPEC: *Emerging good practices of the community-based models in Uganda and Zambia* (Geneva, ILO, 2008).



## Knowledge development

**209.** Knowledge development and sharing is a key to promoting the ILO's policy agenda around the Social Justice Declaration. The ILO's knowledge strategy was reviewed at the November 2009 Governing Body, when a results-based knowledge strategy for 2010–15 was adopted.

**210.** In this context, IPEC's web site provides visibility and access to knowledge products. Downloads of materials from IPEC's programme database, which is linked to the web site, hit a record high of 57,450 in April 2009 – up from 3,500 in May 2007, on the eve of the launch of the web site. Other knowledge platforms that are in the process of being developed include those associated with specialized networks or communities of practice that have been inspired by ILO–IPEC, such as those for youth, health, and trafficking. These promote exchange of experience and cooperation across countries and are important contributions to the ILO's emerging knowledge strategy. The development and documentation of models of intervention, including the identification and sharing of good practices, is integral to IPEC projects. Added to these are the findings of global, thematic and project evaluations that verify the knowledge derived from projects and lead to the compilation and use of lessons learned.

**211.** As noted above, there have been important research developments. These include the national costing of tools for the elimination of child labour undertaken in Cambodia with the support of the inter-agency programme, UCW. The UCW report assesses the resource requirements needed for Cambodia to meet the 2016 target. Examining various scenarios, the report concludes that even under the most adverse conditions, only about US\$10 million would be needed per year to eradicate the worst forms of child labour by 2016.<sup>70</sup> The development of this important tool is a key outcome for future ILO work on child labour. The evaluation conducted in 2008 acknowledged that UCW has generated improved child labour data, developed indicators and completed research on child labour measurement challenges.<sup>71</sup> UCW is also working on impact assessment of child labour interventions, including analysis of the success stories of Brazil and Mexico. Completed by the work on the IPEC impact assessment

framework, this will result in a set of tools that will allow countries and other partners to identify the most appropriate way to assess the impact of different types of intervention in the areas of, inter alia, education and conditional cash transfers.

**212.** A SIMPOC study on wages and the productivity of children and adults gathered preliminary comparative evidence on demand-side factors, based on survey work undertaken in Ghana, India, the Philippines and Uganda. The study proved that demand-side incentives do exist in particular child labour markets, and that research to uncover these effects is feasible.<sup>72</sup> New research has been commissioned on the role armed conflict plays in the involvement of children in the worst forms of child labour. Among the many research outputs produced by SIMPOC in 2008, there were two notable monographs, one exploring quantitatively the link between child labour and education and a second reviewing the literature on child labour and its effects on children's health.<sup>73</sup>

**213.** The worst forms of child labour, other than hazardous work, remain a challenge. Work began in 2007 to develop methodological tools to study the forced labour of children and test them in ten countries with the aim of arriving at national estimates. This project, which runs until 2012, has been challenged finding country partners. However, so far it has managed to develop a set of indicators and survey instruments that have been tested to provide preliminary results and conclusions, which should enable a number of national reports and a final synthesis report setting out findings and recommendations to be produced. Work is also under way to measure commercial sexual exploitation at the national level.

## Summing up

**214.** There have been important achievements since 2006 in all three strategic areas. Noteworthy are the number and quality of initiatives and outcomes in the worldwide movement segment, which were perhaps the most critical of the challenges identified four years ago. This is a key finding of the Report. There are also many achievements in the other two areas. New technical tools and resources have been made available to member States and important

70. UCW: *Towards eliminating the worst forms of child labour in Cambodia by 2016: An assessment of resource requirements* (Rome, May, 2009), Vol. II, p. 36.

71. *ibid.*

72. IPEC, *Child labour wages and productivity*, op. cit.

73. P. Dorman: *Child labour, education and health: A review of the literature* (Geneva, ILO, 2008).

contributions have been made to data collection and research. These have led to substantial outcomes in the areas of enhanced capacity to use data for policy and programme design. The issue of child labour is being integrated into the emerging Decent Work Country Programmes, often as a priority. However, although important steps have been taken since

2006, significant challenges remain, not least in responding to an even more difficult and uncertain global economic environment. This reminds us that progress is fragile. Commitments and obligations need to be respected in testing times and the ILO and its partners need to respond to these with imagination and vigour.









## PART III

# Turning challenges into opportunities

**215.** Are we on track to achieve the 2016 target? As outlined in Part II of this Report, there have been important developments over the last four years. However, set against these considerable accomplishments, gaps and challenges still remain. What is particularly troubling is the degree of response to the target of elimination of all the worst forms of child labour by 2016, including the interim target for national action plans by 2008, and the possible aftershocks of the global economic crisis. In the broader context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is clear from the annual United Nations report, published in July 2009, that overall progress is too slow for most of the eight development goals to be met by 2015.<sup>1</sup>

### What is happening to education?<sup>2</sup>

**216.** Progress on universal basic education provides an important proxy indicator for progress in combating child labour. In 2006, approximately 75 million children, 55 per cent of them girls, were not in school. The achievement of universal primary education by 2015 is the target of MDG 2. The *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* pointed to the progress in education which had resulted in overall enrolment in primary education reaching 88 per cent in 2007, up from 83 per cent in 2000. However, it also pointed to the need to intensify efforts to get all children into school. The same report said that efforts to accelerate progress on the MDGs should also include efforts to provide productive and decent employment for all.<sup>3</sup>

**217.** Since 1999, the number of children not enrolled in primary level education has dropped by 33 million. The share of girls out of school has fallen from 58 per cent to 54 per cent. However, in 2007, 72 million children were still not enrolled in primary school and at junior secondary level – the age range which takes children to the point of the minimum age of employment – a further 71 million were not enrolled. UNESCO has warned that business as usual will mean that in 2015 there will still be 56 million children of primary school age not enrolled.<sup>4</sup>

**218.** According to UNESCO, what is particularly disturbing is that those regions where the vast majority of out-of-school children are found – sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia – tend to have the lowest investment in education. In sub-Saharan Africa, about half of all low-income countries spend less than 4 per cent of their national income on education. In South Asia, Bangladesh devotes only 2.6 per cent of its national income to education and Pakistan, 2.7 per cent. India invests a smaller proportion of GNP (around 3.3 per cent) than the median for sub-Saharan Africa, even though average incomes are around one third higher. Even more worrying is that the share of national income devoted to education is stagnating or decreasing in key countries, including Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, which account for over 15 million out-of-school children. Furthermore, South and West Asia devotes a smaller share of government resources to education than the Arab States and sub-Saharan Africa. According to UNICEF, over the 1995–2005 period, India devoted on average

1. United Nations: *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2009* (New York, 2009), p. 3.

2. Statistics for this section taken from UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009: *Overcoming inequality: Why governance matters* (Paris, 2009), unless otherwise stated.

3. United Nations, *The MDGs Report 2009*, op. cit., overview by Undersecretary-General Sha Zukang, p. 5.

4. UNESCO: EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: *Reaching the marginalized* (Paris, 2010).

2 per cent of central government expenditure to education whilst devoting 13 per cent to defence; the respective figures for Pakistan were 1 per cent and 20 per cent, for Brazil 6 per cent and 3 per cent, and for Turkey 10 per cent and 8 per cent.<sup>5</sup> To the extent that budget allocations reflect political priorities, this reveals insufficient levels of commitment to universal education and, by proxy, child labour elimination in South Asia – a key battleground for the global campaign against child labour.

**219.** Therefore, on current trends, millions of children will still be out of school by 2015 – about 56 million children at the very least.<sup>6</sup> The stark fact is that the world is not on track to achieve universal primary education by 2015, or the other seven MDGs, nor will it, with current trends, achieve the 2016 target for eliminating the worst forms of child labour.

### **The politics of eliminating child labour: A critical dimension**

**220.** An essential part of the solution to the child labour problem lies in political action in developing countries. It requires mobilizing a constituency around those changes that are most likely to impact the problem, particularly measures to reduce poverty and inequality. Yet much of the action against child labour around the world, particularly that which is project-based, appears to take place in a context which is outside the policy debates. The recent IPEC guide to mainstreaming underscores the need to see the elimination of child labour in context.<sup>7</sup> The classic example of this is Myron Weiner's study of India, which examined the ideologies of elite groups as a barrier to achieving mass education and to eliminating child labour.<sup>8</sup> It is important to identify the key stakeholders contributing to the policy process – those with the power to put child labour on the policy agenda. These include government departments, parliamentarians, the social partners, civil society actors, and external agencies such as United Nations agencies and regional development banks. Timing is critical. Combating child labour is a political art of seizing opportunities; the art of the possible. Convincing policy-makers requires hard evidence and persuasive arguments, couched in terms of seeing the child labour problem as linked to meeting important

national priority goals. Policies, programmes and the key public services children need, have to be supported by appropriate budgetary allocations.

**221.** Policies and programmes also require the necessary capacity for implementation at local and district levels, a major weakness in many developing countries. Finally, there needs to be thorough monitoring of progress by the social partners and their civil society allies. Their commitment and comparative advantage in tripartite consultation and national action, as well as their representative role in the workplace ought to be developed to its full potential. Eliminating child labour therefore requires sustained effort. And political action lies at its core.

**222.** There is a long way to go in creating the political environment that prioritizes combating child labour when it comes to the formulation of national budgets and the highest reaches of policy-making. In Part II, the Report provided a number of important national case examples of this political commitment. Making promises at international forums is the easy step, delivering on them is the hard part. Delivering on commitments is one of the key messages of this Report.

### **More strategically focused efforts needed in challenging times**

**223.** Greater national ownership supported by employers' and workers' organizations is urgently needed to get on track for 2016. Better-targeted advocacy depends on filling important knowledge gaps and making greater use of the media and other champions. The ILO's ratification efforts need focusing on South Asia in particular. And, as part of a regional approach, greater attention still needs to be given to Africa, which is in the greatest danger of missing the MDGs and the 2016 target. More needs to be done on some of the worst forms of child labour, such as children in armed conflict, bonded labour, illicit activities, and in reaching out to the socially excluded. However, as we saw in Part II, important foundations have been laid. Agriculture also remains a challenging area for the ILO's work. Finally, we have to take account of the possible fallout from the financial and economic crisis that broke at the end of 2008. That said, challenges also offer opportunities.

5. UNICEF, 2007, op. cit.

6. UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, op. cit.

7. IPEC: *Mainstreaming child labour concerns in broader policy frameworks: Selected issues and guidelines* (Geneva, ILO, 2009).

8. Weiner, op. cit.

### Box 3.1 Budget initiatives and child labour

The national budget represents a financial commitment and embodiment of its policy goals to which the government can be held accountable. Budgets are political. Government budgeting is a political process in which conflicting priorities often compete for limited resources. In recent years, gender advocates have made substantial strides in analysing budgets from a gender perspective. But who advocates for children? Beginning in Latin America, UNICEF has in recent years experimented in ways to influence national budgets to pay closer attention to social expenditure and the needs of children. In Brazil, it has supported a government-led initiative in popular participation in defining local-level spending priorities. UNICEF has been tracking public policy financing that affects children since the mid-1990s. In Ecuador, beginning in 1999, it has undertaken budget analysis as a response to minimizing the negative impact of economic shocks on the poor, especially children. The results were presented to key national stakeholders, including the President, cabinet members, and political party leaders. As a result, social spending in Ecuador increased in 2000 and 2001 and tax reforms led to a doubling of tax revenue between 1999 and 2002. Budget analysis skills are key to success. Technical expertise in budget analysis is essential to advocate for, negotiate, participate in and support informed decision-making on public expenditure issues. This implies developing analytical tools that are tailored to the country context. Budgets are political and effective advocacy requires understanding the politics of budgeting. Going down this road in respect of child labour would require strengthening the ILO's and the constituents' capacity to dialogue more intensely with governments and legislatures on socio-economic and public finance issues.

Source: R. Gore and A. Minujin: *Budget initiatives for children* (New York, UNICEF, 2003).

## National ownership and scaling up

**224.** Too many child labour interventions remain small-scale pilots, and a perpetual pilot stage appears difficult to surmount in action against child labour. Too many projects fail to be replicated on a bigger scale and countries do not graduate from external assistance. The recent initiative of the Brazilian state of Bahia aiming at child labour-free status by 2015 has, however, set out a new level of ambition that offers a model to other large federal states. Conditional cash transfer (CCT) programmes also offer considerable potential for scaling up, as Brazil has again shown.

## Time-bound Programmes

**225.** The Time-bound Programme (TBP) approach offers another mechanism for scaling up. This approach was launched at the time of the first Global Report (2002). It grew out of ILO thinking, as far back as the 1980s, regarding the need for large-scale impact. TBPs are country-owned programmes, supported by the ILO and other development partners. TBPs aim to make the connection between child labour and the bigger national development picture. Emerging lessons set out in the 2006 Report, however, pointed to problems regarding effective political

support, national and local ownership, resource constraints and the need for the design and implementation of projects to support coherent and sustainable impacts. Furthermore, the 2006 Global Report suggested that the TBP should be viewed as a public good that needed support from other international agencies. In particular, the Report drew attention to the need for projects to address the mix of interventions required to achieve sustainable outcomes, especially the balance between policy development and targeted interventions for demonstration purposes.

## Conditional cash transfers<sup>9</sup>

**226.** Numerous evaluations have attested to the promising results from CCTs in a number of areas such as poverty reduction, school attendance and gender disparities. A key issue is the potential for replication. Most CCT programmes have been operating in Latin America and the Caribbean, a region where child labour is less extensive than in Africa and Asia and resource problems and supply constraints less severe. The relevance of the CCT approach for child labour resides precisely in its potential for take-up elsewhere in the developing world.

**227.** There are obstacles to CCT programmes. Significant resources are needed to finance the

9. This section draws heavily on H. Tabatabai: *Eliminating child labour: The promise of conditional cash transfers*, (ILO-IPEC, 2006) and H. Tabatabai: *Conditional cash transfers and child labour: Experiences and opportunities* (ILO-IPEC, 2010).

transfers, reach large populations, and maintain the programme long enough for sustainable results. Data requirements may be substantial for targeting, monitoring and evaluation, and this may be a serious handicap in the case of many of the least developed countries. The availability and quality of services, such as schools, are prerequisites that are not always met. Moreover, appropriate exit options need to be built into the programmes to avoid long-term dependency on the part of beneficiaries.

