

Basic Information



International Labour Organization

SCREATCH

Stop Child Labour

Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media



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Basic Information

This booklet is part of the SCREAM - Stop Child Labour Education Pack. SCREAM stands for Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media. The pack was produced in 2002 as part of IPEC/ILO Project INT/99/M06/ITA funded by the Government of Italy.

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Aim: Provide background information on child labour and a basic understanding of the complexity of the issues surrounding the problem.



Gain: Stimulates interest and curiosity among young people and provokes an emotional response by using hard-hitting statistics, information and visual media to portray child labourers in their environments.

Time frame

1 double or 2 single teaching sessions

Motivation

According to recent estimates by the ILO¹, there are over 245 million child labourers below the age of 18 in the world. Approximately 179 million of these children are engaged in the worst forms of child labour.

Together, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific account for more than 83 per cent of total child employment for the 5-to-14 age group. Many child labourers are deprived of an education and suffer physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Some will be physically handicapped or even die before reaching adulthood as a direct result of their labour. Others will be emotionally scarred for life.



1 Source:

A future without child labour, Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, ILO, 2002



For many, child labour is an invisible phenomenon, invisible because children work in hidden occupations or invisible because society is only too willing to turn a blind eye. The ILO is channelling considerable resources into trying to assess the full extent of child labour across the globe. But such research takes time and careful implementation and the nature of some of the more hazardous forms of child labour, for example, child prostitution, child soldiers and domestic workers, makes the work of researchers very difficult. However, making child labourers visible will help strip society of its indifference to their plight. Making child labourers visible is what these modules are all about.

Education and tackling poverty are the major components in sustainable action to eliminate child labour. In 2000, just over 13 per cent of all children between the ages of 10 and 14 were working instead of going to school. Yet, every year that a child attends school dramatically reduces the chance that he or she will end up in economic servitude. Education is every child's right, but it should be of good quality and freely available or else it will remain unattainable and inappropriate for those who need it most.



This module provides some basic facts and figures that will assist you in "setting the scene" for the young people in your group. When passing on some of these statistics, it is important to remind young people that they are based on

Note for the user

It is a good idea to implement this module very early on in the process, either first or in tandem with the Collage module. The two modules will support each other in building up an image of child labour in the minds of the young people. They will also provide a solid basis on which to conduct some or all of the other modules.

At a later stage, should you decide to do so, we suggest you implement the Research and Information module, which encourages young people to look for more details on the issue of child labour for themselves. Therefore, in order not to pre-empt their work nor dampen their enthusiasm to learn more about the issue, this module deals only with the more significant statistics that are widely used by leading organizations, governments and the media.

the best information available, but that more is being done to uncover the real faces and numbers behind child labour. The idea is to begin to piece together the framework and the mind-set in which the group can build its platform on which to launch the project.

Preparation

This module requires little in the way of preparation, as all the information you'll need is provided in the annexes. The exercise seeks to stimulate general discussion within the group, and your main task will be to maintain the energy of this discussion and the young people's interest. This will involve interjecting information from the module and then managing the questions and discussion around these. It may be useful to use this initial exercise to set the tone of the project, to let the group know that this project might be something a little out of the ordinary as far as education normally goes.



Note for the user

If you are able to contact IPEC headquarters in Geneva (see User's Guide for contact details) and have access to a video playback machine, request a copy of their 10-minute video entitled "Combating Child Labour: The Global Cause". This video is an effective visual introduction to the issue of child labour for young people. While it provides some background information on IPEC, it also contains footage of children in hazardous forms of labour. It is hard to turn one's back on the message conveyed by these images.

A number of other organizations around the world have developed video materials on the issue of child exploitation, such as bonded or slave labour. Contact the local or national offices of these organizations to ask if you can borrow one of these videos. In some countries, there are development/human rights centres which have libraries and lending services for such projects. Visit the nearest one to you and see what video and other resources are available that will help you in implementing the project. In addition, some government departments have information services that the public can consult. Try every information source possible but stay focused on the issue of child labour.

You will probably want to go through the statistics and background information in the annexes and familiarize yourself with them before the classroom session. They will also help you decide which discussion themes you want to pursue.

