Human Rights, Social Justice and Child Labour

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Webinar Structure

- Children’s right to be free from child labour as a human right
- ILO Conventions and the implications for business
- Recent evidence, experience, trends
- ILO business resources for eliminating child labour
- Working with ILO
  - What is World Day against Child Labour?
  - Working with Child Labour Platform
The latest figures on child labour...

- **215 million** children involved in child labour
- **115 million** of these children are in hazardous work
- Types: 66% unpaid family work, 21% paid employment, 5% self-employment
- Sectors: 60% agriculture; 26% services; 7% in industry; overwhelmingly informal
- Estimated **7% - 15%** in global supply chains
- New global estimates covering 2008-2012 will be available in 2013
Child labour - a human rights issue

- Right to Education established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1946)

- Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: Based on eight ILO core Conventions and regarded as human rights which all ILO Member States are required to respect, promote and realise:
  - freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining
  - the elimination of forced or compulsory labour,
  - the abolition of child labour, and
  - the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

- The elimination of child labour will be achieved much more quickly and efficiently when the other rights are also respected.
Access to basic education

- **67 million** primary aged children are not enrolled in school
- **74 million children** of lower secondary school age are not enrolled in school
- Many children who are enrolled are not attending on a regular basis
- We need a new commitment to education for all children to the minimum age of employment
- We must tackle the barriers and improve access to quality education
There need to be essential social services for all (e.g. education, health)

Legal Framework in accordance with ILO Conventions

Social protection strategies which assist poor families to access essential services

Decent work for adults so they can choose school not work for their children
ILO Conventions on Child Labour

- **Minimum Age Convention (No. 138)**
  - A minimum age for employment not less than the age of finishing compulsory education
  - In any case not be less than 15 years; for developing countries, initially 14 years (though many have ratified stating 15 years)
  - National laws may permit 13-15 year olds in light work which does not interfere with school attendance, nor harmful to a child’s health or development

- **Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182)**
  - Prohibition of the **worst forms of child labour** as a matter of urgency
    - Slavery or slavery like conditions
    - Prostitution or pornography
    - Use of child for illicit activities
    - Work that harms the health, safety, and morals
Minimum ages: more than one!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in years</th>
<th>Work excluded from minimum age legislation***</th>
<th>Light work</th>
<th>Non-hazardous work</th>
<th>WFCL: hazardous work</th>
<th>Other worst forms of child labour</th>
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**Shaded area = child labour for abolition**

* The minimum age for admission to employment or work is determined by national legislation and can be set at 14, 15 or 16 years.

** The minimum age at which light work is permissible can be set at 12 or 13 years.

*** For example, household chores, work in family undertakings and work undertaken as part of education.
Role of Business in the Fight against Child Labour

● A major force for progress by
  ■ Providing opportunities for decent work, propelling economic growth
  ■ Adhering to national and int’l law
  ■ Paying fair share of taxes
  ■ Eschewing corruption

● But significant risks persist
Continuing Challenges:

- How to tackle child labour in supply chains that involve the informal economy, small holdings, household production, piece rate production etc-- and how to demonstrate progress

- How to marry capacity strengthening efforts with compliance programmes and improve their impact on rights

- How to engage effectively with governments to improve enforcement, social service provision, and with workers’ and employers’ organizations

- How to bring effective community based monitoring models to scale and sustain them
Continuing Challenges...

- Long term remediation means tackling root causes beyond the lifetime of “projects”
- Private sector voluntary initiatives have had positive impact on working conditions for workers in global supply chains, especially on safety and health
- However, less evidence of impact on “rights-based issues” such as FoA, discrimination, child labour: need for impact evaluation
- Ensuring business practices live up to commitments on child labour and other worker rights
Possible responses

- **Codes of Conduct**
  - Aligned with ILO Conventions?
  - Do they extend to supply chain? Below first tier where risk is often greatest?

- **Labelling/certification initiatives**
  - Rugmark/Goodweave initiative example
  - Sometimes adapt environmental or organic standards, however no way to test a final good for “labour content”
  - Sufficient rigor to provide a real assurance?

- **Fairtrade**
  - By paying small producers higher prices, can alleviate poverty, a root cause of child labour
  - Wage labourers and their children do not necessarily benefit
  - How to improve conditions across the board in “regular” commodities
Possible responses

• Multistakeholder Initiatives
  ■ Companies, trade unions, civil society
  ■ Industry wide effort, common vision
  ■ International Cocoa Initiative
  ■ ECLT

• Child Labour Platform
  ■ ILO, UN Global Compact
  ■ Cross-sectoral
  ■ Engaging with government: the missing element to achieve scale?
Possible responses

- **Changes to business practices**
  - Centralized production: soccer ball stitching
  - Incentives and disincentives: sugar cane in Brazil, El Salvador
  - Rubber plantations in Liberia and collective bargaining
Child Labour Monitoring Systems

