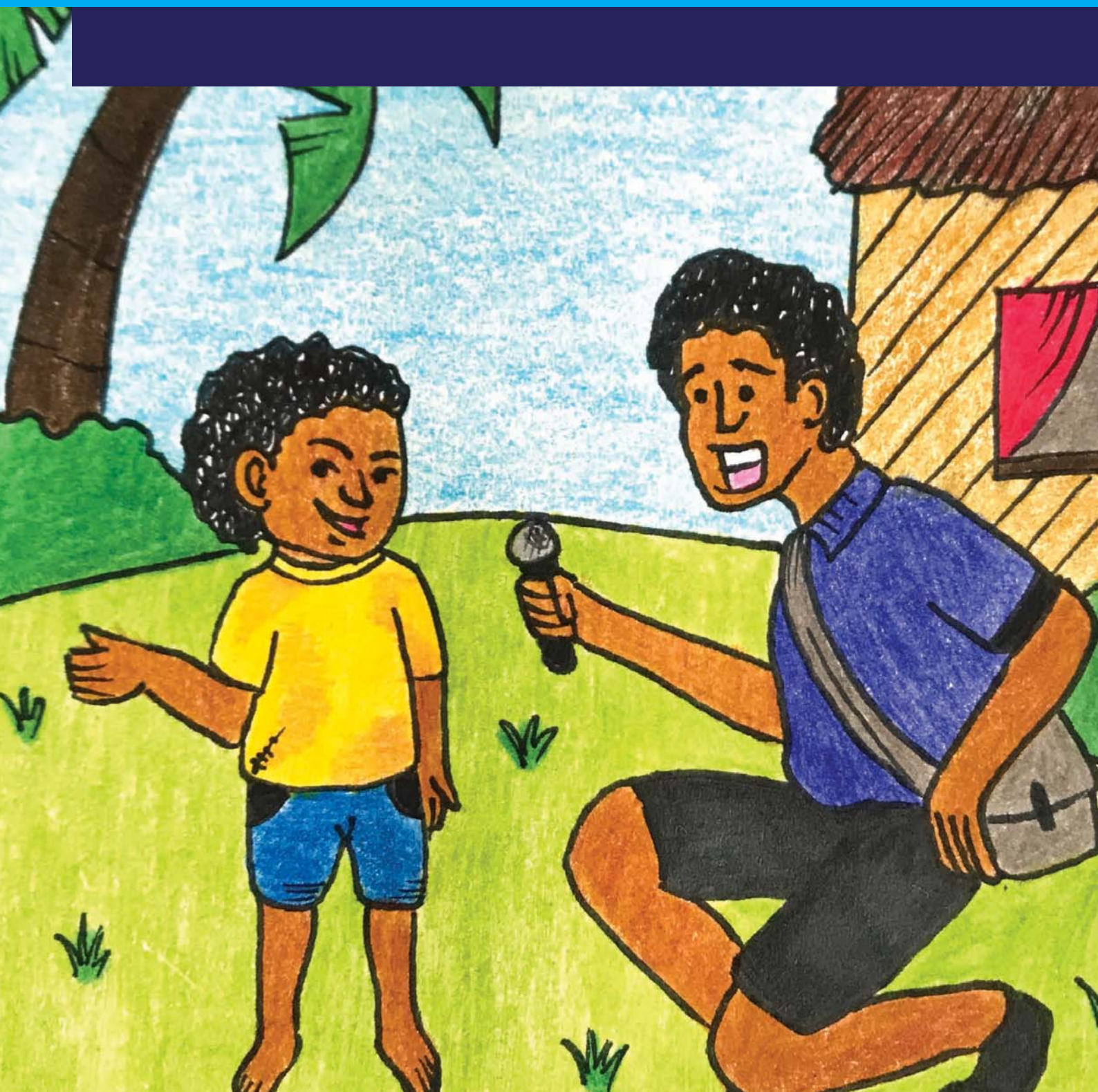
International Labour Organization

unicef for every child

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR JOURNALISTS

FIGHTING CHILD LABOUR AND PROMOTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN FIJI'S MEDIA



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First published 2022

ISBN: 9789220370322 (print)
9789220370339 (web PDF)

Printed in Fiji

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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CSO's	Civil Society Organisations
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
ERA	Employment Relations Act 2007
FBOs	Faith Based Organisations
FWCC	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
FRCS	Fiji Red Cross Society
ILO	International Labour Orgamisation
ISO	International Standardisation of Organisation
MAP 16	Project Measurement, Awareness and Policy Engagement Project to accelerate action against child labour and forced labour
MIDA	Media Industry Development Act 2010
MEHA	Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts
MEPIR	Ministry of Employment, Productivity, and Industrial Relations
MHMS	Ministry of Health and Medical Services
MOWCPA	Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAC	Violence Against Children

FOREWORD

Journalists play a significant role in creating public awareness and influencing public opinion. ILO and UNICEF recognize media professionals as critical partners in child protection and the fight against child labour. Through the work of journalists, there is enormous potential to promote changes in social norms, attitudes, and behaviours that are harmful to children, and to drive support for policy reforms toward greater protection of children at all levels.