What you'll need



You need very few materials for this module, which is primarily an exercise in encouraging group discussion on child labour.



- ✓ Facts and figures contained in the annexes.
- ✓ Black/white board or flipchart.
- ✓ Paper, pencils and/or pens for the group to take notes.
- ✓ Television and video playback, if available and if you have video material.
- ✓ IPEC's Photo Catalogue on CD-ROM included in this education pack contains hundreds of images of child labour.
- ✓ Any publications or other documentation that you may have been able to borrow that have good images of child labour.

Getting started



Sit the group in a circle, semi-circle or horseshoe configuration around you. If the young people are sitting behind desks or tables, break this barrier down: it is a classic education setting and this is not a classic pedagogical project. Move all the desks to one side of the room and ask the group to arrange their chairs or sit on the floor around you. In some cases, this process alone may be enough to stimulate a bit of excitement and interest. After all, this is a discussion exercise and this is the most suitable room set-up for it – everyone can face each other and establish eye contact and it allows you to move freely

among them without having to negotiate your way around furniture obstacles.

Try and be involved in how the group arranges itself in position. Experience shows in some countries that the natural order of things will be that boys congregate in one group and girls in another, unless, of course, you are dealing with a single sex group. Close friends will also try and sit next to each other. Again, as part of an implicit statement that this project is all about challenges and change, insist on a different arrangement, for example, male/female/male/female, and so on, around the group. See if you cannot also split up cliques who tend to stick together. It is not about making individuals feel uncomfortable or destabilized, but it is about beginning to create a more cohesive and dynamic group.

Group organization



Activity one: What is child labour?

1 teaching session or half a double session

Begin your session by asking a very simple question "What do you understand by the term 'child labour'? What does it mean to you?" Encourage individuals to tell you what they already know about child labour, what they have heard from others, learned from television or read in the papers, perhaps even experienced themselves in some form or other. Your objective is to find out what they really know at this very early stage. Jot the various points they come up with on a white/blackboard or flipchart.

If things are slow starting off, you could stimulate the discussion by asking a few questions:

- What age of child are we thinking of when we talk about child labour?
- Would it be boys or girls or both?
- What sort of work are we talking about?
- Where does child labour exist? Which parts of the world, countries, regions?
- Are child labourers paid?





Note for the user

This initial discussion should not be exhaustive. There will be time for more detailed debates on child labour later in the project and as you conduct the other modules. You may not want to use all of the information included in this module. It does not matter. There is more than enough, so just use what you think is relevant for your own situation. This is not a competition to see who knows what, but a dynamic method of introducing the topic.

- Are they well treated?
- Do they live at home?
- Do they go to school?

This is just an attempt to set the ball rolling to begin to help them to sift through their knowledge and to assess how much they have ever thought about this issue before and how much they care.

If you have the equipment and a video to show the group by way of introduction, then do so after this discussion draws to a close. While it is showing, stand to one side of the room and keep a close eye on how individuals react to the video.

If you are in a country where child labour is prevalent or you are working with young people who might have experienced child labour themselves, this module will set a different challenge. If they have a reasonable amount of knowledge about what child labour might be in their country and immediate environment, then explore this area fully with them. Keep note of the main points of the discussion on whatever equipment you might have available. This exercise will boost the group's confidence as they are on solid ground and are talking about something of which they have experience. However, once you have pushed the discussion as far as it can go, begin to ask them what they know of child labour in other countries around the world. Ask the same type of questions as above and shake them up a bit. Now they will have to move from a subject in which they are secure, to thinking about something they had never thought of before, i.e., that children elsewhere around the world might be in a worse situation or one just as bad.

In the annexes to this module are a series of statistics and general information on child labour. Rather than just copy them and hand them out to your group, use these to help along general discussions. For example, if one particular avenue of discussion is beginning to slow down and filter out, then take it off in another direction by saying something like "How young do you think children are who work as domestic servants?" Somebody might guess, but

then lead the group into a discussion on this point, again referring to statistics if you like. For example, how many children work as child domestics in Indonesia, what sort of hours they work, what sort of abuses they suffer, and so on. Use these statistics with focus – do not just read out the entire list, that is definitely not the purpose. Use them to develop discussions within the group.

