



UNITED NATIONS WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

Child Labour

- According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) 2013 statistics, the total number of children in child labour has declined by one-third from 2000 to 168 million.
- The ILO distinguishes between children working in three ways: children in employment, with a subset of children in labour, and an additional division of those below the minimum age or engaged in hazardous work.
- 85 million children are engaged in hazardous work, including working 24-hour shifts, drilling in gold mines, spraying toxic pesticides, picking up trash, and cutting down cocoa plants.
- ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment defines 13–15 as the minimum age for light work; 15 or the end of compulsory schooling as the minimum age for basic work; and 18 as the minimum age for hazardous work, with a slightly broader range for developing countries.
- Of the 168 million child labourers reported in 2013, 44 percent are aged 5-11; 28 percent are 12–14; and 28 percent are 15–17.
- 98 million child labourers (59 percent) work in agriculture; 54 million in services; and 12 million in industries.
- 17.2 million children are paid or unpaid workers in the home of a third party or employer. Of these, 11.2 million are engaged in child labour; 3.7 million in hazardous labour; 82.6 percent are ages 5–14; and 67.1 percent are girls.
- An additional 5.7 million children in “permissible work” need protection from abuse and to find decent work.
- Regionally, in Sub-Saharan Africa, one in five children are child labourers; in Asia, there are 77.7 million child labourers (down from 114 million in 2000).

- Child labour, which is linked to the demand for cheap, malleable, and docile workers, is dangerous to the health and development of children and violates the child's human rights.
- Poverty is the primary driver of child labour, followed by natural disasters — environmental, health, and economic.
- Most child labourers have no pay and have no schooling or must work and go to school.
- Child labour prevents children from acquiring the skills needed for a better future, perpetuates poverty, and affects national economies.
- Forms of child labour include bonded labour, camel jockeying, child domestic labour, commercial sexual exploitation and prostitution, drug couriership, child soldiering, and exploitation in slave-like conditions of children in the informal, industrial sector.
- Child labourers not only work in the country where they live, but are also transported across national borders and across continents.

ILO Initiatives Against Child Labour

- The ILO Conventions No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and No. 138 on the Minimum Age of Admission to Employment are its principle legal tools to fight child labour. Convention No. 182 has 180 ratifications; No. 138 has 168 ratifications.
- The ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) works with governments, workers, and employment organizations, NGOs, and others to strengthen their capacity to deal with child labour issues. The ILO's biggest programme, IPEC operates in 88 countries, offering technical assistance of \$61 million in 2008.

US Department of Labor Initiatives Against Child Labour

- The United States Department of Labor's 14th edition of "*Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*" reviews 140 countries and non-independent territories regarding progress in addressing child labour, particularly policies and programs to help children go to school, stay in school, and avoid exploitative work.
- 115 of 140 countries have made meaningful efforts to reduce child labour: 59 by adopting a strong legal framework; 54 by improving enforcement; 39 through better enforcement of laws; 62 by adopting better government policies; and 66 by extending social programs.

- The report found seven countries with no minimum age for child labour and eight countries below the minimum standard, as well as 12 countries with no minimum age for hazardous work and 24 below the international standard.
- The United States 2014 “List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor” includes 136 goods in 74 countries produced with child labour or forced child labour.
- The US Department of Labor CLEAR program has given grants for 20 years at the country level to assist in reducing child labour.

Children in human trafficking

- 11.4 million women and girls and 9.5 million men and boys are victims of trafficking each year, according to the UNODC 2014 report.
- 19 million are trafficked by private industries or enterprises.
- The annual profits from trafficking are \$150 billion worldwide, making trafficking one of the three most profitable illicit activities in the world.
- 40 percent of all trafficking victims worldwide are trafficked for labour; 53 percent for sexual exploitation.
- According to the 2014 UNODC report, 33 percent of all trafficking victims, **more than six million**, are children. 21 percent of trafficking victims are girls and 12 percent are boys – an overall increase of 5 percent since the UNODC 2007–2010 report.
- ILO Convention #182 stresses the elimination of child trafficking as a matter of urgency, no matter what a country’s level of development is.
- 26 countries have not signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
- The ILO is a founding member of UN.GIFT, the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, which strives to mobilize state and non-state actors to eradicate human trafficking by reducing the vulnerability of victims and the demand for exploitation in all its forms; ensuring adequate protection and support to those who fall victim; and supporting the efficient prosecution of criminals involved.

ILO Strategies to Reduce Child Labour

- developing statistical visibility and further enhancing knowledge on child domestic work to better capture child labour and youth employment in domestic work;
- awareness-raising and advocacy to transform social attitudes and to address the widespread acceptance of child labour in domestic work and the beliefs among employers and parents that these situations represent a protective and healthy environment for children – especially girls;
- promoting the ratification and implementation of the child labour Conventions No.138 and No. 182 and of Convention No. 189 concerning decent work for domestic workers;
- taking legislative and policy action to end child labour and to protect young workers in domestic work:
 - setting a clear minimum age for domestic workers not lower than that established for workers generally;
 - identifying types of hazardous domestic work for children;
 - regulating the working and living conditions of domestic workers, with special attention to the needs of young domestic workers. This should include strict limits on hours of work, the prohibition of night work, restrictions on work that is excessively demanding, and monitoring mechanisms on working and living conditions;
 - adoption of appropriate penalties;
 - provision of complaint mechanisms;
 - facilitation of access to justice and legal redress;
- effective labour inspection that is authorized by law to enter premises in order to enforce provisions applicable to domestic work;
- paying attention to child migrants vulnerability to abusive working conditions in domestic work;
- formalizing the employment relationship in domestic work through written contracts/ model employment contracts;
- enhancing the role of the social partners and extending freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining in domestic work, including the recognition to young domestic workers of legal working of the right to join or form unions;
- enlisting the support of employers of domestic workers;
- providing support to child domestic workers against child labour and for decent youth employment;
- supporting the worldwide movement against child labour;
- engaging with child domestic workers as agents for change;
- joining forces to promote decent work for all: Better together.