On the other hand, media reporting, even with the best intentions, may cause harm, especially to the most vulnerable children and families, if confidentiality is not maintained or inappropriate language or images are used. Reporting on child protection issues, including child labour, has its unique challenges, in that it can place children at risk of reprisals, stigmatization, humiliation, or rejection by their local communities. A lack of understanding of children's rights and child protection can lead to further harm to children. A lack of skills in communicating with children may also reactivate the pain of traumatic events experienced by child abuse survivors.

This Guidebook aims to encourage and support journalists to report on child labour and other forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children in Fiji in a manner that is ethical, professional, and sensitive to the needs and rights of children while serving the public interest. It provides tips for interviewing children, writing stories about children, and presenting the stories to the public in a way that does not expose children to additional risks or harm.

The Guidebook also intends to help journalists become advocates for children's right to protection, and to be powerful allies in voicing issues affecting the wellbeing of children in Fiji and in bringing about positive change in the lives of the children, their families and communities.The effects of child abuse, neglect and exploitation, including child labour, reach far beyond the individual child and family to affect the entire community and society. Journalists can make a unique contribution to discourse about these issues across society by helping the public understand their underlying causes and long-term consequences, as well as what can and is being done to improve the situation. In particular, they can highlight the importance of prevention and early intervention with families at risk, and spotlight stories of overcoming abuse, ongoing efforts to support child survivors, and promising initiatives to end child labour and violence against children.

The Guidebook contains resources to help journalists gain the confidence to take on these roles. It provides definitions, useful contacts and examples of child protection issues in Fiji, their drivers and negative impacts on children and society. It includes information on relevant international standards and national legislation, reporting and referral mechanisms, services and programmes to prevent and respond to child abuse, exploitation and child labour, and other initiatives to strengthen the child protection system in Fiji.

We hope this Guidebook will inspire journalists to become key influencers with government, employers, trade unions, large corporations and micro, small and medium enterprises, and other groups, for the protection of children from all forms of harm and in particular, the elimination of child labour. We hope the Guidebook will equip journalists to become behaviour change agents, who can engage parents and communities, including traditional and faith-based leaders, to be involved in efforts to prevent and protect children against all forms of violence and harmful practices.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This publication is a joint collaboration between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) under the ILO MAP 16 Project funded by the United States Department of Labor.

The publication was authored by Margaret Wise, ILO Consultant, and supervised by Victoria Yee, ILO Pacific Senior Programme Assistant. Charles Autheman, ILO Consultant, provided technical inputs in putting the guide together. The copy editing was undertaken by John Maloy, ILO Consultant and the illustrations were developed by a local artist Wayne Luciano. Special thanks go to Bharati Pflug, ILO Senior Specialist on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and Peter Blumel, ILO Senior Communications Officer, for their support towards the development of the Media Guide, as well as to Matin Karimli, ILO Director for Pacific Island Countries for his overall support.

Technical inputs, comments and editing support were also provided by UNICEF Child Protection Specialists Ana Janet Sunga, Katherine Hodges and Salote Kaimacuata, and consultants Marcela Nunez and Stephanie Delaney, and UNICEF Communications Chief, Cate Heinrich. Graphic design and layout was provided by UNICEF Senior Communications Associate, Adi Wong.

Funding for this publication was partially provided by the United States Department of Labor under cooperative agreement number IL-30147-16-75-K-11. One hundred per cent of the total costs of the MAP16 project are financed with federal funds, for a total of US$ 22,400,000. Project funds for activities in Fiji total US$ 150,000.

UNICEF Pacific also provided funding support for the printing and dissemination of the publication and training of journalists on the Guide.

This material does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of Labor, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government.

Introduction

On 4 August 2020, following ratification by Tonga, the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), became the first international labour standard to achieve universal ratification.

This historical event is a vivid reminder of the global consensus around the importance of eradicating child labour, further reinforced by the decision of the United Nations to mark 2021 as the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour.[1]

At the same time, the latest child labour trends are fuelling concern about our collective capacity to meet the Sustainable Development Goal target of ending child labour by 2025. [2] The latest estimates on child labour, published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF in 2021,[3] indicate that child labour is on the rise for the first time since the beginning of the century, with 160 million children involved in child labour globally – an increase of 8.4 million in the last four years. This already worrying situation does not factor in the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which presumably will lead to more children being pushed into child labour.

Age of a Child

In this guide, the term 'child' refers to any individual under the age of 18, as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Fiji, a pathfinder country in the global effort against child labour

Since ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1993, Fiji has systematically reviewed and updated relevant laws and policies to meet its international and moral obligations towards Fijian children.

The international coalition Alliance 8.7 has been set up to accelerate efforts related to the elimination of child labour, forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking.[4] Countries can engage in an Alliance 8.7 process to become 'pathfinder countries', and in doing so show their commitment to fighting child labour domestically. This is the case for Fiji, which volunteered to be a pathfinder country in 2019.