You should not even attempt to try and use all the statistics. A long list is given here but that is for you to choose from. If you use too many, you run the risk of confusing the group who will not be able to cope with so much information. You don't want to lose them at such an early stage – so keep it simple and keep it few.

Activity two: Causes and consequences of child labour

30–35 minutes

Having been through a general initial discussion, depending on the mood and inclination of the group, decide if you would like to move on now to some more specific issues in the area of child labour. Remember, do not overload the group. Judge their mood and body language. You can tell if they are beginning to turn off the subject; leave it if that is the case. These are discussion themes that you can always come back to at different stages of the project.

Annex 2 provides some basic information about child labour that will help you stimulate the debate. As the discussion progresses, refer to these notes to ensure that the main points are covered. Compare them with what the individuals in your group might come up with themselves. Make those comparisons to the group and develop a discussion on why these situations exist and what can be done to deal with them.

Why does child labour exist?



Discussion themes



This theme gives you the opportunity to introduce a discussion in the group on why child labour is a global issue. One of the key areas of debate for young people is the “why” of it all and this could be an interesting area for them, particularly if you are in a country where child labour is not prevalent. If you are in a country where child labour exists, it will also be interesting to hear what young people have to say about why they think they or their peers work. It is possible that some of the young people in your group do work, no matter where you are in the world. This could be a starting point for your discussion. Ask how many in the group work, find out what they do and what their working hours are. Ask how much they are paid and what they feel about working. And ask them why they work in the first place. What is it that pushes them to look for a job? Are the reasons similar to those who toil in what is termed “child labour”? What’s the difference?

What makes children “desirable” employees?

Child labour also exists because some employers actively want to employ children instead of adults. Ask the group why they think this might be. Why should a responsible adult encourage children to work for them? What reasons might they have to employ children? Ask the group if they believe that all employers might even think of the dangers to children. Do they see children as anything other than workers? Do they believe that all children deserve a free education? Do they see the harm in what they are doing?

This area of debate raises some very interesting questions and should stimulate some good discussion. For example, perhaps these employers were themselves child labourers and therefore do not agree that it might harm children. This raises the issues of tradition and culture. Then, of course, it is inevitable that the philosophical debate of right and wrong may raise its head. Some employers may just not care. Their sole objective in life may be to make as much money as possible and never mind the consequences. How does one deal with this mind-set?

Is child labour a bad thing?

Some members of the group may not think that child labour is such a bad thing. There are many who argue that it is a necessary evil and that if children didn't work, they and their families would starve. Get the group to discuss why child labour should be stopped and whether they think all children have the fundamental right to a childhood whatever their circumstances, the right to play, to go to school and to enjoy the love of their families.

How does child labour harm children?

This theme gives you the opportunity to introduce a discussion in the group on the way in which labour, especially hazardous labour, can harm children. No matter if the group includes young people who work or not, it is important that they realize the dangers of certain jobs and why they need to be protected from these. Young people sometimes believe that they are "invincible", especially in industrialized countries. They may think that nothing can harm them and that work is not such a big deal. However, young people can be their own worst enemy. They do not understand the medium- or long-term harmful effects of certain forms of labour.

Annex 2 provides details of how different forms of labour can harm children. Introduce your discussion to the group by asking them how they think work can hurt or disturb children. Annex 3 contains a table showing some of the most hazardous forms of labour and how they harm children in specific ways. Refer back to the different forms of work that children might do and ask them what might be the effects of these different forms of labour on the children. Keep note of comments on the white/blackboard or flipchart. As your group begins to get into the discussion, they will begin to realize just what is at stake for child labourers.



Note for the user

Depending on your set-up, time, space and inclination, you could break the group into sub-groups for the more in-depth discussions. You could give a theme to each group and ask them to discuss it and then report back to the full group. In this way, everyone would benefit from the results of the various discussions. You could give each sub-group the same theme. It does not matter. Indeed, you might prefer to keep everyone in the full group for the whole of this module. It is completely flexible and entirely up to you.