**228.** From the standpoint of child labour, the main strength of the CCT approach is that it tends to address the roots of the problem: chronic poverty, vulnerability to economic shocks, and difficulties of access to education. The approach furthermore strikes a balance between targeted interventions, which tend to be small-scale and costly, and policy action at the macro level, which works slowly. It puts more emphasis on prevention than on cure. This is strategically important since the transition to less direct and more systemic approaches is indispensable for achieving the 2016 target.

**229.** However, including child labour considerations in CCT programmes may run the risk of overloading them and detracting from the main aims of the programme. Another concern has to do with the multiplicity of both the forms and determinants of child labour, not all of which can be addressed effectively in the context of a CCT programme alone. Cash transfers are likely to be least effective against some of the worst forms of child labour such as forced labour, commercial sexual exploitation and armed conflict. In such situations, children may not be living with their parents or guardians at all, or may be subject to abuse by parents or guardians, or their earnings may be more attractive than the cash incentive. Furthermore, as the problem of child labour is often entrenched, dealing with it might require a much longer time frame than that of a typical CCT programme.

**230.** Nevertheless, there are sufficient grounds for a systematic examination of the potential of this approach by incorporating child labour components in new programmes as they are launched. Inserting child labour concerns in a CCT programme is best done from the start, when it is being designed. It involves a host of issues relating to, *inter alia*, targeting, conditionalities, transfer amount, complementary programmes, exit options, information requirements, institutional arrangements, and monitoring and evaluation.

**231.** CCTs should be a key element of child labour mainstreaming strategies in the future. The principal

role of the ILO may be twofold. First, by undertaking research to improve knowledge of how CCTs can contribute to the reduction of child labour, and, second, by providing technical assistance to constituents in helping to integrate child labour concerns in CCT programmes. Further research and practical experience are needed to ascertain, for example, which forms of child labour may or may not be suitably addressed through cash transfers and how a child labour component can best be accommodated in various aspects of CCT programmes.

**232.** The Indonesian CCT programme, which began in 2007 and will continue until 2015 as part of government efforts to eradicate poverty and the worst forms of child labour, shows the existing potential. It is being tried in 49 districts in seven provinces with cash aid per family of between US\$45–US\$90 depending on the number of children and their grades in school. The aid is conditional on children attending school. The emerging experience of good practices in Indonesia and elsewhere helped shape the programme. The ILO is currently working on inserting child labour considerations in the impact assessment process for this programme. Finally, Ghana has recently embarked on an ambitious programme – Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) – that has integrated child labour concerns from the outset and is expected to be eventually extended nationwide.

### Challenges and opportunities in education

**233.** Progress is currently too slow to reach the 2015 MDG target of achieving universal primary education. More than 10 per cent of children of primary school age are not in school. Achieving this target would have required that all children at the official entry age for primary school had access to education by 2009.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, those that enter have to be retained if universal primary education is to be attained. This, in turn, requires addressing quality issues and in particular the recruitment of an adequate number of properly qualified teachers. UNESCO has calculated the need for 18 million new teachers if the 2015 MDG target is to be met.

**234.** Education is clearly central to the worldwide movement against child labour. Countries which have taken initiatives to extend access to education by measures such as the abolition of school fees and cash transfer programmes targeting poor families, have seen a significant increase in the number

10. United Nations, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

of children attending school. If a child is attending school on a regular basis this clearly reduces the chances of involvement in child labour. Extending education access through free and compulsory education, therefore, has a major role to play in reducing child labour.

**235.** Although the ILO is not a central global player in education, recent collaborative efforts at the global level, set out in Part II of the Report, have enabled the ILO's role in combating child labour to be understood as a major contribution to fighting exclusion from education. The EFA movement is now focusing on social exclusion and the so-called hard-to-reach, recognizing that their situation represents a major barrier to reaching the 2015 MDG target. For example, the 2009 Global Monitoring Report clearly stated that progress towards universal primary education is inextricably linked with the progressive elimination of child labour.<sup>11</sup> The Fast Track Initiative (FTI), launched in 2002 as a global compact between donors and developing countries, is now looking for new partnerships and new approaches to respond to social exclusion, including working with the ILO. Here is a major opportunity to integrate child labour concerns into EFA and institutionalize the role of the ILO.

**236.** As we saw in Part II of the Report, there have been many developments over the last four years promoting the conceptual and policy linking of child labour and education, particularly at the global level. However, convincing international agencies of the interconnection between EFA and elimination of child labour is only part of the task. Figure 1.9 in Part I, examining actions reported under the Conventions, is one indicator that there may still be a long way to go in convincing some governments in developing countries of the fundamental relationship between free, compulsory and universal education and eliminating child labour.

**237.** It is at the country level that action really needs to be taken. Here education sector plans offer a major opportunity for the ILO's constituents to put child labour on the common action agenda by opening the eyes of policy-makers and planners to constraints child labour poses on ensuring education for all. These plans have been given a greater impetus through the FTI. Countries that are or seek to be part of the initiative are required to develop a comprehensive education sector plan, which is subject to appraisal by civil society and donors.

**238.** Through this consultative process there is an opportunity to insert child labour concerns into

national education plans. This has to be reflected in data collection activities, the design of strategies to reduce barriers to access and retention, public awareness campaigns, teacher recruitment, training and support, and monitoring of school attendance. In addition, education sector plans need to be properly financed. Social budgeting is a key part of the strategy of ensuring that education sector plans are viewed from a child labour perspective. In order to play this role, the ILO has to be at the table with other United Nations partners and donor groups when national education planning is being discussed, and have the necessary technical skills in analysis and advocacy. Though there are many positive examples, this remains challenging.

**239.** There are significant opportunities in developing transitional education programmes that properly provide bridges to bring children into the formal education system or, where this is not appropriate, provide opportunities for remedial education and preparation for future employment. Managing the school-to-work transition is an important part of the response to child labour, particularly with regard to the older age groups among children. Preventive and rehabilitative measures that need to be implemented within the education system should include vocational and careers guidance that can help ensure future "employability" – so that all young persons are properly equipped for entering the world of work. This is an area where ILO has undertaken important work under the youth and child labour linkages project supported by the Government of Sweden. Vocational education and skills development is therefore another significant contribution that needs building up. ILO's work in the economic reintegration of children affected by conflict also provides a way forward.

**240.** As well as developing new structures and mechanisms such as the inter-agency task force, it is important to use existing ones where the ILO has a place and a voice at the education table. In particular, the ILO's work in support of teachers' status and conditions of work needs to be better integrated with the overall child labour effort as this is a central factor in school quality, which in turn has a bearing on access and retention. There is an important advocacy role in ensuring that an adequate number of properly qualified teachers are recruited and supported to achieve the 2015 MDG target of universal primary education.

11. UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, op. cit., p. 79.



### Box 3.2 Closing the teacher gap: An ILO policy framework

Getting every child into school and keeping them there is central to achieving both universal education and the elimination of child labour. This, in turn, requires overcoming a significant teacher recruitment challenge that is particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa. UNESCO calculates that the world needs an additional 1.9 million teachers just to achieve universal primary education. A further 8.4 million primary teachers are needed to replace those expected to retire or leave their posts by 2015,<sup>1</sup> up to 3.8 million of them in sub-Saharan Africa.

A forthcoming ILO paper sets out the range of challenges in closing the teacher gap. The paper suggests that the global estimate of new teacher requirements may be a considerable underestimate if qualitative factors are taken into consideration, particularly the number of unqualified and untrained teachers and the need to respond more vigorously to female teacher recruitment and urban/rural imbalances in deployment. The ILO contributed a policy framework as part of the discussions held at the Eighth High-level Group Meeting on EFA, in Oslo in December 2008. An outcome of the meeting was the establishment of an international task force to address the teacher gap and develop an Action Plan for the next High-level Meeting in Addis Ababa in February 2010.

Set out below are the ten points of short- and long-term measures and benchmarks that the ILO believes provide the best way to ending teacher shortages:

- Defend and promote professionalism in teaching.
- Finance education at levels that ensure quality and sustainability.
- Strengthen teacher governance and management systems.
- Establish and maintain high teacher qualification and relicensing standards.
- Develop and maintain a continual professional development programme for all teachers.
- Improve working conditions for teachers, especially in some of the least developed countries.
- Enhance teacher retention through transparent, diversified career structures.
- Set remuneration levels consistent with attracting and retaining high-calibre individuals in teaching.
- Recognize that targeted material and professional incentives are necessary for rural and remote areas
- Make teachers' voices count; teachers are best represented by their organizations.

<sup>1</sup> UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, op. cit., p. 116.

Source: A. Fyfe: *Teacher shortages and EFA: Financing and recruitment challenges*, Background paper for the Tenth Session of CEART (Geneva, ILO, forthcoming).

## Child labour and youth employment

**241.** This remains a challenging area for the ILO. Though there has been important work reinforcing the conceptual link between eliminating child labour and promoting decent youth employment, there are still many policy gaps and, with the notable exception of the ILO-EAST project in Indonesia, there have been few major programmatic breakthroughs over the last four years. And yet the link between the two is fundamental and offers a strategic opportunity to raise the profile of each one.

**242.** From a labour and employment perspective, childhood and youth, two early stages of life, by and large determine success or failure throughout later working life. A good start in the labour market is largely shaped by the opportunities and experiences available to younger people to make a smooth transition to adulthood and the world of work. In turn, the

right start is crucial to obtaining and keeping decent jobs as adults. It also creates the foundations for the future prosperity of economies and societies.

**243.** Child labour and youth unemployment and underemployment therefore remain serious challenges to achieving decent work everywhere. There is need for more empirical analyses on the link between early work experience, human capital accumulation, and subsequent youth market and adult market integration. There is a case for reinforcing programmatic work on child labour and youth employment in the context in which child labour is prevalent and leads to inadequate labour market outcomes. However, the focus and approaches may well differ by age group, with child labourers being removed and integrated into education, whilst older children above the minimum age for work are provided with services aimed at improving their employability.

**244.** The interest of policy-makers in the link between child labour and youth unemployment has increased significantly in recent years, reflecting the growing magnitude of these problems. However, there has been little effort by the research community to examine the relationship between them, in particular the implications that engagement in child labour may have for employment as children grow into adulthood. There has been comparatively little documentation, for instance, of the labour market experiences of former child labourers in their youth and adulthood. Similarly, little is known about good practices that bridge child labour and youth employment programmes.

**245.** The above analysis and the global estimates underscore the need to develop a coherent strategy for the 15–17 age group. According to ILO Conventions, these adolescents *can* have access to the labour market provided that they do not engage in the worst forms of child labour. Initiatives to remove hazards from the working environment or to facilitate the transition of adolescents from prohibited forms of work into decent work achieve two parallel goals as they help reduce child labour while increasing decent work opportunities for youth.

**246.** Furthermore, the goal of making decent work a reality through working life requires that rights at work are promoted and respected regardless of the workers' age. ILO Convention No. 87 proclaims the right of all workers and employers, without distinction, to establish and join organizations of their own choosing. That includes the rights of young workers to join trade unions or young entrepreneurs to join employers' organizations. Ensuring these rights at the country level is hindered, inter alia, by weak enforcement of labour law in agriculture and in the informal economy, in which there are high concentrations of children and youth, often beyond the reach of national labour legislation or law enforcement, or explicitly excluded from its protection; and in some cases beyond the existing reach of the social partners. Legal and policy obstacles persist at the country level that constrain the realization of these rights for young workers. In some jurisdictions, contradictions exist in law between the legal minimum age to work and the right to associate. On occasion, organizations themselves may not offer membership to the youngest workers legally in the labour market simply because of their age.

**247.** As a consequence, IPEC suggested in a 2007 paper that there was an urgent need to explore with the social partners the continuum from child labour

to youth employment.<sup>12</sup> There is clearly the need for a nuanced approach for adolescents from 12 to 17 years of age. For example, for the 12–14 age group, the focus needs to be on full-time participation in quality education. Progressing up the age range from 14 to 17, a number of options need to be available including, where appropriate, vocational education and safe work and combining learning with earning. The message needs to go out more clearly and forcefully that the ILO is *for* young people working under decent and legal conditions in work that has been freely chosen. There is a need to promote the enforcement of national legislation prohibiting the involvement of 15–17 year olds in hazardous activities. However, education and training must always be an option for young people. The message needs to be conveyed that the ILO's endeavours in child labour and decent youth employment are complementary as we seek to get children and young workers off the wrong work track and onto the right track to decent work.

**248.** The social partners are well placed to make a major contribution to policy development in this area as well as responding to the needs of young workers in the informal economy. This requires underpinning with research into the rights and needs of young workers in both the formal and the informal economy, and the part the social partners can play as part of the Decent Work Agenda.

**249.** Finally, the ILO has a lead role in youth employment in post-conflict situations. The ILO with UNDP helped draft the United Nations policy for post-conflict employment creation, income generation and reintegration adopted in May 2008.<sup>13</sup> The policy document puts employment at the heart of all post-conflict recovery and reintegration strategies and pays particular attention to the needs and capacities of youth. However, it acknowledges that creating youth employment opportunities in post-conflict situations is a major challenge as youth comprise a disproportionate number of both victims and perpetrators of conflict. They therefore need selective and targeted assistance if they are to escape the vicious cycle of violence, poverty, illiteracy and social exclusion. The challenge is to provide sustainable income-earning opportunities through either employment or self-employment in post-conflict settings. The end of conflict therefore provides a window of opportunity to promote decent work for youth, with the international community increasingly looking to the ILO to provide technical assistance as the policy is rolled out in pilot countries.

12. IPEC, 2007, op. cit., pp. 53–58.

13. United Nations: *United Nations policy for post-conflict employment creation, income generation and reintegration* (Geneva, May 2009).