- Regular, repeated visits to worksites, schools
- To identify child labourers, at-risk children and assess conditions in all forms of CL
- Triggers protection, referral to appropriate services
- Follow up to ensure a good outcome and that other children do not take the place of removed children

- Main features
  - Linked to government inspection, services at district and national level
  - Community-based
  - Alliance of partners
  - Companies can play a role but do not replace government functions

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
Recent Evidence: Child labour elimination in India

- Marked improvements in Knitwear, Fireworks, Handicrafts, Stone quarries, Brick kilns
- Domestic and export markets
- Government intervention in education, school meals critical, but also sanctions against employers
- Handicrafts: centralization of production for easier monitoring
- Higher urban wages, higher aspirations of parents: education as an elevator
- Rather than projects what is needed are multi-stakeholder programmes to implement existing child labour legislation, involving communities in design/implementation
Recent Experience: Tackling child labour in cocoa growing communities

- Partnership with 8 companies in chocolate and cocoa industry
- Ghana and Cote d’Ivoire
- Coordination and capacity strengthening around community-based child labour monitoring
- Building exit strategy from outset: national CLMS rolled out in cocoa communities to carry on after project’s end
- Integrated, area-based approach to avoid displacement
- Partnerships to improve productivity and livelihoods, organization, OSH
- Initial results: national CLM system tools available; OSH manual developed; 1,600 birth records secured
Recent Experience: Policy development and mobilization in Malawi

- Partnership with ECLT: largest labour conference in Malawi history
- Tripartite plus National Conference adopts Action Plan against child labour in agriculture-
- Tobacco, sugar, tea and “neglected sectors” of fishing, livestock
- New commitments from Government, industry, employers’ and workers’ organizations, civil society
- At a moment of fundamental market and policy reform, adding a rights based focus to ensure greater efficiencies and productivity benefit the most vulnerable in supply chains: child labourers
Tools: Step By Step Guide for Employers

8 Key Steps serve as a guiding framework: Each enterprise challenges unique

Elements of a child labour strategy

1. Analysing the situation
2. Designing the strategy (with implementation schedule)
3. Three immediate actions: hiring, hazards and hours
4. Supporting child and household welfare
5. Eliminating the need for child labour in my business
6. Eliminating child labour in the supply chain
7. Using a code of conduct
8. Auditing, monitoring and certification
Tools: “How to” Guidebook

- Guidebook on How to do Business with respect for Children’s Right to be free from Child Labour
- Forthcoming tool that builds upon existing materials
- ILO Conventions, UN Framework on Business and Human Rights, Guiding Principles
- Focus on supply chain due diligence, “knowing and showing”
- Evidence based, practical advice on management systems
- Involving IOE and company assessments
Positive trends in the business response to child labour (1)

- Increased engagement with government
- Increased use of integrated, areas based approaches
- Increased linkage between support for improved productivity in supply chains and respect for labour rights
- Use of field technicians to raise awareness and train on OSH, support community-based child labour monitoring
- Conversion of child labour to youth employment among 15-17s through protection, OSH
Positive trends in the business response to child labour (2)

- Increased public commitments to sustainable production

- Increased acceptance that causing, contributing to child labour, or being linked to it through business relationships, is antithetical to sustainable production: changing business culture

- Some consumer demand—but enough to pay for all of the progress needed? Other drivers needed
How You can help: World Day against Child Labour - June 12

- Since 2000 on June 12
- Annual centerpiece of awareness raising and social mobilization campaign
- Year round: 12 to 12 campaign, focus of research
- Activities around the globe
- Employers play an important role
How you can help: World Day against Child Labour

- Mark the World Day against Child Labour at headquarters and other offices and retail outlets. Include photo exhibitions of child labour scenes, and distribution of World Day materials (posters etc.) Materials are available at www.ilo.org/ChildLabourWorldDay

- Organize a forum to discuss child labour, especially the role of business in addressing the problem. ILO can provide examples of successful initiatives and help design for you.

- Highlight World Day against Child Labour on business websites, linking to the World Day website.

- Include articles on World Day in corporate newsletters or magazines.

- Encourage offices and business partners in other countries to contact local ILO-IPEC offices, which coordinate World Day activities with employers and workers organizations and governments in close to 80 countries
How you can help: Child Labour Platform

- Initiative of UN Global Compact Labour Working Group, IPEC, and Leading Companies in the fight against Child Labour
- Initiative aims to:
  - Foster exchange among companies, governments, workers organizations and civil society: what works, what does not
  - Identify obstacles and ways to overcome them
  - Catalyse collective approaches
  - Build the global knowledge base on child labour in supply chains

www.ilo.org
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
For more information

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- ILO Helpdesk for Business on international labour standards [www.ilo.org/business](http://www.ilo.org/business)

- [The UN Global Compact Labour Principles, A Guide for Business](http://www.ilo.org)
  Githa Roelans: roelans@ilo.org