Do's and don'ts



- Do accentuate the positive in everything. Anything that an individual has to say is important and deserves to be heard and acknowledged.
- Do encourage everyone to be involved in the discussions. Keep an eye out for those who are reticent or indifferent about joining in. Ask them for their opinions and comments.
- Do use positive and dynamic body language during discussions. Move among the group and be animated yourself in your comments.
- Do use the facts and figures and general information in the annexes to this module to support the discussion.
- Don't over-extend the discussions. Try and gauge a good balance to the group involvement. If energy and interest flag, be prepared to wrap up the module relatively quickly. It is important that you do not "lose" your group and begin to bore them. Keep the discussions going for as long as wide interest is there, not just because one or two individuals are still interested. That interest will remain and you can always return to points of discussion included in this module.
- Do try and persuade individuals to lead discussions as well. If someone shows an interest in a subject, encourage that person to maybe lead in your place. These modules aim to empower young people and build their self-confidence, so do things slightly out of the ordinary and build confidence, trust and respect.
- Do allow banter, dialogue, teasing, jokes, humour and competitiveness if it can be controlled.
- Don't put individuals under pressure or in a situation where you might undermine their self-confidence. If someone is not ready to join in a discussion and really does not have an opinion or want to speak, then respect that and move on to others who do. Individuals will join in their own good time and some need longer than others. Early days.

Final discussion

10–15 minutes

When you decide to draw the discussions to a close, bring the group together for a quiet summing up and general chat. This could well be your first module with the group and it might have been a bit of a hard experience for some, maybe all of them. They will have been exposed to some facts and figures that are not easy for adults to accept, let alone young people. Child labour is a truly awful way of exploiting the most vulnerable and it can lead to severe trauma, injury, slow mental development, and even death. This is a harsh introduction to the real world of millions of children who are at risk.



The group will now have a better understanding of what child labour is and why it exists. You will not have gone into significant detail on every aspect, but this module is only designed to begin peeling back some of the layers of invisibility that surround child labour.

Some of the discussions will have been pretty heavy, especially for adolescents who are often far more wrapped up in themselves and their immediate problems. This is why it is so important that you manage these sessions carefully and sensitively. Don't allow individuals to be turned off, making them unwilling to participate in any further activities. Use this final session to allow them to express themselves in any way they like. They don't have to stay on the issue of child labour if they don't want to. Allow them to move their minds laterally and bring in other subjects that they may feel are related. This lateral movement is an interesting process as it gives you an insight into how their minds are working and what they really feel and see as a result of the earlier debates. Just let it all flow and go with it. Sometimes it is better not to impose too much control, but rather allow them to express themselves and see where it ends up.

Allowing them this level of freedom will build their confidence and their trust in you. It is important that they feel that they can express themselves freely and fully within the group and to you. They should feel that you are listening to them and responding to what they have to say. It begins to put together the platform of empowerment upon which you will all build as a group in this project.

Accentuate the message of hope and the need to surround everything you do and say as a group with hope. Child labour *can* be eliminated, that is the point. It is not an unrealistic goal.



Evaluation and follow-up

There are no real measurable indicators for this module. The main objective is to set the project and process in motion and to begin to stimulate broad interest in the issue of child labour. You are looking for thought processes, expressions of emotion, sentiment and understanding. Specifically, you have to set the project and process in context.

Your main indicator for this exercise will be your own perceived level of attention and involvement of the group. You should be very honest with yourself as you think about this later. These discussions can be quite interesting and a lot of fun for young people.

This module is a simple but effective means of opening young people's eyes and ears to the problem of child labour – whether you are in a country where it exists or not. They should take a very important lesson away from this module. They will begin to realize how terrible child labour really is and the harm and damage it causes. It should motivate them to want to know more and to want to do something, whatever they can, to help.