### Agriculture: A challenge for action against child labour

**250.** Sometimes the obvious needs to be stated or re-stated. Meeting the 2016 target and the ultimate goal of the effective abolition of child labour requires a breakthrough in agriculture. Agriculture is, after all, the sector in which most child labourers work. In addition, the problem is not confined to developing countries, as demonstrated by the ILO supervisory system's regular monitoring of Convention No. 182.<sup>14</sup>

**251.** Agriculture was recognized in the last Report as a somewhat underdeveloped area of the ILO's work on child labour. And yet, this is where 69 per cent of all *child labour* takes place, often in hazardous conditions. Agriculture also remains an employer of child labour in those OECD countries which have not ratified Convention No. 138 and which, in some cases, have not yet prohibited hazardous work in the sector for all children under the age of 18 years as required by Convention No. 182. The implication, if not explicitly stated in the Global Action Plan, was that significant increases in interventions related to child labour in agriculture were needed if the 2016 target were to be achieved. Though there have been important initiatives in developing partnerships and tools, this expectation is far from being fully met. For example, agriculture tends to be sidelined when it comes to national deliberation over hazardous work lists and revising legislation. Labour laws remain limited or non-applicable, unenforced or only poorly enforced in the agriculture sector in many countries. Aside from the export sector, the media has given virtually no exposure to agriculture. Ministries of Agriculture tend to be preoccupied with production rather than social or child labour issues.

**252.** The ILO increased its global profile in agriculture and rural employment with the launch, in 2007, of the important international partnership, set out in Part II of the Report. There is still a considerable challenge in realizing the potential for greater collaboration with international agricultural partner agencies at the national level. In response to this challenge a new IPEC initiative was planned in agriculture, starting in 2009 and running to 2012, to enable the ILO to play this mainstreaming role more effectively. This project comprises three components: work at the global level to build partnerships and coherent policies on child labour among the international agricultural agencies; improving data on children in agriculture; and intensive work in selected countries to demonstrate good practices

in addressing child labour in agriculture, and to support the enhanced capacity of constituents. The project will benefit from the breadth of experience and opportunity offered by IPEC projects in rural areas. In particular, projects on agriculture in Africa and Central America have provided important lessons which can be built on by the new initiative.

**253.** Agriculture, and food security in particular, has moved to the centre of the development debate in recent years, as witnessed by the G8 meeting in July 2009 and the G20 meeting in September 2009. The US\$20 billion development package for African farming over three years announced at the G8 Summit should provide an opportunity to ensure support for small farmers and should include the prevention of child labour, for which additional funds may be required. It is now important that agriculture becomes a priority area in eliminating child labour.

### Neglected worst forms and the excluded: Important gaps remain

**254.** The 2006 IPEC report also acknowledged that there were many worst forms of child labour that remained relatively neglected in terms of policy or effective action. Those worst forms that are largely invisible are the hardest to engage with and illuminating them often meets with the most sensitive response. In this category can be placed children in armed conflict, children in forced and bonded labour and illicit activities and, in some cases, child domestic labour. Some of these, such as forced, bonded and domestic labour, affect significant numbers of children, whilst the number in others, such as illicit activities, is relatively small. This group also includes HIV-induced child labour, which significantly affects sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the emerging concern with children on the move. A common feature in many, if not most, of these categories is the disproportionate number of girls involved.

### Forced and bonded labour

**255.** These worst forms of child labour continue to challenge the worldwide movement. Policy and programme responses are somewhat uneven across countries and regions. The Global Reports on child labour (2002) and on forced labour (2005) settled on the global figure of around 5.7 million children in forced and bonded labour, which represents about half of all

14. See, for instance, CEACR observations concerning hazardous work of children in US agriculture.



**Box 3.3****Girls still at special risk and still being left behind**

The ILO estimates that about 100 million girls are involved in child labour around the world. If engagement in unpaid household chores is included and combined with economic activity, girls work longer hours than boys as part of a “double burden” and as a result often jeopardize their education and future. There are many other reasons why the plight of girls deserves special attention and is particularly challenging for those concerned with tackling the problem of child labour.

The fact that girls constitute a large proportion of children engaged in some of the most dangerous forms of child labour, including forced and bonded labour and prostitution, is especially alarming. As child domestic workers, girls face the risk of literally being locked away from outside view. Girls, too, have ended up as sex slaves to armed groups in some of the most intractable civil conflicts of recent years. Most girls, however, work in agriculture, a sector not without its own hazards and dangers.

Being a girl still implies a significant education disadvantage in many countries. Girls represented 55 per cent of out-of-school children in 2007. The MDG gender parity goal in education by 2005 was missed. Women still account for two-thirds of the world’s illiterate population – the most neglected of the EFA goals. The discrimination facing girls in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa and West and South Asia is a major impediment to achieving EFA and the elimination of child labour. Overcoming these gender disparities once again points to the importance of political leadership in helping to change attitudes and creating additional rungs to the ladders of opportunities for girls at all levels of the education system and in future employment.

Source: IPEC: *Give girls a chance: Tackling child labour, a key to the future* (Geneva, ILO, 2009).

victims in these forms.<sup>15</sup> There is a general scarcity of data on forced labour. While IPEC has commissioned a number of country studies and other work on methodological development, beginning in 2007 and due to run to 2012, the research effort has faced considerable political difficulties, resulting in the exclusion of some countries with significant levels of children in forced labour. The pursuit of a reliable quantification methodology remains challenging. Political linkages of trafficking to migration have contributed to an abundance of research on trafficking in a relatively short time. Meanwhile, research worldwide on forced labour has been pursued in a number of institutions, among them the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam and the universities of Minas Gerais in Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Bochum and Trier, Germany; Nottingham and Hull, United Kingdom, providing IPEC and the Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (SAP–FL) with a wide academic network for further cooperation. A key trend has been a shift towards a historiography uniting the study of slavery, forced labour and free labour. In India, there have been in-depth and sector-specific studies in recent years into bonded labour. Research on bonded labour in India conducted under SAP–FL demonstrated the extent to which children are still caught up in this system in a variety of industries such

as carpet weaving, silk reeling and weaving and hybrid cotton seed production.<sup>16</sup> Migrants and indigenous people are particularly vulnerable to bonded labour. **256.** The 2005 Global Report called for a global campaign to eradicate all forms of forced labour by 2015. All concerned member States were requested to devise and put in place time-bound action programmes for the eradication of forced labour by the end of 2008. The rationale was that the numbers were not so large as to make this a distant dream, but rather an objective to be pursued.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, bonded labour is largely confined to South Asia, and even within India, mostly to a few states. Indeed, in the early 1980s this fact had led ILO researchers to conclude that child bonded labour would be the easiest target against which to mount a global campaign. **257.** The global trade union movement has been engaged in the struggle against slavery and bonded labour from its early days, and it was among the elements informing trade union engagement in anti-colonial struggles. The Workers’ group of the International Labour Conference, in cooperation with the Employers’ group, has for years pursued high-profile cases of forced labour and forced child labour in the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards concerning countries in all continents and, in the case of Myanmar, resulting in a Commission

15. Based on ILO estimates presented in 2002.

16. R. S. Srivastava: *Bonded labour in India: Its incidence and pattern* (Geneva, ILO, 2005), pp. 29–31.

17. ILO: *A global alliance against forced labour* (Geneva, 2005), p. 82.

of Inquiry and a resolution under article 33 of the ILO Constitution. In recent times, the ITUC also expanded its work on forced labour through a project funded by SAP-FL and through the establishment of the Global Workers' Alliance against Forced Labour, at an international conference held in Malaysia in September 2007. The conference identified four priority areas for trade unions in combating forced labour and trafficking: bonded labour in South Asia and Latin America and the opportunity for South-South exchange on these matters; the exploitation of domestic workers; trafficking in Europe and Asia; and Myanmar. An MOU was signed between the ITUC and Anti-Slavery International (ASI) to involve NGO partners in support of the ITUC action plan and vice versa for ASI.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently, the ITUC adopted an 11-point action programme in December 2007.

### *Child domestic workers*

**258.** Child domestic work is largely carried out by girls who are easily isolated and have little protection or social support. Many girls migrate from the rural areas to find work as domestics or are trafficked for such work. However, it is difficult to obtain quantitative and qualitative data in this area.

**259.** In early 2006, an interregional trade union workshop was held to share experience leading to the adoption of a statement highlighting the main elements of a trade union response, and calling for further support.<sup>19</sup> In 2009, TUCA-CSA, the regional organization of the ITUC for the Americas, received ILO technical assistance to further its efforts against child domestic labour. Previous experience of sectoral unions, such as the Conservation, Hotels, Domestic and Allied Workers Union of Tanzania (CHODAWU) and Samahang Ugnayan ng mga Manggagawang Pangtahanan ng Pilipinas (SUMAPI) in the Philippines, had demonstrated the impact trade unions can have in this most difficult area for labour organization.

**260.** Since the workshop in 2006 there have been awareness campaigns in the East Africa region. CHODAWU in the United Republic of Tanzania has been an excellent example of trade union activity in this context. It has been working with NGOs and local authorities for over ten years to identify where

child domestic workers can be found. The physical and social mapping of local areas, with a particular focus on access to basic services, has proven a successful technique to identify the most vulnerable families. For example, where people have to walk 5 km to get water, sending children to the urban areas may seem very attractive. The mapping technique has allowed CHODAWU to develop action plans aimed at prevention.

**261.** This issue has now to be seen in the broader context of discussion for a possible new international labour standard on domestic workers in 2011. In March 2008, the ILO Governing Body included a standard-setting item on decent work for domestic workers on the agenda of the 99th Session (2010) of the International Labour Conference. In preparation for this, the Office produced a law and practice report to facilitate discussion at the Conference.<sup>20</sup> The report draws attention to the work of IPEC in fostering awareness of child domestic labour among parents and guardians, citing experiences from East Africa.

### *Children affected by armed conflict*

**262.** According to UNICEF, just over 1 billion children live in countries or territories affected by armed conflict.<sup>21</sup> The international community needs to give greater attention to tackling the effects of conflict and fragile States. Though the number of conflicts is declining, those that remain have become more entrenched – half of all current conflicts are deemed intractable, having continued for more than 20 years. Violent conflict lies at the root of much poverty. Fragile countries account for 1.4 billion people below the poverty line, as well as half of all children who are not in primary school. Too often, the international community struggles to quickly exploit windows of opportunity in the immediate aftermath of conflict. Moreover, responding to this issue requires an understanding of underlying political dynamics, including social exclusion and high numbers of unemployed youth.

**263.** The fact that the United Kingdom Government policy paper on aid in 2009<sup>22</sup> prioritized fragile countries is an alert on this neglected issue and provides an opportunity to put the ILO's work in this area on a higher plane.

18. ILO: *The cost of coercion* (Geneva, 2009), pp. 56–57.

19. ILO–IPEC: *Interregional Workshop on child domestic labour and trade unions: Report* (Geneva, ILO, 2006).

20. ILO: *Decent work for domestic workers* (Geneva, 2010).

21. UNICEF: *Progress for children: A report card on child protection*, (No. 8) (New York, Sep. 2009), p. 20.

22. DFID: *Eliminating world poverty: Building our common future* (London, Office of Public Sector Information, 2009). This is an indication of greater international attention being given to the issue of fragile States, for example, within the G8 and G20.

**264.** This relatively new area of ILO programming seeks to build the capacity of partners and focuses on economic reintegration activities for children of working age formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups. It is a unique niche for the ILO that needs to be filled. There are also important links to work on youth employment and “Focus Africa”. Through two successive projects in the field, IPEC has developed an approach model focusing on vocational preparation. Though others are working in this field, the ILO is recognized as having a leading role.

**265.** There are many opportunities to build up the potential of this leadership role in the future. Ending child labour must be viewed as contributing to a peace and security dividend. This potential includes contributing to the upgrading of economic components of release and reintegration programmes for children through the development of tools such as the revised youth module of the United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards<sup>23</sup> and the forthcoming ILO “How-to” guide on economic reintegration of working-age children formerly associated with armed forces and groups. Additionally, advocacy and lobbying efforts are going ahead to put the issue on the agenda of partner organizations working with children associated with armed forces and armed groups.

**266.** There is a need to address more systematically how conflict and post-conflict settings, including emergency situations, impact on the worst forms of child labour. In addition to child soldiers, this includes commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour and trafficking. As a response, the ILO has commissioned research that aims to provide in-depth analysis of the role armed conflict plays in the involvement of children in the worst forms of child labour. The research examines Sierra Leone, Angola, South Sudan, and Senegal’s border between Casamance and Guinea Bissau. It will need to be followed up with the development of technical tools and advocacy to ensure that the United Nations and other agencies working in humanitarian situations have the worst forms of child labour on their agenda. This is another way in which the ILO can contribute to “Delivering as One.”

**267.** Finally, the United Kingdom Government white paper on aid focused on countries recently emerging from conflict with an emphasis on job creation.<sup>24</sup> This could provide an opportunity to promote the ILO’s work in linking the removal of

children from the worst forms of child labour and putting them on the right track to decent work.

### *Illicit activities*

**268.** Another neglected area highlighted in the 2002 Global Report is “other illicit activities” by children, which has seen little in the way of a major breakthrough in the last four years. This, despite the fact that illicit activities affect an estimated 600,000 children,<sup>25</sup> twice the number of children involved in armed conflict. Moreover, this worst form is often more pronounced in developed countries, helping to counterbalance the focus on developing countries.

**269.** Three forms of illicit activities need to be singled out: drug trafficking, organized begging and organized crime. Building on lessons from the 2002–04 IPEC Project “Assessing the Situation of Children in the Production, Sales and Trafficking of Drugs in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand”, a number of programme activities have been developed as a response, including in South Africa, from 2005, under the “Children Used by Adults to Commit Crime” component of the IPEC project of support for the national TBP; as well as part of the subregional Mekong initiative and the Balkans regional project. In IPEC’s Balkans project, significant attempts have been made in Bulgaria to achieve legislative coherence that decriminalizes children who, engaged in illicit activities, are victims of the worst forms of child labour. This is a politically sensitive area in many member States, but requires action if Convention No. 182 is to be applied fully.

**270.** Better data collection is an important part of any future strategy to put this issue on the policy agenda. The potential way forward is to use Convention No. 182 to link up the criminal justice system with child labour efforts. The need to follow up the United Nations study on violence against children and the work of the United Nations Special Representative on the issue will be of particular importance.

### *The impact of HIV/AIDS on child labour*

**271.** The development of a national plan of action that integrates HIV-induced child labour is still needed in most affected countries, particularly in

23. United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR, op. cit.

24. DFID, op. cit.

25. ILO estimates published in the 2002 Global Report.

sub-Saharan Africa. Awareness is limited concerning the linkages between HIV/AIDS, child labour, education and gender. The proposed new standard on HIV/AIDS and the world of work to be adopted in 2010 will help in this regard and offers an opportunity for further advocacy. Finally, interventions remain pitifully small-scale in relation to the problem and therefore need to be scaled up to have impact.

### ***Children on the move: Migration as an emerging concern***

**272.** An estimated 214 million people worldwide – or 3.1 per cent of the world’s population – are international migrants.<sup>26</sup> The number of internal migrants may be even greater as China alone had 140 million internal migrants in 2005. Youth make up a disproportionate share of the world’s migrants – indeed, about a third of the migrant flows from all developing countries are in the 12–24 age range.<sup>27</sup>

**273.** This is a contentious issue with ongoing debate as to whether the aim should be to stop children migrating, or to make it safer for them to do so. The prevailing view is to prevent children from embarking on unsafe migration. It is feasible and desirable to improve the protection available to young migrants without this amounting to encouraging them to leave home or to migrate.

**274.** There is no unequivocal evidence that children who migrate with their families are more vulnerable to child labour. Risks relate to the status of the family and economic sectors. Although the majority of child migrants move with their families, significant numbers do not. This makes them more vulnerable to child labour. The May 2009 report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants notes that “States should recognize that migrant children, especially those unaccompanied, are most exposed to the worst forms of child labour.”<sup>28</sup> Most migrant children work in sectors such as agriculture, domestic work and the urban informal economy, and are often confronted with hazardous working conditions and the risk of abuse. Where adults migrate without their children, remittances could be part of the solution to child labour. In 2008, an estimated US\$328 billion of remittances

were sent to developing countries.<sup>29</sup> Recent studies have indicated that remittances can help put children in school and close the gender gap. Further research is needed to determine under which conditions adult migration can be beneficial to children and reduce child labour. Such research needs to include a gender dimension, given the special risks facing girls during the migration process. In any event, children on the move cannot be ignored, and they need protection from abuse and exploitation.

### ***Children with disabilities and other special educational needs***

**275.** The child labour movement still needs to pay greater attention to the needs of children with physical disabilities and specific learning difficulties. The failure of conventionally designed education systems to provide the necessary support for children with special educational needs can be a major source of disadvantage for children trying to access education, in addition to existing stigmatization by others who see them as different. Children with disabilities are among the most marginalized and least likely to go to school. The difference in school attendance rates at the primary level between those with disabilities and those without, ranges from 10 percentage points in India to almost 60 in Indonesia.<sup>30</sup> For children with physical disabilities, distance to and the layout of schools can be barriers to attendance, and the lack of trained teachers and support staff can hinder both them and children with specific learning difficulties. Political leadership and effective public policy are needed to overcome negative attitudes and to ensure the right to education of children with special educational needs. Education for All is by definition a fully inclusive aim.

**276.** Children excluded from education, including those excluded because of failure to meet their special needs, may drift into the labour market where their lack of education may compound their particular vulnerability to the worst forms of child labour. Working in hazardous occupations in workshops, mines and fields can lead to injuries and occupational diseases that impair children. At the most extreme level, there are reports of children with visible disabilities, deliberately inflicted, so that they

26. UN Population Division estimation for 2010.

27. World Bank: *World Development Report Overview, 2007* (Washington, DC, 2006).

28. UN General Assembly (A/HRC/11/7), p. 22.

29. D. Ratha et al.: *Outlook for remittance flows 2009-2011*, Migration and Development Brief 10 (Washington, DC, World Bank, July 2009).

30. UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, op. cit., pp. 82–83.

can be sent out on to the streets to beg. Other children with disabilities may not immediately enter the labour market, but remain idle, lacking basic education or skills. A key area of ongoing work in member States, which in conformity with Convention No. 182 requires still further attention and funding, is the remedial support through transitional education provision that enables these children to gain at least the level of the basic education they have been denied and, where desired, to return to mainstream education or to proceed with vocational and skills training.

### Role and commitment of the social partners

**277.** The social partners have played a historic role in national and international efforts to end child labour. As noted above, they have done so either as explicit campaigners, organizers and advocates against child labour, or simply by performing their essential role as good employers or effective trade unions, representing their members through policy dialogue and collective bargaining. Some in the worldwide movement may not have fully understood the latter approach. Trade unions are not single-issue campaign groups, and independent trade unions are financially self-sufficient and not dependent on donor funding. They have a wide range of policy and representational responsibilities, child labour among them, and most operate under considerable financial constraints. Some organizations may place child labour explicitly at the forefront of their campaigning. Among those which have done so in recent years have been the global union federations in the education, agriculture, building, mining and garment sectors. Others, with lesser incidence of child labour in their sectors, campaign differently, but all are committed to the elimination of child labour as a fundamental principle. Some recognize that child labour can be an entry point for dialogue with employers, including in the informal economy. In other sectors, especially in the formal economy, child labour may not be an immediate challenge but it may arise as an issue in CSR initiatives or in bargaining about global supply chains and subcontracting.

**278.** The different actors in the worldwide movement have varying roles. Intervening directly to remove children from the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency, and providing them with the necessary services, is largely a matter for public services or, in many cases, is performed by donor-funded voluntary sector organizations. Social partners should

not be criticized for not responding to approaches which assume they will perform a role they were not established to perform.

**279.** Two questions arise, however. First, why is it not possible to channel more funds to public services to enhance their capacity to deliver such services to children and to build the skills to continue to do so after donor-funded project interventions end? What should the public and voluntary mix of service provision look like? Some countries see these as the proper role of the State, while others have developed a mix of provision with much of it subcontracted to voluntary or faith-based organizations. Second, what more can be done with donor funding to support a still greater capacity of the social partners to use their comparative advantage in the struggle against child labour? As noted above, trade unions have important comparative advantages that could be deployed more effectively. Given the notable success in recent years of rural workers' organizations in a number of countries in recruiting millions of new members, their mass membership and their presence in communities and workplaces as well as their lobbying role afford them particular advantages. It is indeed the responsibility of States to ensure that unprotected work does not take place, but trade unions and employers, through their activities in the informal economy, contribute to the momentum because both have interests in contractual relationships recognized under law. And the multiple efforts around the world, bringing millions of informal economy workers into the trade union movement, are evidence that collective organization of workers, but also of employers, provides the best access to protection under the rule of law and the viable way to build structures for social dialogue.

**280.** No further research is needed to demonstrate the underlying value of social dialogue in combating child labour, not least in key sectors such as agriculture or mining as well as other sectors and forms of child labour, though more can be learned from how the relationship functions in practice. Nearly two centuries of historical experience offers adequate evidence of that and should be borne in mind in the defence of tripartism in the United Nations reform process. However, further funding of exchange, not least South–South exchange, of experience and good practice of engagement in the development and tripartite oversight of national action plans would enhance capacity and strengthen the worldwide movement. Moreover, this was foreseen by Convention No. 182 in the integration of other strands of activity such as CSR and in sectoral, workplace and community activity.



**Box 3.4**  
**Types of engagement by employers' and workers' organizations**

Working with ILO support, employers' and workers' organizations have entered into a broad range of child labour-related activities. Though there is an inevitable degree of overlap between categories, the typology below is a useful device for exploring where best to focus the efforts of the social partners:

- Awareness raising and campaigning
- Social dialogue and sector alliances
- Effective industrial relations that permit collective bargaining for decent work
- Capacity building
- Child labour monitoring
- National policy-making
- Promotion of international standards
- Work with international and regional bodies
- Participation in global task groups
- Direct support to working children and their families (including collaboration on training and apprenticeships)
- Networking with civil society partners
- Research
- Resource mobilization

Source: *IPEC action against child labour: Highlights 2006* (Geneva, ILO, 2007).

**281.** In 2006, IPEC produced a typology of social partners' child labour engagement which could provide an important device for future strategic development.

### Corporate social responsibility

**282.** The past decade has produced very valuable lessons as codes of conduct, multi-stakeholder initiatives, ethical trading and international framework agreements and other approaches have flourished. This experimentation is important and promises to enhance the ability of companies to stay clear of complicity in child labour abuses and to take appropriate action when child labour is found in supply chains. Companies now have an important role in the worldwide movement against child labour, and their contributions will be central to sustained progress. The decade-long collaboration between FIFA and ILO–IPEC in Pakistan in the football industry is a good example of successful public–private partnership in eliminating child labour. The engagement of the employers through the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) helped ensure sustainable results. But the lack of an integrated approach to fundamental rights at work in Sialkot, in particular the weakness of industrial relations and continuing challenges to freedom of association and the right

to bargain collectively, led to a crisis in 2006 in the city's sporting goods sector. Faced with persistent reports of anti-union harassment and the fear that child labour was re-emerging in subcontracted supply chains, one major global brand threatened to end a major contract. The result was the negotiation of the Tripartite agreement for decent work in the Pakistan sporting goods sector, in Islamabad in February 2007, underwritten by the ILO and the Government of Pakistan, which committed the global and national social partners to pursue the realization of all fundamental rights at work and to seek to establish the sector in Pakistan as a global centre of excellence.

**283.** With pressure focused on supply chain compliance, the wider value chain is often overlooked and the risk of simply displacing child labour is considerable. The displacement effect and the responsibility to monitor the entire value chain and ensure remedial action remains a major challenge and is further examined below. There is a need to bridge the gap with the public sector by exploring ways that the significant resources devoted to CSR can help strengthen national capacity for monitoring labour conditions and the incidence of child labour. CSR efforts also require robust evaluation and impact assessment. It is important that CSR initiatives be examined by their results in eliminating child labour, if the charge is to be avoided that they simply serve public relations purposes.

### The promise of United Nations reform

**284.** The United Nations reform process offers both challenges and opportunities for the ILO's constituents. The main challenge is how to ensure that "One UN" includes the activities and programmes that are based on the ILO mandate and objectives. This includes international labour standards, the ILO supervisory machinery, as well as the involvement of the social partners. A further challenge is to ensure that the ILO's Decent Work Agenda is included in the country-level United Nations development assistance framework. For the ILO, the main tool for engagement in the process will be Decent Work Country Programmes. Finally, it is necessary to recognize the considerable transaction costs incurred in attempting "Delivering as One".

**285.** There are many ways in which this can work to the benefit of child labour programmes and the worldwide movement. The ILO is a relatively small agency and United Nations reform offers the possibility of greater global outreach for its messages and concerns. Rather than trying to build up a parallel infrastructure, more effort should go into using existing United Nations structures as well as influencing other United Nations agencies and development partners.

**286.** The social partners will need to develop strategies to maximize their engagement in United Nations reform structures such as implementation committees at the national level. The United Republic of Tanzania offers a positive example of how the social partners have tapped into new resources and funds for capacity building as part of a civil society advisory group.<sup>31</sup> IPEC national steering committees need also to consider their remit in the light of these developments. They provide an existing structure to coordinate input into national child labour policy and programme development.

**287.** Finally, United Nations reform provides an additional impetus to develop a better coordinated effort on child labour between ILO and UNICEF.

### Re-energizing the worldwide movement

**288.** Though much has been achieved over recent years in forging international partnerships and in placing child labour on the EFA and other agendas, considerable challenges remain. A fundamental

weakness remains the failure to sustain a high-profile global "movement" that can engage governments more forcefully in living up to their commitments, a key message of this Report. In the words of the Global March, ratifying governments must ensure that they "keep their promises". Central to ensuring this is mobilizing civil society actors in effective alliances. The Worldwide Movement Report pointed to the need for the ILO to break with "business as usual" to mobilize other champions for the cause.<sup>32</sup> This would include the social partners continuing to form alliances with others in civil society, such as NGOs and the mass media. Already since 1998, the ICFTU (now the ITUC) and Education International have been institutional trade union pillars of the Global March against Child Labour, which groups together hundreds of trade unions and NGOs in its worldwide alliance. Further support is required to release the latent capacity of the worldwide movement, based on common goals of decent work, the elimination of child labour and education for all in accord with ILO standards, and to build greater cooperation and cohesion between its various strands.

### What kind of leadership role for the ILO?

**289.** The issue of ILO leadership featured in the worldwide movement study. It concluded that the nature of the worldwide movement precluded any formal leader. The ILO has an essential role in setting the international policy framework through its standards and it provides a convening role.<sup>33</sup>

**290.** The comparative advantage of the ILO lies in the power of its message, its knowledge and its partnerships, not least with workers' and employers' organizations. Where the ILO needs to do better is perhaps in the most critical areas of all – intellectual leadership, the reach and impact of its advocacy efforts, and pursuing social partnership as the avenue for the development and implementation of policy. The ILO can best demonstrate leadership not through the size of the resources it manages to mobilize for itself, but through its ability to influence the allocation of much larger resources at the national and international levels, which can have a significant impact on child labour. Not by the number of its projects but through the quality of its insights, and its capacity to disseminate them. This was already expounded by Albert Thomas, the first ILO

31. ILO–IOE: *UN reform and employers' organizations* (Geneva, 2010).

32. Fyfe, 2007, op. cit., p. 94.

33. *ibid.*, p. 88.