The module begins to open young minds to the level of abuse and exploitation that still exists throughout the world – in industrialized and developing countries. The reason that child labour has flourished over the centuries and continues to do so is because for too long the abuse has been kept under wraps; it has been hidden away in the hope that it won't be discovered. As a result, governments, authorities, employers and society in general have not really been under much pressure to do anything about it. This is changing slowly but surely and the more people are aware of the problem and protest about it, the more pressure there will be for something to be done.

Once you have completed this module to your satisfaction, move on to a new module. We recommend that the next module you tackle is the one entitled "Collage", which will introduce a bit of fun and light-heartedness into the process.



Annex 1

Facts and figures ²

- There are 245.5 million child labourers below the age of 18 in the world. Of these, more than 186 million are aged 5 to 14, and more than 59 million are aged 15 to 17.
- Approximately 170 million of these child labourers are working in hazardous conditions. Of these, more than 111 million are aged 5 to 14, and more than 59 million are aged 15 to 17.
- Approximately 179 million are working in the worst forms of child labour.
- In addition, it is estimated that more than 8 million of these children are involved in the unconditional worst forms of child labour. This includes nearly 6 million in forced and bonded labour, 0.3 million in armed conflict, nearly 2 million in prostitution and pornography and just over half a million in illicit activities.
- Around 1.2 million children are victims of trafficking.
- It is estimated that there are nearly 352 million children between the ages of 5 to 17 who are economically active world-wide.
- Around 211 million of economically active children are aged 5 to 14 and nearly 141 million are aged 15 to 17.
- On average, one child in every six aged 5 to 17 can be classed as a child labourer.
- Around 60 per cent of the 211 million – just over 127 million –working children are in Asia and the Pacific.
- Nearly 23 per cent – 48 million – are in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Just over 6 per cent – 13.4 million – are in North Africa and the Middle East.
- Around 8 per cent – about 17.4 million – are in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest relative number of working children.
- Most children working in rural areas are engaged in agriculture.

2 Sources:

A future without child labour, Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, ILO, 2002

Targeting the intolerable: A new international Convention to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, ILO, 1999

- In Africa, children as young as 8 or 9 descend 30 metres into the ground and spend 7 or 8 hours a day in gemstone mines digging through narrow passages without ventilation or proper lighting and with earth frequently caving in.
- In the gold mines of Peru, children as young as 6 work long hours in extremely precarious conditions, without any protection against injury and illness. Accidents are common and children suffer from respiratory diseases.
- Child labourers work long and hard hours.
- Child domestic work is one of the most common and traditional forms of child labour. The practice, especially in the case of girls, is quite extensive as many cultures continue to view girls' work in the household as an essential part of their upbringing.
- Families in urban areas often recruit children from rural villages through family, friends or contacts and while most child domestics come from extremely poor families, many have been abandoned, are orphaned or come from single parent families.
- In many cases and especially when they have been abandoned or are orphaned, the child domestic is completely dependent on the employing family. The situation often becomes one akin to slavery. Children report that they are made to eat left-overs, receive little or no pay, sleep on the floor, endure physical or sexual abuse, are isolated from their immediate family and rarely attend school or play with other children their own age.
- The majority of child domestic workers tend to be between 12 and 17 years old, but some surveys have identified children as young as 5 or 6 years in domestic servitude.
- The hours of work of child domestic workers are usually long; 15 or 16 hours a day is not uncommon.
- The number of children under the age of 18 who have been coerced or induced, either by the State or by non-state military groups, to take up arms as child soldiers or to serve as porters, messengers, cooks and sex slaves is generally thought to be in the range of 300,000, with 120,000 of those in Africa alone. These children are reported to be as young as 8 years old.
- More children work in rural than in urban areas, although this situation is likely to change in many African countries with the rapid urbanisation process currently under way.
- A large majority of working children are unpaid family workers, especially in rural areas. Those who are paid receive well below normal rates and their wages fluctuate greatly depending on their age and gender – girls are paid much less than boys.