Director, regarding the need for a global clearing house for good practice: “Even if the International Labour Organisation should only be a scientific information service at the disposal of all employers and workers, ... who are seeking the social justice which is the guarantee of international peace, even if the Office only registers the progress made in various countries, even then the International Labour Organisation would be an invaluable cog in the machinery of social evolution.”<sup>34</sup>

### Course corrections

**291.** An important message of this Report is that business-as-usual will not help us achieve our ambitious 2016 target. The worldwide movement has to engage in a significant change of steps. IPEC is a critical part of the worldwide movement, as its own vision statement of 2008 makes it clear.<sup>35</sup> In a sense, IPEC is a product, perhaps the most tangible and visible product, of the movement as well as contributing to it in many areas.

**292.** The ILO and IPEC, as its technical cooperation arm for child labour, must also be part of this change. This is, after all, consistent with the United Nations reform process. As IPEC approaches two decades of existence, it is therefore important to reflect on the challenges and the opportunities that lie ahead. In particular, how can IPEC’s strategy be adapted and strengthened to make it an even more effective tool for the ILO and the wider global movement? Given its status as the largest dedicated child labour programme in the world, the future of IPEC is of major interest and concern for the whole worldwide movement. Indeed, the programme can be viewed as an international public good.

**293.** To have progressed for nearly 20 years as it has in politically turbulent times, IPEC must clearly be doing something right. But does it always focus on the right things in the right way? And does the present model best fit with the overall comparative advantage of the ILO with its focus on knowledge leadership?

**294.** Project-based funding, vital as it is, should not detract from strategic agility and national and global policy coherence and delivery. One should not be at the expense of the other. Projects, especially of the kind that pursue direct interventions and the

delivery of services to children, most often through action programmes implemented by donor-dependent NGOs, are one method of delivering elements of the broader programme. It is, however, important they do not encourage tunnel vision or not seeing the political economy “wood” for the child labour-project “trees”, or what has been termed the “micro-macro paradox”.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, a narrow project focus can reflect and reinforce a “head-on” approach to child labour when the solution lies, as ILO standards and IPEC acknowledge, in fundamental economic, social and political change and an integrated policy approach in which national budgetary allocations must play a key role. Projects have been used effectively as learning devices, as “demonstration projects” – and are a critical vehicle for acting with urgency and finding effective approaches. But child labour projects alone will not end child labour. IPEC’s vast field experience over nearly 20 years is a global resource for the worldwide movement. The lessons need to be integrated into the necessary broader strategies that will have a sustained impact on the child labour problem.

**295.** The ILO’s comparative advantage lies in knowledge, policy and normative areas and bringing together tripartite constituents and other key actors to take necessary action. The challenge is ensuring the coherence and impact of the programme when the majority of the funding is provided for direct services projects. For example, IPEC has long recognized that the lack of core funding has constrained its capacity to extend the scope of its programmes to the most neglected regions, economic sectors and worst forms of child labour. Additionally, the transactional costs entailed in project administration means that there is little time to grasp emerging opportunities and maintain a strategic overview. Opportunities to have an impact on global policy-making, more recently the follow-up to the G20 process, have enormous potential which needs to be capitalized.

### Important partners: Working with UNICEF and international NGOs

**296.** Reflection is needed on systematically engaging with international NGOs and their national affiliates as part of a broad alliance-building effort. This could be supported by existing alliances recently

34. A. Thomas: “The International Labour Organisation: Its Original development and future”, in *The International Labour Review* (Geneva, ILO, Jan. 1921) Vol. I, No. 1, p. 21. Knowledge-sharing was a particular emphasis of the first IPEC donor, the Government of Germany.

35. IPEC, 2008, op. cit., pp. 17–18.

36. D. Moyo: *Dead aid: How aid is not working and how there is another way for Africa* (London, Penguin Books, 2009), p. 44.

forged on the issues of, for example, child domestic labour, trafficking, migration and armed conflict.

**297.** A stronger partnership with UNICEF at the international level, also called for in the last Global Report, would also help support the implementation of the Global Action Plan and facilitate work at the country-level through “One UN”. UNICEF can be a major ally in advocacy, as can be seen by the support already provided to World Day activities. Again, some mechanism at the global level to maintain regular dialogue would be supportive of country-level collaboration. To ensure the partnership with UNICEF also at the local level, it will be important to mainstream the international-level agreements into the daily work of national offices.

### *The potential of BRIC as child labour champions*

**298.** South–South cooperation began with a focus on promoting trade and foreign direct investment and now embraces development assistance. The group consisting of Brazil, the Russian Federation, India and China (BRIC) held its first formal summit in June 2009. This group produces about 15 per cent of the world’s GDP and holds 40 per cent of all gold and hard currency reserves. The term BRIC was first coined in 2001, to describe the four countries that are expected to surpass today’s largest economies by 2050. To this group may be added Mexico, Indonesia and Turkey, to form the “Emerging Seven” (E7). The BRIC alliance is looking to translate this economic clout into political influence on the global stage, including within the International Financial Institutions (IFI). Brazil and China have already become donors and are changing the way the world goes about development assistance. There is potential to work with Brazil, India and China (BIC) as child labour champions, not least on “Focus Africa”, as part of the commitment to the 2016 target and in the spirit of Article 8 of ILO Convention No. 182.

### **Advocacy**

**299.** Communication and advocacy are seen as future core capacities for the ILO in promoting its agenda. However, raising the visibility of the ILO remains challenging. High-level advocacy has helped position the child labour issue more centrally on the EFA agenda and on other agendas dealing with some dimensions of the worst forms of child labour, such as trafficking and children in armed conflict. However,

the IFI and key global development advocates, such as Jeffrey Sachs, Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz have tended to give lesser attention to the child labour issue as part of their analysis of development and globalization. A quantum leap is still needed in advocacy efforts, which have to be far more ambitious – a key message of this Report. The ILO’s cost–benefit study of ending child labour that came out in 2004 did not have the impact that it really warranted. This work on cost–benefit needs to be emphasized in the context of the G20 follow-up, which offers new opportunities for innovative financial instruments. An important focus will need to be on linking the elimination of child labour and the value of education.

**300.** Much more could be achieved through the World Day brand if it is taken “to the next level” as a web-based online campaign. The aim would be to create a “World Day Partnership” as a loose alliance through a vigorous campaign to promote the web page. This would require more investment and systematic planning to build up a network and database with key partners such as the ITUC and IOE networks. The development of simple guidelines on how to become involved would enhance the participation of the social partners. The World Day also offers a major opportunity to partner international and national NGOs, as well as the United Nations family. This means a greater focus on the country level, and there is a particular opportunity to expand the scope of World Day activities in industrialized countries that needs exploring with the social partners.

**301.** Web-based information is a critical part of any contemporary communications strategy. IPEC has invested in this area in terms of the general web site and specialized ones such as SIMPOC. These have been used for spreading the message, for example, around the World Day. This also links with the strategy to develop “community of practice” networks about issues such as occupational safety and health, child labour and youth employment, and trafficking. Scaling up communications and advocacy development therefore increasingly means going online.

### **Knowledge gaps and strategy**

#### *Knowledge gaps*

**302.** We cannot help invoking the past when we try to shape the future. At one level our historical understanding of child labour causality and elimination is profound. The child labour campaign is not like the global response to HIV/AIDS that goes back barely two decades. National experience of tackling

child labour goes at least back to the 1830s. The response at the international level goes back to 1919, if not before, as combating child labour lay at the core of the motivation to set up the ILO. In very broad terms we know what to do about child labour, but the problem lies in the detail.

**303.** When it comes to specific countries and types of child labour, gaps are found. Moreover, any lessons from history do not provide a precise blueprint for any given country. That said, a central message of this Report is the importance of the “politics of eliminating child labour”, in other words, how to overcome obstacles to policy and budgetary reforms through building coalitions particularly within civil society. The analysis of Brazil (and Mexico) to help explain the past “leaps forward” is important here in identifying lessons of how key interventions can be scaled up. Similarly, support for countries and national partners to conduct better impact assessments of national initiatives could also potentially demonstrate how national outcomes have been achieved as a result of specific interventions, policies and ILO support projects. This has been a major gap in the past, but is now being addressed through the further development and implementation of the IPEC Impact Assessment Framework that emphasizes tools for countries to perform such assessments. Sustainability studies that review longer term and broader national outcomes ex post and link these to specific policy and programme interventions, including those supported by ILO–IPEC, are also being planned.

**304.** It is necessary to continue work on methodologies to better capture some of the more hidden worst forms of child labour, such as forced labour. This was called for in the Child Labour Statistics Resolution adopted by the ICLS in December 2008. The Resolution requested further action from the ILO and its partners to develop appropriate statistical methodologies for generating reliable estimates of children in the worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work, and special groups such as child workers living independently on the streets.<sup>37</sup>

### Knowledge strategy

**305.** Knowledge management has become a central concern within the United Nations system and covers the full spectrum of generating, collecting,

capturing, storing, codifying, transferring and communicating knowledge. The ILO aims to maintain and enhance its status as a leading knowledge institution in the world of work and influence global and national policy debates. IPEC, for its part, has put intellectual leadership as central to its own vision in going forward.

**306.** As noted in Part II, there have been important accomplishments in developing and disseminating knowledge products, particularly resources aimed at policy-makers and practitioners. However, there is still some way to go to realize a fully articulated and integrated knowledge strategy that connects people with the knowledge they need as part of the broad worldwide movement against child labour. For instance, IPEC’s significant stock of evaluations with systematic documentation of lessons learned and potential good practices will be of great value for further systematic use by the ILO when iTrack, the ILO web-based electronic evaluation management system, becomes fully operational. This will involve promoting a strategy for the worldwide movement in which the Programme also listens and learns from others through partnerships and opportunities for knowledge sharing provided by evolving communities of practice. This focus on knowledge leadership also anticipates a future recalibrating of IPEC as it moves increasingly towards a more catalytic role of enabling the ILO’s constituents, and others in the worldwide movement, through what it knows rather than simply through the funds it has available.

### Measuring national efforts and progress

**307.** One knowledge and advocacy tool that may need to be considered is the notion of a *Child Labour Indicator Tool*, assessing countries in terms of incidence of and their responses to child labour. Such a tool could form an important element of future world reports on the child labour issue.

**308.** An indicator for the progress made by countries regarding child labour would also be in line with the framework developed by the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work, held in September 2008.<sup>38</sup> The framework combines conventional statistical decent work indicators with a systematic description of information on rights at work and the legal framework for

37. ILO: ICLS, 2009, op. cit.

38. See ILO: *Measurement of decent work*, Discussion paper for the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work (Geneva, Aug. 2008) and ILO: Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work: Chairperson’s report (Geneva, Oct. 2008), both available at <http://www.ilo.org/integration/resources/mtgdocs/lang--en/index.htm>.

decent work. However, the experts argued that this should be complemented with numerical indicators for progress on the four fundamental principles and rights at work. The Governing Body has debated the proposal developed by the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on two occasions and endorsed further work by the Office.<sup>39</sup> Developmental work on a numerical indicator for progress on freedom of association and collective bargaining is already well advanced, and indicators for child labour, as well as for forced labour and equal opportunity and treatment in employment, could follow next.

**309.** The ILO has both the statistical data under SIMPOC and qualitative data from progress reporting by the CEACR and IPEC to begin the systematic development of such a tool. Indeed, recent efforts by IPEC to develop a method to assess the type and extent of support required by a member State already anticipate such work. Indicator development for Decent Work Country Programmes that includes child labour would be another natural departure point.

**310.** As a means of encouraging further debate on this issue, a possible selection of criteria for a numerical indicator of progress on child labour is presented below. As with the indicators for the other fundamental principles and rights at work, it will be pivotal to develop a reliable and reproducible indicator that is fully in line with the ILO supervisory system. The following potential indicators, based on Conventions Nos 138 and 182, could be used to group countries in their response to the child labour problem:

- Incidence of child labour as measured by national surveys.
- Ratification of key Conventions such as ILO Conventions Nos 138, 182 and 144 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and reporting outcomes.
- Child labour knowledge through a number of dedicated national surveys, rapid assessments, baseline surveys and the results concerning incidence and trends.
- Qualitative indicators (rights at work and legal framework) of measuring progress towards eliminating child labour from the ILO Decent Work Indicators template.
- Openness to UN action in the country at national, subnational, sector or constituent levels.
- Child labour policy expressed in terms of legislation, national action plans, budget allocations, hazardous lists.

- Child labour mainstreaming through national development plans, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, UNDAF and Decent Work Country Programmes.
- Social partners' capacity and commitment as part of the child labour response through social dialogue mechanisms such as national steering committees, and the extent of mainstreaming within policies, structures and programmes and an extension of their activities and representative capacity into the informal economy.
- Enabling environment that is supportive of the elimination of child labour that can be gauged through indicators for political stability and good governance, and development indices for education for all, human development, and gender.

### Ratification prospects

**311.** As we saw in Part I of the Report, absolute numbers on ratification of the ILO child labour standards are impressive, especially for Convention No. 182, but they mask critical qualitative gaps. This does not necessarily call for a campaign but, at least, for a strategy. As indicated in Part I of the Report, 12 countries are lagging behind with respect to Convention No. 182. Regarding Convention No. 138, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Iran, Mexico, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia and the United States form an important group. Positive prospects for ratification, particularly when it comes to key countries such as India and the United States, would provide an important boost for global advocacy efforts.

### Regional strategies

**312.** ILO child labour efforts still put a lot of emphasis on Latin America. There are understandable reasons for this, including the capacity to deliver operational activities quickly and successfully. However, Africa remains the region where the least progress is being made regarding EFA and many of the MDGs. What still needs to be done, for example, in promoting an Africa-wide movement against child labour? To what extent have opportunities been seized and international promises of assistance made at the G8 Summit in 2005 been delivered? At the

39. See GB.303/19/3, Report of the Director-General: Third Supplementary Report, Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work, Nov. 2008 and GB.306/17/5, Report of the Director-General: Fifth Supplementary Report, Measuring Decent Work, Nov. 2009.

same time, South Asia is home to the greatest numbers of child labourers and some governments have shown weak political commitment to EFA and to ratifying ILO Conventions Nos 138 and 182. The Arab States region may also require a particular focus and there is also East and Central Asia to consider. Finally, though Latin America has done well as a whole, and set its own target at 2015 (as has Africa), progress in the region is uneven, with some countries showing child labour prevalence rates on a par with, or superior to, many sub-Saharan African countries.

**313.** This Report argues for a much greater strategic focus on South Asia (in addition to Africa) but also stresses the importance of a subregional approach – and in the case of very large countries, such as India, a subnational approach – as there is considerable diversity within regions regarding problems, opportunities and progress. Key regional priorities for action, rather than an exhaustive presentation region by region are set out below.

### *Honouring commitments to Africa*

**314.** Over the last four years, many African economies have achieved annual growth rates of around 5 per cent. There have been important achievements in education, notably the abolition of primary school fees in some countries that has led to significant expansion of enrolment. For example, a strong partnership of government, donors and civil society has been instrumental in the rapid improvement of access to, and completion of, primary education in the United Republic of Tanzania. In 2001, the Government abolished primary school fees and launched a programme to improve access and quality at the primary level. As a consequence, between 1999 and 2006 the number of out-of-school children of primary school age decreased dramatically, from over 3 million to under 150,000.<sup>40</sup> Between 2001 to the end of 2006, Kenya more than halved its HIV prevalence rate. There have been significant changes in the political landscape, with more than half of countries in the region now holding democratic elections. However, the general picture remains a challenging one. The region has half of the world's poor and levels of poverty are rising, leaving many countries as poor as they were 40 years ago.<sup>41</sup> A major constraint to progress in Africa has been persistent conflict in a significant number of countries, including some of the largest

States such as Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As noted elsewhere in the Report, the impact of armed conflict is increasingly recognized by the international community as a major constraint to development, particularly in Africa.

**315.** However, this is not an easy time to make the case for giving more aid. The worst global downturn since the 1930s has prompted individuals, organizations and governments to reduce their giving. To this donor fatigue can be added a growing public scepticism in donor countries regarding the past effectiveness of aid efforts in Africa. This has, in part, been due to recent critiques of aid to Africa from economists such as Paul Collier, Bill Easterly and Dambisa Moyo. In particular, Zambian economist Moyo points out that Africa has received approximately US\$1 trillion in aid since the 1940s (many times more than the Marshall Plan for post-war Europe) but has little to show for it.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, aid itself has become the problem for which it claims to be the solution, creating a dependency that constrains much-needed change and the adoption of alternative models for financing development.

**316.** The 2006 Global Report was written at the time of the international call for a “Big Push” for Africa that culminated in the G8 Summit, held at Gleneagles in July 2005. This was also part of a mass movement to *make poverty history*. Africa was promised a doubling of aid by 2010. But sub-Saharan Africa does not need new promises; what it needs is a commitment to provide the additional US\$14 billion by 2010 to deliver on the old ones. As we saw in Part II, these aid commitments have not been fulfilled by most of the rich nations of the G8. This was addressed at the 2009 G8 meeting through support to African agriculture.

**317.** Whatever the debates concerning the effectiveness of aid, the facts on the impact of ODA in Africa tell another story. For instance, in the United Republic of Tanzania development assistance has helped put 3 million children in school. However, the issue is not the volume but the quality of assistance and how governments respond and are made accountable by civil society. In a study of the costs and benefits of eliminating child labour, the ILO estimated the present value of the cost of eliminating child labour in sub-Saharan Africa at around US\$140 billion, of which US\$107 billion would be education supply costs for teachers, new schools, materials and so on. The total benefits however, amount to US\$734 billion, or

40. UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, op. cit., p. 63.

41. Moyo, op. cit., p. 5.

42. ibid.



5.2 times the cost, making it a major 20-year investment in Africa's future.<sup>43</sup> The world can afford this.

**318.** Moreover, the importance of foreign assistance must also be put into proper perspective by acknowledging other perhaps more significant tools for African development, not least trade, private investment and the potential for business development. The emerging economies are likely to be of growing importance as partners for Africa's development. China has emerged as Africa's most prominent trading partner, but India and Turkey, among others, are following on its heels. The first Sino-African Summit, in November 2006, was attended by over 40 African leaders. In April 2008, India launched its own India-Africa forum. In May 2008, Turkey signed mutual trade agreements with 35 African countries. As will be argued later in the Report, these growing economic and political ties can also be explored in supporting child-labour elimination efforts in Africa.

#### *ILO action*

**319.** The ILO first addressed the overall child labour problem in Africa 20 years ago in the first ever regional tripartite workshop.<sup>44</sup> Then, as now, Africa was viewed as the region where the problem was especially serious due to the high incidence. The workshop concluded with proposals for national action programmes, many of which took the form of studies. Important observations during the workshop included the special role of free and compulsory education, and the need to stimulate government and public opinion to deal with the problem. Child labour was viewed as a controversial issue, in some cases with the media reluctant to take it up due to government control.

**320.** From 2007, IPEC began to develop a regional strategy paper for Africa as part of a "Focus Africa" programme. In April 2007, ILO constituents in Africa advanced the goal of the elimination of the worst forms by 2015, to align it with the MDGs. The strategy paper viewed this as a feasible proposition in that the necessary knowledge and tools were largely available and most of the necessary resources had been pledged as far back as the World Education Forum in Dakar, in 2000. The problem, as ever, is political will to deliver these commitments.

**321.** The IPEC regional action plan for Africa calls for a more focused approach using the three pillars of the Global Action Plan. The main components of the proposed strategy include expanding the outreach of ILO–IPEC in the region, particularly to assist in the formulation and implementation of national action programmes, alongside technical support in other areas such as conditional cash transfer programmes, legal reform and linkages with youth employment policies. The development of knowledge, tools and capacity is also essential, particularly enhancing the capacity of African development research institutes. Resource mobilization remains central and needs to include efforts to increase local resources from public and private sources. Efforts need to be made towards promoting an Africa-wide movement against child labour that can bolster political commitment. An eminent advisory group could be instrumental here. A key element of the action plan is to develop further links to vital African partners such as the African Union and subregional bodies. Finally, child labour considerations need to be further integrated into Decent Work Country Programmes, where the link with youth employment is central.

**322.** A high-level political conference in Africa could also be pursued as a means of putting the child labour problem on the policy agenda. The follow-up to the 2009 G8 meeting and its focus on African agricultural development should be an important part of this. The 2010 Global Conference in The Hague should help build momentum.

#### *South Asia: A large child labour population*

**323.** The critical fight against child labour has to be won in South Asia. Numbers say it all. India has 445 million children, Bangladesh 64 million, and Pakistan 70 million, compared to, for example, China's 348 million.<sup>45</sup> In sheer numbers, India and Pakistan have by far the largest out-of-school child population in the world.<sup>46</sup> The region also offers a stark contrast in political commitment to universal education and poverty reduction. Whereas China has taken more people out of poverty than any other country since 1979, and put most of its children into basic education, this goal has often proved elusive in South Asia. As noted in Part II of this Report, 1960

43. IPEC: *Investing in every child: An economic study of the costs and benefits of eliminating child labour* (Geneva, ILO, 2004).

44. ILO: Report of the African Regional Tripartite Workshop on Measures to Combat Child Labour, held in Cairo between 10–14 September 1989 (Geneva, 1989).

45. UNICEF, 2007, op. cit.

46. FTI, op. cit., p. 1.

was the first target date set to achieve universal education as promised in the Indian Constitution. How can this time lag be explained?

**324.** There cannot be any doubt that India faces the most daunting challenges of any country. As was noted in Part II, the vast majority of the working population is found in the rural informal economy. Of India's 370 million informal economy workers, 236 million are found in agriculture. According to official data nearly 25 per cent of the rural population are reported to be below the poverty line. By World Bank definitions of poverty more than 75 per cent of all Indians are probably below the poverty line. As a consequence, there is a huge problem of rural indebtedness affecting 82 per cent of farmers in Andhra Pradesh, and around 50 per cent of farmers nationwide. About a quarter of men and nearly half of all women are illiterate, and 28 per cent of villages do not have primary school facilities.<sup>47</sup>

**325.** Against this background there has been a vigorous debate over the years concerning the trends and scale of the child labour population in India. As noted in Part II, according to the National Sample Survey Organization the estimated number of child labourers was 13.3 million in 1993–94 and 8.6 million in 2004–05. They constituted about 6.2 per cent of children in the age group 5–14 in 1993–94 and 3.4 per cent in 2004–05.<sup>48</sup> Four States account for 40 per cent of the country's child workers. Nearly 80 per cent of the child worker population is found in agriculture. However, the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector, which reported in 2007, pointed to a much larger "labour pool" made up of out-of-school children who could be considered as potential child labourers. For example, the state of Bihar has over one-third of its children in the 5–14 age group out-of-school with an all-India average of around 18 per cent. This potential child labour pool remains very high at 45.2 million.<sup>49</sup>

**326.** Given this context, the level of ambition and political commitment to basic education should be scaled up. India, for example, still devotes about the same proportion of national income to education (around 3.5 per cent) that it did in the mid-1980s, indeed, slightly less. Institutional capacity to implement policies and programmes and enforce

legislation remains a major challenge at all levels and could be better supported by the United Nations country team.<sup>50</sup>

**327.** A way forward, in the context of South–South cooperation, could be the adoption of child labour-free subnational pledges and programmes along the lines of the state of Bahia in Brazil. Kerala already offers a model that other Indian states could follow. This could be part of a subregional strategy for India and for South Asia in general. Kerala also demonstrates the importance of investment in basic education in tackling child labour. It is important that the governments of the region, which have been under-investing in education, quickly move towards the international benchmark of devoting 4–6 per cent of GNP to education.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, this expenditure needs to be focused on basic education and ensuring that neglected groups, not least girls, are enrolled and retained in school.

### *The Americas: Good but uneven progress*

**328.** The Americas have made good progress in recent years. The fundamental Conventions on child labour have been ratified by almost all countries in the region. The child labour issue is present in the national policies of all countries. It is the region with the most significant reduction of child labour during the last decade. An impressive knowledge base in both qualitative and quantitative terms has been produced. A wide alliance of employers and workers against child labour has been built up along with civil society and the media. There is strong regional commitment through the Hemispheric Agenda on Decent Work for the Americas, which includes commitments and specific time frames to eliminate the worst forms by 2015 and all child labour by 2020. The "road maps" adopted for Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic are a good expression of the Agenda.

**329.** While the progress made is important and encouraging, there is still considerable work to be done. The great challenge in the region centres on keeping the momentum going. In the Americas, vulnerable populations are a major concern. These include indigenous peoples who have not benefited from the

47. Haque and Varghese, op. cit., pp. 8–15.

48. A recent report by UNICEF claims, however, that the child labour rate in India is 12 per cent, or 29 million. See UNICEF, *Progress for children*, op. cit., p. 26.

49. National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector: *Report on conditions of work and promotion of livelihoods in the unorganized sector* (New Delhi, Aug. 2007), p. 101.

50. IPEC, 2009, op. cit.

51. See Oslo Declaration, Eighth meeting of the High-level Group on Education for All, 16–18 December 2008.



general progress in the region. In order to highlight this neglected issue, a major Latin America Meeting of Indigenous Peoples and Government: Towards an Effective Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Boys, Girls and Adolescents in Child Labour Situations to be Abolished took place in March 2010. The ILO has taken a leading position among the nine supporting agencies by producing national reports for Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. This initiative is timely, given the extent to which the children of indigenous populations disproportionately miss out on education and are found in some of the worst forms of child labour in mining, agriculture and other sectors. Encouragingly, in 2008, IPEC and UNICEF jointly organized a subregional Andean meeting on indigenous child labour. As a result, the Tripartite Child Labour Commissions of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Paraguay created special units to respond to this issue in cooperation with organizations representing tribal people.

**330.** Other regional child labour concerns include the plight of migrant workers and vulnerability to the global economic crisis. Mapping the worst forms of child labour, such as trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, remains a challenge. Developing indicators to track the commitments of the intra-regional approach is also central to maintaining momentum. Expanding and intensifying cooperation with other regions, not least Africa, in the context of South–South cooperation, is an important opportunity to move the whole global effort forward. Brazil (and Mexico) could increasingly play a vanguard role in providing technical and financial assistance to other regions as well as in the Americas.

### *Arab States*

**331.** The issue of child labour in the Arab States region has long been viewed either with indifference or with a degree of scepticism. However, the last decade or so has witnessed a dramatic change both at the government level and in civil society at large. With close to a 100 per cent ratification rate of Conventions Nos 138 and 182, the Arab States show a commitment to tackling child labour.

**332.** Due to data shortcomings, there are no recent estimates on the extent of child labour in the region. It is assumed, however, that the problem is significant in some countries and further compounded by poverty, widespread unemployment and the poor quality of education leading to early dropouts. Most working children are in agriculture and endemic political conflicts have led to an aggravation of the problem.

The latest conflict in Gaza is a case in point, leading to school disruptions and loss of adult breadwinners.

**333.** Much of the work of the ILO in the region has led to greater awareness of the child labour problem. In partnership with other United Nations agencies and international and national NGOs, the issue has been placed at the top of the media agenda. A particular focus has been on the “hidden” types of worst forms such as commercial sexual exploitation and the drugs trade.

**334.** Legislative reform raising the minimum age for work has been accomplished in many countries along with other child protection measures. However, there is still a long way to go to create monitoring mechanisms to ensure implementation. The special situation of girls is still not fully recognized as a priority in the region, with many parliamentarians, for example, still opposing minimum age laws for marriage. As in other regions, many working children are in the informal economy where labour law is hardly ever applied.

**335.** A major challenge in the region is the lack of sustainability and a well thought-out exit strategy regarding the response to child labour, gender and other ILO priorities. The policy prescriptions going forward for the region need to focus on the most vulnerable children trapped in the worst forms of child labour, about which there still exists a significant state of denial in the region. By definition, this means prioritizing girls. Given the level of institutional dependency on external assistance, another priority must be the capacity building of government agencies and the social partners, particularly to develop policy coherence and interventions. There is a special need and opportunity to respond to children in situations of conflict and to address, to a greater extent, the child labour–youth employment nexus, given the importance of the latter on the region’s policy and political agenda.