- Many children also work during the evening or night. Girls employed in domestic service often have to spend the night in their employer's household and may be subjected to various abuses, including sexual.
- Children are sometimes sold outright for a sum of money – slavery is not dead.
- Sometimes landlords buy child workers from their tenants or, in a variant of the system, labour "contractors" pay an advance sum to rural families in order to put their children to work – in agriculture, domestic service, the sex industry, the carpet and textile industries, quarrying and brick-making. Child labour of this type has long been reported from South and South-East Asia and West Africa, and despite vigorous official denial of its existence it is both common and well documented.
- One of the most common forms of bondage is family bondage, where children work to help pay off a loan or other obligation incurred by the family. The lenders, who are often landlords, usually manipulate the situation in such a way that it is difficult or impossible for the family to pay off its debt, thereby assuring essentially free labour indefinitely. A family may thus remain bonded through generations, with children replacing their aged or infirm parents.
- Perhaps most widespread of all are informal bondage agreements under which impoverished parents surrender their children to outsiders simply to work in exchange for their upkeep, on the assumption that they will be better provided for as unpaid servants in an affluent household than they could be in their own families.
- Children are often tricked by one means or another into different forms of commercial sexual exploitation, such as prostitution and child pornography.
- Commercial sexual exploitation is one of the most brutal forms of violence against children. Child victims are subjected to one of the most intolerable forms of child labour because they suffer extreme physical, psycho-social and emotional abuse. It results in life-long and in many cases, life-threatening consequences for the future development of children.
- Children in commercial sexual exploitation are at risk of early pregnancy, maternal mortality and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Case studies and testimonies of child victims speak of a trauma so deep that the child is often unable to re-enter or return to a normal way of life. Many children die before they reach adulthood.
- Commercial sexual exploitation of boys is reported to be increasing.
- Transition countries (Central and Eastern Europe) are witnessing a huge upsurge in the problem of trafficking of girls and women.
- Every year that a child attends school dramatically reduces the chance that he or she will end up working.

Annex 2

Causes and consequences of child labour

Lack of access to education

There are many reasons why children work and do not go to school. Basic education in most countries is not free and is not always available for all children. Where schools are available, the quality of education can be poor and the content not relevant. In situations where education is not affordable or parents see no value in education, children are sent to work, rather than to school. This particularly affects children in poverty and those belonging to the culturally and socially disadvantaged and excluded groups. As a result, they easily become victims of child labour exploitation.

Poverty

Indeed, poverty emerges as the most compelling reason why children work. Poor households need the money, and children commonly contribute around 20 to 25 per cent (one quarter) of family income. Since poor households spend the bulk of their income on food, it is clear that the income provided by working children is critical to their survival. It cannot be said, however, that poverty necessarily *causes* child labour. The picture varies. In many poor households, at least some of the children are singled out to attend school. Similarly, there are regions in poor countries where child labour is extensively practised while in other equally poor regions it is not. Kerala state in India, for example, though poor, has virtually abolished child labour. Countries may be equally poor and yet have relatively high or relatively low levels of child labour.

Tradition

In certain areas, it is traditional for the children to follow in their parents' footsteps. If the family has a tradition of engaging in a hazardous occupation such as leather tanning, it is likely that the children will be caught up in the same process. In industries where payment is on a piece-rate basis, children are frequently summoned to "help" other members of the family, a common practice in construction and home-based work.

Specific vulnerability

Child labour in hazardous conditions is most prevalent in the most vulnerable families – families whose low income allows them little margin to cope with the injury or illness of an adult or the disruption resulting from abandonment or divorce. Such families may often be in debt, or under the threat of it – factors which are often at the root of hazardous and bonded child labour, children being in effect sold to pay off the family debt.

Demand for child labour

Employers may prefer to hire children because they are “cheaper” than their adult counterparts and also form a largely docile work-force that will not seek to organize itself for protection and support. Part of the solution, therefore, is to target those who profit from the economic exploitation of children, bring a halt to their practices and oblige them to contribute towards the rehabilitation and support of those affected, the children and their families.

Research on the causes of child labour tends to concentrate on the supply factors, chiefly because of the common view that poverty is the driving force. But the demand for child labour also needs to be taken into account. Why do employers hire child labour? The most common explanations are the lower cost and the irreplaceable skills afforded by children: the “nimble fingers” argument. In fact, both these claims are often unsustainable as has been proved by the research of the ILO.