### *Europe and Central Asia*

**336.** In 2009, in Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, IPEC provided the first examples of phase-out in the region. However, there are still areas where child labour is endemic, for instance in Central Asia and in some parts of the Caucasus. There are also concerns about the impact of migration, trafficking and the economic crisis, as well as those related to the continued social exclusion of indigenous minority groups, such as the Roma and Sinti peoples. The 2009 Global Report drew attention to the situation in Uzbekistan where, following media reports about forced

**Box 3.5****Providing educational opportunities to socially excluded children: The experience of Portugal**

In Portugal, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity jointly with the Ministry of Education created the PIEF – Programa Integrado de Educação e Formação, an instrument that, since its creation in 1999, has proved an important tool in retaining children and youth, and thus potential child labourers, in the education system.

The PIEF methodology sets in following the identification of children not regularly attending school. Based on the characteristics of the target group, a special curriculum is created and added to the formal curriculum. Then a PIEF target group is created, taking into consideration a series of conditions such as the availability of local resources (e.g., the school infrastructure).

One of the factors that have ensured the success of the PIEF programme is local ownership and the fact that parents are involved. In some cases, the children who benefited from the programme later trained their own parents in basic literacy skills. As a result of the PIEF, the target groups are afforded the possibility of completing their basic education.

The PIEF has characteristics that make it a flexible tool to be applied to any social problem involving children who are not attending school regularly. While it was initially created for child labourers, it also turned out to be effective for other groups of children affected by social exclusion.

child labour in the cotton industry, several major retailers and buyers stated they would no longer purchase cotton from the country.<sup>52</sup> Uzbekistan subsequently ratified Convention No. 182.

### **Achievements at stake: Impact of the global financial and economic crisis on child labour**

**337.** The global financial crisis began in 2007 and dramatically worsened in the last quarter of 2008, turning into the biggest economic crisis since the Great Depression. Developed and developing countries alike are affected. While the crisis originated in rich countries, it subsequently had significant impact in many poor countries. Despite signs of recovery at the time of writing, the global economy remains vulnerable to a range of potential shocks, making a sustained recovery far from assured.

**338.** The ILO has projected that, as a result of the crisis, up to 59 million more workers could have been made unemployed in 2009 compared to 2007.<sup>53</sup> The crisis risks triggering a prolonged labour market recession as labour markets generally tend to take a few years longer to recover than the overall economy. Unemployment levels worldwide could potentially reach 230 million, an unemployment rate of 7.1 per cent. The World Bank has predicted that the global

economic crisis will trap an additional 55–90 million people in poverty. According to the Bank, almost 40 per cent of 107 developing countries are highly exposed to the poverty effects of the crisis, with the remainder moderately exposed.<sup>54</sup>

**339.** Growth prospects for developing countries have been revised downwards by a magnitude similar to advanced economies. According to the World Bank, developing countries were anticipating growth to fall from 5.8 per cent in 2008 to 2.1 per cent in 2009. Previous experience indicates an important link between economic downturns and rising poverty levels.

**340.** Some of the poverty gains made during the last decade risk being wiped out. There was a danger that 2009 would prove to be the first year, since the launch of the MDGs, in which poverty would not be reduced but increase. Sub-Saharan Africa could be particularly at risk.

**341.** As the crisis deepens, leading to falling tax revenues, there will be a pressure on governments to cut or reduce the growth of their public spending. During periods of fiscal contraction, social expenditure typically suffers the most. For example, education budgets were cut in most of the East Asian countries after the 1997 financial crisis. UNESCO has predicted that sub-Saharan Africa faces a potential loss of around US\$4.6 billion annually in financing for education in 2009 and 2010, equivalent to a

52. ILO, 2009, op. cit., p. 21.

53. ILO: *Global employment trends, update May 2009* (Geneva, 2009). A “middle scenario” of 39 million unemployed appeared more likely, but is still disturbing.

54. World Bank: *Crisis hitting poor hard in developing world, World Bank says ahead of G7 meeting* (Washington, DC, Press release No. 2009/220/EXC, 12 Feb. 2009).

10 per cent reduction in spending per primary school pupil.<sup>55</sup> Teachers and other education workers are very vulnerable to cuts in education budgets as salaries comprise the bulk of educational expenditure.

**342.** Remittance flows to the developing world overtook ODA in the mid-1990s and have increased by 15 to 20 per cent in the last decade. However, they slowed down in the second half of 2008 and were expected to decline in 2009. Remittance flows often assist families in keeping children in education, and disruption to these flows could also have a negative impact in many countries.

**343.** Additionally, international aid flows are expected to shrink as a result of the crisis. These have been volatile in the past and have been falling off in recent years. Africa is again most at risk since aid averages around 9 per cent of GDP. There are wide variations across countries, for example, from South Africa, with only a small proportion of GDP, to Sierra Leone and Burundi, with over 30 per cent. Across poor countries, education and social expenditure is often substantially supported by international aid.

**344.** Child labour and education outcomes do not respond to shocks in the same way everywhere. We can expect the economic crisis to be associated with an increase in child labour in low-income countries, especially for poorer households in these countries. For middle-income countries, there is some evidence that the impact of falling living standards might be accompanied by reduced employment opportunities for children. Household responses are also likely to depend on the presence of well-functioning social safety nets.

### Policy responses

**345.** The ILO is playing a leading role in two important initiatives which form part of a United Nations framework of response to the crisis.

**346.** The ILO Global Jobs Pact is a key response to the current crisis. It calls for supporting job creation and helping people into work; investing in social protection systems; strengthening respect for international labour standards; and promoting social dialogue. It has a strong focus on supporting vulnerable groups, and ensuring that progress towards achieving the MDGs is not disrupted as a result of the crisis. The Pact also urges action to continue the prevention and elimination of child labour.

**347.** Moreover, the ILO is playing a leading role in a United Nations Social Protection Floor Initiative, which could make an important contribution to efforts to prevent child labour. The aim of this Initiative is to help ensure access to key services and social transfers for poor and vulnerable populations. It focuses on two components. The first component is *services*, i.e. geographical and financial access to key services, such as education, health, water and sanitation. The second component is *transfers*, i.e. a basic set of social transfers, in cash and in kind, essential to provide a minimum income and livelihood security for poor and vulnerable populations and to facilitate access to key services. The Initiative provides a framework through which countries can expand social protection, scale up existing programmes or replicate successful practices from other countries.

### Next steps

**348.** During the course of 2009, IPEC commissioned assessments of the impact of the crisis on child labour at the country level. In the context of the multi-agency Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All, broad stakeholder meetings were organized in Cambodia, Mali, Mongolia and Zambia to consider the potential impact of the crisis on education budgets and how that might affect child labour. This initial assessment revealed that it was still too early to gauge the child labour and education-related effects of the crisis.

**349.** Given the uncertainty about the evolution of the crisis, a form of “early warning system” would be essential to guarantee timely and effective intervention to prevent a child labour emergency developing. This idea was suggested in the evaluation of the BGMEA project in Bangladesh, in response to another kind of “crisis” prompted by the threat of trade sanctions.<sup>56</sup> Both macro and micro systems are needed.

**350.** This fits in with a much larger initiative that was called for at the G20 meeting in London, in April 2009: a global alert system for the monitoring of current and future crises, particularly on the most vulnerable populations and countries. In September 2009, the UN Secretary-General called on the international community to work together to create a Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert

55. UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009, op. cit., p. 1.

56. See ILO/UNICEF: *Addressing child labour in the Bangladesh garment industry 1995–2001: A synthesis of UNICEF and ILO evaluation studies of the Bangladesh garment sector projects* (Geneva and New York, 2004).

System (GIVAS).<sup>57</sup> This provides another strategic opportunity for the ILO. In particular, IPEC has important data that can be fed into the data platform and products that will emerge from GIVAS in the coming year, as it monitors the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable.

### International trade measures and child labour

**351.** The relationship between trade and core labour standards was much debated in the 1990s, not least in the context of the 1996 WTO Ministerial meeting in Singapore and in the development of the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Over the past two decades, the link between child labour and international trade relations has been woven into the global debate about ways to tackle child labour.

**352.** A number of initiatives invoke the linkage between trade policy and child labour, including incentive schemes in both the United States and European Union Generalized Systems of Preferences (GSP). The issue has recently regained further ground in discussions about child (and forced) labour as certain member States have introduced trade-related mechanisms to induce others to take action regarding the use of child labour in the production of certain internationally traded goods.

**353.** Though further authoritative research may be required, it is evident that the majority of child labour is not found in the export sector but rather in the production of goods and services for local consumption, notably in subsistence agriculture, the informal urban service sector and in domestic service. While the criteria defining the formal and informal economies may be relatively clear, the boundaries and overlaps between the two are not. There is greater appreciation, not least among multinational enterprises, that without transparency and effective supervision, subcontracted supply chains may lead from the first-tier export sector factory or plantation through workplaces with fewer protections into the informal economy of sweatshops and family-based production in which child labour may be engaged. To an extent, also, recognition has grown among international business, and in the global trade union movement, of the need to tackle child labour and violations of other fundamental rights throughout

the worldwide production palette of a particular internationally traded commodity rather than in only one country among the several engaged in its production.

**354.** Trade measures, in the widest sense, may be linked to trade preferences or import restrictions decided by governments or regional entities, or they may be the trading or CSR policies of multinational enterprises or global brands, or a combination of both. Governments and intergovernmental organizations, enterprises, multi-stakeholder initiatives, employers' and workers' organizations and various campaign groups may base their assessments of compliance with ratified ILO Conventions on the findings of the ILO's supervisory bodies, or they may rely on other sources of information, including commissioned research. The dependence of some producer countries on particular export markets has historically engendered responses of varying effect. Among those globally traded goods and commodities which have seen significant efforts to address child labour in their production are garments, sporting goods, carpets, cocoa, cut flowers, and tobacco. More recently, attention has also turned to cotton and sugar cane.

**355.** Unilateral trade measures may carry the risk of weakening the cooperative engagement that has emerged since the adoption of Convention No. 182 and the key shift, identified in the 2006 Global Report, from denial of the existence of child labour through acceptance and to action.<sup>58</sup> This positive international environment has encouraged global technical cooperation and fostered national alliances. Whether or not trade-related measures to discourage child labour in the export sector can be effective, tackling non-export-oriented child labour also requires room at the national level for open, constructive and collaborative tripartite policy debate and action.

**356.** There are a number of other options than import restrictions to discourage child labour through trade-related measures. In May 2009, the Government of the Netherlands announced an initiative whereby Dutch companies would no longer qualify for government assistance in making investments abroad unless they verifiably pledged that neither they nor their immediate suppliers employed children. The European Parliament and Commission continue to discuss measures that would place obligations on EU-based multinational enterprises to promote fundamental rights in their supply chains.

57. United Nations: *Voices of the vulnerable: The economic crisis from the ground up* (New York, 2009).

58. See M. Doepke and F. Zilibotti: *Do international standards contribute to the persistence of the child labour problem* (Bonn, Institute for the Study of Labor, June 2009).

**357.** Addressing the problem of child labour in value chains (all the way from raw materials to retailing, including transportation), and not simply in supply chains, would entail supporting importing companies to monitor working conditions throughout the value chain, including at the beginning where raw materials are produced to the retailing of the finished product. Efforts need to be targeted on those value chains where there is strong potential to generate an industry-wide effort to tackle child labour. In addition, support would have to be given to multinational enterprises, importers and their suppliers to detect child labour and to make the necessary adjustments to their value chains. These efforts need supporting by awareness-raising campaigns, by including consumers, and, in particular, by promoting the outreach of employers' and workers' organizations in the informal economy. Supporting effective labour inspection systems; enhancing the capacity of trade unions to provide a monitoring presence; periodic social auditing of the application of codes of labour practice; and building structures for effective industrial relations which anchor the rights provisions of such codes in collective agreements are, therefore, all important elements of any endeavour of this kind.

#### **The economic impact of climate change: Making the child labour case**

**358.** Climate change poses the greatest risk to our common future and to people in the poorest countries. Those in sub-Saharan Africa and in South Asia are the most vulnerable, with agricultural production projected to fall by up to 50 per cent in some countries if climate change is not checked. The International Food Policy Research Institute predicts that 25 million more children will go hungry by the

middle of this century, as climate change leads to food shortages. The issue of climate change and food security is so critical that it is moving to the centre of the development policy debate. In Brazil, a study supported by the DFID (United Kingdom) is examining the likely economic and social impacts of climate change, including a threatened reversal of progress on tackling inequality. Food shortages and the potential for rising conflict are also emerging as a concern.

**359.** In this context, relatively little attention has been paid to the social dimension of sustainable development, in particular, the implications for employment and decent work and child labour. The elimination of child labour can be part of "climate-smart development" but the case needs to be made *now*.

**360.** The likely impact of climate change on children is increasingly receiving attention.<sup>59</sup> According to the UNDP *Human Development Report (2007–08)*, climate change is already slowing progress towards the MDGs and increasing inequalities within and across countries. This has major implications for children. However, more is known about the impact of climate change on young children compared to older children. Gender issues also have a bearing on vulnerability – the workload of women and girls increases disproportionately during drought and the aftermath of natural disaster. A decline in access to education is closely associated with the breakdown of social and economic structures. One very common reason for non-attendance at school is the deterioration of child health. Loss of livelihoods and food security also prevent access to education for many children. Natural disasters may force children out of their homes, or even their countries. This forced migration could lead to many children being absorbed into child labour, including in its worst forms.

59. See UNICEF: *Climate change and children* (New York, Dec. 2007).







## PART IV

# Accelerating progress towards 2016

### Two scenarios

**361.** It is our responsibility to ensure that this is the last generation of children to be exploited as child labourers. In 2006, the ILO set an ambitious target and agenda to contribute to this end. Part III of this Report set out the gaps and challenges facing the international community as it attempts to honour its commitment to reach the 2016 target. Much like the MDGs, to which it is linked, prospects for the 2016 target can be envisaged in terms of two scenarios, or two roads. At the risk of simplification, these two scenarios can be termed the “crisis scenario” and the “breakthrough scenario” respectively.

**362.** In the first scenario, which if current global child labour trends and policy and programme responses continue, it is more likely that the 2016 goal will not be achieved. Failure to reach the 2008 target for NAPs in any meaningful sense is already a warning sign, as is the current slow progress on the MDGs, especially towards universal primary education. Under this scenario “business as usual” will prevail and governments and the international community will use the global economic crisis as a further excuse for spending cuts in key social areas and cutting back on foreign aid commitments.

**363.** However, in the second scenario, an opportunity could be seized out of the crisis (“don’t waste a good crisis”) to mobilize the necessary political will to prioritize the elimination of child labour as a wise investment in future development. To invest out of the crisis, the poverty of policy must first be remedied with a road map setting out how to get the world on the right but more difficult track to eliminating child labour. Ambition is everything. The fact is that eliminating child labour is possible and affordable, if the world wills it and fights for it. We

have to be bold. The future success of the worldwide movement against child labour will depend almost wholly on generating momentum.

**364.** Set out below is how this might be done, starting with very big picture elements of a global road map, before concluding with an agenda to guide the ILO in the coming years.

### Past agendas

**365.** First, it has to be acknowledged that child labour has been the subject of numerous attempts at global agenda-setting, starting with the international conferences held at Amsterdam and Oslo in 1997, as the most prominent. At the Oslo Conference, the ILO outlined nine steps to “targeting the intolerable” and the Conference adopted an “Agenda for Action”. Subsequently, the ILO standards adopted in 1999 on the worst forms of child labour offered further policy and programme guidance. The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children in 2002 put child labour in the context of the wider development agenda. Prior to this, an international meeting held in The Hague set out an 18-point agenda. A report by the Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research for the international trade union movement also set out its “Next Steps” in April 2002 and, in 2006, the founding Congress of the ITUC incorporated the aim of the elimination of child labour in the Confederation’s constitution and programme of action. In 2006, the ILO Governing Body adopted the ILO’s Global Action Plan.

**366.** Any future road map will need to take a more practical approach to moving forward that learns from the past, particularly from the follow-up to the Oslo Agenda for Action that was evaluated in



2004.<sup>1</sup> Insufficient accountability and follow-through were seen as key deficits here.

**367.** The road map, outlining a series of short- and medium-term steps the international community needs to take to get on track for the 2016 target, must however be viewed in the context of Article 8 of Convention No. 182, which states that:

Members shall take appropriate steps to assist one another in giving effect to the provisions of this Convention through enhanced international cooperation and/or assistance including support for social and economic development, poverty eradication programmes and universal education.

**368.** In setting out the steps which may potentially be contained in a future global road map, it is important to affirm two key principles. First, it is the spirit of international solidarity, embodied in Article 8 of Convention No. 182, that is central to delivering the commitments made in 2006. Any road map sets out the *obligations* of key stakeholders to the process. Recent South–South initiatives are an encouraging sign of this solidarity. Second, though every country is different, solutions to child labour lie ultimately with governments. Policy choices and not poverty are the critical factor.

### Strategic considerations for reaching the 2016 target

**369.** This Report has highlighted a number of important strategic considerations or themes that should inform the road map.

**370.** There is a need for greater *focusing* of international efforts on regional priorities and countries, both those furthest from international targets, such as sub-Saharan Africa, and those that need just that extra support to get there, such as some of the countries of Latin America. South Asia also deserves particular attention, given the significant absolute number of child labourers in the region.

**371.** More has to be done to arrive at the best possible cooperation linked to “One UN” and other mechanisms in which the total is greater than the sum of its parts. Given limited resources there is no excuse for duplication of efforts, let alone parallel or competitive ones. United Nations reform provides

an opportunity to pool the comparative advantages of the agencies to arrive at a more optimal response to the child labour problem. This is particularly the case in education and child labour where the strategic connection is so evident. New opportunities for partnership are opening up in agriculture and some of the worst forms of child labour. There is a particular need to have the ILO, UNICEF and UNESCO work more closely together to pool their complementary strengths.

**372.** In the current financial and economic climate, there is a need to devise new *innovative financial instruments* to mobilize the necessary funds to meet ambitious targets. This will require the necessary political leadership to push it through, but a momentum is growing. It has to be borne in mind that the global cost of eliminating child labour, estimated at US\$760 billion, is far outweighed by the economic benefits by a ratio of 6.7 to 1.<sup>2</sup> This is little compared with recent public expenditure for restoring the financial sector and fiscal stimulus packages.<sup>3</sup>

**373.** The ILO should enhance its advocacy efforts and demonstrate its intellectual leadership by launching an annual or biennial *World Report*, registering progress in the campaign against child labour with a dedicated team. This would be an important resource for the worldwide movement. Furthermore, this would affirm the traditional role of the ILO, first expressed by Albert Thomas, that it should monitor progress and provide a clearing house of experience. ILO leadership within the worldwide movement needs increasingly to be expressed in terms of knowledge development and sharing.

**374.** We need to urge the scaling up of what we know works, such as the abolition of school fees and the extension of cash transfer programmes to keep children in school. This could be part of an even greater formal integration of the global efforts to achieve universal education and the elimination of child labour including, perhaps, through a Heads of Agency Agreement. What is quite clear is that we will not eliminate child labour without free, compulsory and universal education up to the minimum age for entry into employment, nor will we ensure every child is in school unless we eliminate child labour. EFA estimates that US\$16 million more per year is required to reach the EFA goals. Current aid for basic education in the 46 countries covered amounts to just US\$2.7 billion.<sup>4</sup>

1. L. Bjerkan, C. Gironde: *Achievements and setbacks in the fight against child labour*, Assessment of the Oslo Conference on Child Labour October 1997, Fafo report 439 (Oslo, Fafo, 2004).

2. *ibid.*, p. 4.

3. The combined cost of the bank bailouts in the United States and United Kingdom alone has been over US\$10 trillion.

4. UN press release on the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, 19 Jan. 2010.

**375.** Engaging new global initiatives such as South–South cooperation to foster *child labour champions* can help counter the traditional top-down relationship in development action and help re-energize the worldwide movement.

**376.** Targeted supervision and promotion of ILO child labour standards should be linked to Decent Work Country Programmes. There is also a continuous need to strengthen the role of the social partners and develop alliances with the business community.

### Key steps for getting to 2016: Building global momentum

**377.** To help ensure accelerated progress towards the 2016 target the following key steps can be identified:

- Engage new political champions for the elimination of child labour cause, recruited from the countries of the South (Africa, Asia and Latin America) committed to providing technical and financial assistance in the spirit of Article 8 of Convention No. 182. Candidates for this “Article 8 Group” could include many of the early participants and beneficiaries of IPEC, such as Brazil, India, Indonesia and Turkey, among others. One particular focus of this bloc could be the promotion of the “child labour-free” concept to embrace economic sectors, communities, sub-national entities and nations.
- Ratification of Convention No. 182 by the end of 2010 from those member States still to do so, and a strategy adopted for accelerating progress towards universal ratification of Convention No. 138, which remains the ILO’s basic instrument on child labour.
- Strengthened collaboration with the social partners to advance the elimination of child labour through policy reform and sectoral, enterprise and workplace action.
- Strengthened collaboration with the Global March against Child Labour as the principal trade union/NGO alliance committed to ILO standards and the Decent Work Agenda, and greater efforts to promote cooperation within, and enhance the strength of, the civil society component of the worldwide movement.
- Develop further linkages between work on child labour and education, with a view to ensuring that global and national financing for education includes a specific focus on reaching children involved in child labour, inter alia, through a

Formal Heads of Agency Agreement between the World Bank, ILO, UNESCO and UNICEF.

- A Global Public–Private Partnership to Combat Child Labour with the establishment of a Special Fund to scale up child labour-related initiatives, such as conditional cash transfer schemes; and to strengthen labour administration and labour inspection.
- The consideration and piloting of new and innovative financial instruments for the elimination of child labour.
- A mass Global Advocacy and Mobilization Campaign using new social communication tools and child labour champions.
- Explore the feasibility of “Global Child Labour Ambassador(s)”, possibly on behalf of several agencies concerned (ILO, World Bank, UNICEF and UNESCO).

### Specific action for the ILO

**378.** Set out above is not a new action plan but elements of a road map to achieve the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016. The audience for this global road map is the international community. What of the ILO? It has an important leadership role, but clearly many of the proposals set out above lie beyond the capacity of the Organization, or any one organization or actor. However, the ILO can, over the next four years, act as a catalyst in many of these key areas to hasten the pace of progress towards the 2016 target. These key areas, which are strongly interconnected, comprise intellectual leadership, support to the worldwide movement, and strengthening the role of the social partners. Finally, there is a need to respond to important regional issues and priorities. Taken together, these elements provide a strategic agenda for the ILO and, in particular, IPEC over the next six years.

### Intellectual leadership

**379.** Part of the ILO vision regarding the elimination of child labour is that the Office is both at the service of, and should contribute to, the intellectual leadership of the ILO’s constituents and the wider worldwide movement. Moreover, this is where the ILO has a comparative advantage through its accumulated experience in data gathering, empirical and policy-oriented research, policy work and extensive practical experience obtained from its field projects. Utilizing these resources to become *the* knowledge

leader should increasingly become *the* focus of the ILO's child labour strategy. However, in Part III we examined a number of significant knowledge gaps. The ILO will therefore continue to develop methodologies to better capture some of the more neglected worst forms of child labour, such as forced and bonded labour and illicit activities. Furthermore, the development of impact assessment methodologies will also continue with a view to better explaining the programme and policy mix that provides the most effective, rapid and sustainable results in eliminating child labour and the ILO's contribution to positive national developments.

**380.** The costing tool developed on a pilot basis for Cambodia will be rolled out in a greater number of countries to obtain a more accurate picture of funding gaps that need to be filled to reach the 2016 target. The ILO will also need to develop new research areas related to the impact on child labour of the recent global and financial economic crisis, conflict within and among fragile States, and climate change. Finally, the value added of social dialogue in sector-based strategies aimed at eliminating child labour will also be demonstrated through action research.

**381.** Pursuing this course correction progressively, away from the implementation of narrowly focused direct-action projects towards knowledge development and dissemination and active collaboration to build sustainable capacity of the tripartite constituents and coherent national public policy, will necessarily require a reorientation of the resource mobilization strategy and an increased understanding and support of this strategic priority by donors.

### ***Support to the worldwide movement***

**382.** Intellectual leadership needs complementing with other contributions from the ILO if the worldwide movement against child labour is to be reinvigorated. The ILO will aim to expand its global *influence* through developing more effective advocacy tools, particularly through the scaling up of the World Day through an online campaign. Guidelines will be developed for the social partners on how they can more actively participate in World Day activities. Additionally, more emphasis is required to making the ILO *the* international clearing house of ideas and practice related to combating child labour.

**383.** Starting in 2010, a major new advocacy tool could be developed in the form of an annual or biennial *World Report* on child labour, combining an

update of global estimates and a review of progress towards the 2016 goal. Current global initiatives, such as The Hague Global Child Labour Conference, the G20 response to economic instability and climate change, and the emerging South–South movement, will provide important opportunities to put child labour more firmly on the international policy agenda. The United Nations reform process will also become an increasingly important child labour platform with the complete roll-out of “One UN” by 2012. In this context, there is a particular need to develop a closer complementary relationship with UNICEF and UNESCO in support of both national and international efforts to combat child labour.

**384.** Existing international partnerships and networks related to agriculture, mining, education, armed conflict, health, research and data collection, and trafficking, will be strengthened and complemented. IPEC will encourage the organic transition from participating country to child labour champion status, as part of its exit strategy, as indicated above. Finally, the ILO will continue to support South–South initiatives as a vehicle for the transmission of technical expertise and advocacy.

### ***Strengthening a trade union and business alliance against child labour***

**385.** The social partners have a vital role to play at all levels of the worldwide movement against child labour. Over the years, the ILO has invested considerable resources in capacity building for the social partners to enhance their role in child labour efforts. The Report has identified many opportunities, as well as challenges, that face workers' and employers' organizations in better responding to action needs in the child labour arena. An important investment in recent years has been the development of regional and global networks to underpin and sustain action. This will continue. Research on the specific impact of social dialogue will be an important contribution to demonstrating and enhancing the role of the social partners in efforts towards the elimination of child labour. A major focus over the next four years should be on how to meet the challenge of the informal economy and, in particular, agriculture as the largest child labour sector. Guidance will be provided in the use of Decent Work Country Programmes and the United Nations reform process as important vehicles for the social partners in their efforts against child labour.

### Regional issues and priorities

**386.** This Report argues for a greater strategic focus on Africa and South Asia. The last Global Report (2006) particularly called for a greater focus on Africa that was especially welcomed by the Governing Body in November 2006. The new global estimates suggest that the pace of progress in Africa remains worryingly slow. The “Focus Africa” strategy remains challenging. IPEC, as part of its “Focus Africa” strategy, will aim to implement its action plan for the continent with a focus on building political commitment towards the goal of eliminating child labour. In pursuit of this strategy, the ILO will work with its partners to establish an eminent advisory group and convene a high-level meeting in Africa, as contributions towards promoting an Africa-wide movement against child labour.

**387.** At the same time, South Asia cannot be ignored, given its population size and growth, including its absolute numbers of child labourers. The Report has argued that India in particular could, and should, play an enhanced role as a child labour champion on the world stage, commensurate with its growing global status. The expanding South–South movement can become an important vehicle for this role.

**388.** The 2006 Global Report drew attention to the considerable progress made in the Latin American region. This progress continues, albeit at a slower pace. However, important challenges remain, not least the need to continue the momentum and to respond more effectively to countries, communities and groups that have been left behind. In this context, there is a particular need for the ILO and its partners to better respond to the plight of indigenous peoples, which is an important drag on efforts to reduce inequality, exclusion and child labour in the region.