ILO field research has concluded that the “nimble fingers” argument is entirely fallacious in several hazardous industries, including carpet-making, glass manufacturing, the mining of slate, limestone and mosaic chips, lock-making and gem polishing. In all these industries, most of the activities performed by children are also performed by adults working alongside them. In fact, children are more often than not consigned to unskilled work. Even in the hand-knotting of carpets, which calls for considerable dexterity, a study of over 2,000 weavers found that children were no more skilled than adults. Indeed, some of the finest carpets are woven by adults. If a child’s “nimble fingers” are not essential in such demanding work, it is difficult to imagine in which trades the claim might be valid.

The “economic irreplaceability” argument also collapses under close scrutiny. It is true that in most cases children are paid less than adults, but these savings are not as obvious or compelling as is claimed. The ILO has found that, as a portion of the final price of carpets or bangles to the customer,

any labour-cost savings realized through the employment of children are surprisingly small – less than 5 per cent for bangles and between 5 and 10 per cent for carpets. At this level, sellers and buyers could between them easily absorb the added cost of hiring adults only. Given this situation, why do these industries hire children? The answer lies in where the gains occur. For example, in the carpet industry, it is the loom owners who supervise the weaving who benefit directly, for they are usually poor, small contractors who can double their meagre income by using child labour. This could easily be overcome by putting a small levy on the consumer price and targeting payments to the contractors.

The implications are that children are not economically necessary for the carpet industry to survive in an extremely competitive market. The study raises serious doubts that any industry at all need depend on child labour in order to compete. It remains true, nevertheless, that in a free global market abolishing child labour in one country could have the effect of simply transferring business to others that still employ it. Therefore, international action to discourage the use of child labour needs to encompass all the major producers.

In the light of the above findings, a major reason for hiring children seems to be non-economic. Basically, children are easier to manage because they are less aware of their rights, less troublesome, more compliant, more trustworthy and less likely to absent themselves from work. Make sure that these points come through very clearly in your group discussions and then ask the group for their reactions to these points. How do they feel about these statements? Are they outraged, angry, indifferent, disbelieving? It seems so callous to use children in such a terrible fashion, surely your group must feel something about this.

Impact of work on children

Because children differ from adults in their physiological and psychological make-up, they are more susceptible to and more adversely affected by specific work hazards than adults. Because they are not yet matured mentally, they are less aware of the potential risks involved in the work place.

The effects of hazardous working conditions on children's health and development can be devastating. The impact of physically strenuous work, such as carrying heavy loads or being forced to adopt unnatural positions at work can permanently distort or disable growing bodies. There is evidence that children suffer more readily from chemical hazards and radiation than do adults, and that they have much less resistance to disease.

Children are also much more vulnerable than adults to physical, sexual and emotional abuse and suffer more devastating psychological damage from living and working in an environment in which they are denigrated or oppressed. This is particularly true in the case of the very young and girls. Girls are more likely to:

- begin working at an earlier age than boys;
- be paid less than boys for the same work;
- be concentrated in sectors and areas that are characterized by low pay and long hours;
- be working in industries which are hidden and unregulated, making them more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse;
- be concentrated in industries which pose excessive dangers to their health, safety and welfare;
- be either excluded from education or suffer the triple burden of housework, school work and economic work.

Occupational health and safety experts consider agriculture – the sector which has the highest percentage of child labour – to be among the most dangerous of occupations. Climatic exposure, work that is too heavy for young bodies, and accidents, such as cuts from sharpened tools, are some of the hazards children face. Modern agricultural methods bring further hazards in their wake, for example, the use of toxic chemicals and motorized equipment. Many children are killed by tractors overturning, or by trucks and heavy wagons brought into the fields for transport.

In many countries, the hazards and risks to health are compounded by poor access to health facilities and education, poor housing and sanitation and the inadequate diet of rural workers. Protective legislation is limited in agriculture. In many countries, the places where children work are excluded from legislation as family undertakings. Even when there is legal protection, enforcement of child labour legislation is difficult given the geographically dispersed nature of the agricultural industry.

Why stop child labour?

- Child labour is work carried out to the detriment and endangerment of the child in violation of international law and national legislation.
- It includes work and activities that are mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children.

- It is work that either deprives them of schooling or requires them to assume the multiple burdens of schooling and work.
- It can also be work that enslaves them and separates them from their families.
- It condemns children and their families to a downward spiral of poverty and deprivation.
- Being tender physically and immature in mind and spirit, children are inevitably at greater risk in the work place than their adult counterparts.
- National surveys have found that a very high proportion of children are either physically injured or fall ill while working. Some of these children may never work again.
- In sectors where machinery and equipment is involved, such as agriculture, the potential for injury is much higher. Agriculture, mining and construction are very high-risk industries for child labourers.

Annex 3

Examples of hazardous occupations

Occupation/ Industry	Main tasks	Hazards	Possible consequences
MINING	Underground digging; carrying heavy loads	Exposure to harmful dusts, gas, fumes, extreme humidity and temperature levels; awkward working positions (bending, kneeling, lying); cave-ins	Respiratory diseases that can develop into silicosis, pulmonary fibrosis, asbestosis, emphysema; musculo-skeletal disorders; fractures and death from falls/cave-ins
BRICK-MAKING	Processing of clay (extraction, crushing, grinding, screening and mixing)	Exposure to silicate, lead and carbon monoxide; excessive carrying of weights; burns from ovens; accident-provoking equipment	Musculo-skeletal deformation; injury
AGRICULTURE	Working with machinery, agrochemicals, animals; picking crops and loading	Unsafe machinery; hazardous substances (insecticides, herbicides); heavy lifting; extreme temperatures	Chemical poisoning (chronic and acute); cuts and other bodily injuries; diseases
CARPET WEAVING	Weaving hand-knotted carpets on a loom	Inhalation of wool dust contaminated with fungal spores; poor (squatting) work posture; poor lighting; poor ventilation; hazardous chemicals	Respiratory diseases; musculo-skeletal diseases; eye strain and defective vision at premature age; chemical poisoning; aggravation of non-occupational diseases
CONSTRUCTION WORK	Digging earth; carrying loads; breaking stones or rocks; shovelling sand and cement; metal work	Being struck by falling objects; stepping on sharp objects; falling from heights; exposure to dust, heat and noise; heavy lifting	Health impairments from noise, vibration and exposure to harmful substances; incapacitation through accidents and injury such as falls

Occupation/ Industry	Main tasks	Hazards	Possible consequences
TANNERY	Tanning and preserving hides and skins	Exposure to corrosive chemicals and bacterial contamination of the hides	Anthracosis, dermatitis and fungal infection
DEEP-SEA FISHING	Diving to depths of up to 60 metres to attach nets to coral reefs	Exposure to high atmospheric pressure; attacks by carnivorous and poisonous fish; congested and unsanitary conditions	Decompression illness (rupture of ear drums); death or injury; gastro-intestinal and other communicable diseases
GLASS FACTORY	Drawing molten glass, carrying molten loams	Radiant heat and thermal stress; noxious fumes; silica dust; stepping on or handling hot broken glass	Accidental trauma; eye injuries; heat stress; respiratory diseases; serious burns and cuts
MATCHES AND FIREWORKS	Mixing hot (steaming) chemicals, making matchsticks and stuffing cracker powder into fireworks	Exposure to hazardous chemicals; fire and explosions	Synergistic effects of chemical intoxications; respiratory diseases; burns; injuries and death from explosions
SCAVENGING	Demeaning, unsanitary work; reclaiming usable material from garbage heaps including dangerous waste from hospitals and chemical plants, often with bare hands	Cuts from glass/metal; exposure to hazardous substances; inhaling stench from putrefied matter; infestation by flies; temptation to eat leftover food	Cuts resulting in death from tetanus; chemical poisoning and risk of contracting or carrying infectious diseases; food poisoning; burns (from build-up of methane gas and explosions)
SLATE MAKING	Carrying heavy loads; making pencils and slates	Effects of carrying heavy loads; exposure to siliceous dust	Musculo-skeletal diseases; lung diseases and premature incapacitation

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