However, Fiji was soon affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which decimated the tourism industry after the first case was detected in 2020. Almost two years later, the pandemic has caused a socio-economic crisis that has worsened the existing vulnerabilities of children, not only from marginalized communities, but in many households in the country.[5]

The link between increased poverty and child labour continues in Fiji, often leading to children being used to “earn” for the family, and the crisis may further drive the risk of child labour, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, physical abuse and sexual abuse of children.[6]

In this era of unprecedented challenges there is a responsibility for journalists and communicators to reach out and establish a dialogue that will elevate issues affecting children, so they are reported on adequately and accurately, and not forgotten in public discourse.

Media as a voice

The objective of this guide is to provide journalists and communicators with a better understanding of child protection concerns, promote regular and quality media coverage on topics related to child labour, and help practitioners avoid mistakes that may lead to physical or psychological harm towards children. The guide does not profess to be a replacement for academic sources, and does notclaim to cover all areas concerning the treatment of child labour or children’s rights in the media.

This guide draws on past initiatives, including the ***ILO’s A Practical Guide for Journalists: Fighting Child Labour and Promoting Children’s Rights in Myanmar’s Media***, two guides developed by the ILO and ANDI in Brazil for journalists and communicators on the worst forms of child labour,[7] and the ILO media toolkit on forced labour and fair recruitment. [8] It will help you answer the following questions:

- How can you give a voice to children in (or at risk of) exploitation, while being sensitive to the peculiarities of each case and applying the ethical, moral and professional approaches needed in covering such stories?
- How can you tell these stories to bring about positive changes in policies, laws, business practices and the lives of thousands of people?
- How can you best prepare for an interview, considering all the relevant questions and sensitivities when interviews are conducted, notably to protect the identity of the child and his relatives?
- How can you make sure that the story is clear and concise, that the relevant sources have been involved and that you are not sensationalizing the issue?


2 × 2 = 4
2 × 4 = 8
What do you think of your school

Chapter 1. Ethics and the media

1.1. The media and children's rights

Journalists and communicators can be great advocates for children by promoting and protecting the rights of the child. However, in carrying out their duty to educate and inform the wider society on issues affecting children, journalists and communicators also need to seriously consider the impact of their work.

Some stories, words and images can insult, embarrass or shame. Others can exacerbate problems, put sources in danger and expose children to the risk of abuse, both from internal and external influences.

It is therefore critical that journalists and communicators uphold the highest standards in regard to the treatment of children and the protection of their rights.

1.2. Principles of ethical journalism

The practice of journalism is grounded in ethics – principles that must always be followed. These principles are not specific to covering child protection issues, but they should be applied by anyone producing content on such matters. The Ethical Journalism Network, a coalition of journalists, editors, press owners and media support groups from across the globe, has drafted a list of five core principles of ethical journalism:[9]

1. Truth and accuracy

Journalists cannot always guarantee 'truth', but getting the facts right is the cardinal principle of journalism. Journalists should always strive for accuracy, give all the relevant facts they have and ensure that these facts have been checked. When journalists cannot corroborate information, they should say so.

2. Independence

Journalists must be independent voices; they should not act, formally or informally, on behalf of special interests, whether political, corporate or cultural. Journalists should declare to their editors – or to the audience – any of their political affiliations, financial arrangements or other personal information that might constitute a conflict of interest.

3. Fairness and impartiality

Most stories have at least two sides. While there is no obligation to present every side in every piece, stories should be balanced and add context. Objectivity is not always possible, and may not always be desirable (in the face, for example, of brutality or inhumanity), but impartial reporting builds trust and confidence.

4. Humanity

Journalists should do no harm. What is published or broadcast can put children and their families in danger. Journalists should be aware of the impact of their words and images on the lives of others.

5. Accountability

A sure sign of professionalism and responsible journalism is the ability to hold oneself accountable. When journalists commit errors, they must correct them, and expressions of regret must be sincere, not cynical. Journalists must listen to the concerns of their audience. Journalists may not change what readers write or say, but they will always provide remedies when they are unfair.

1.3. Making ethics real

Ethical principles can seem quite theoretical, yet they can be integrated into every step of journalists' and communicators' work. The following important attitudes, based on the ethical principles above, will help in protecting children and promoting their rights:

Being accurate

Report as fact only information that you have checked and double-checked and know to be true. Everything else is a claim, and should be attributed. That means writing that someone says or claims something, rather than that it is true.

Take care to report claims accurately. Do not draw conclusions that are not justified by what you have been told.

Report according to the limits of your ability. If you are covering a sensitive issue, report on what you can see, or at least what you are told by those around you.

Leave the analysis, interpretation and speculation to others who have other sources and can see the bigger picture.

Being alert

Analyse all information you are given on a situation.

Consider recording the conversations you have with anyone involved in a sensitive story you are covering. Later, they may be pressured to deny your reports, and you may need to present your recordings and transcripts to a court.

Being balanced

Actively seek out the views of all parties. If they will not speak to you, or you cannot reach them, look for an authoritative source of their position, such as their official website or a news agency.

If you fail, explain why: “For such and such reason, it has not been possible to reach the following source of information.”

Do not act as a judge, advocate or human rights activist. Leave this to the experts who can brief you and give you analysis.

Being impartial

Do not promote the views of one side of the story over another.

Do not use language (usually adjectives) to describe how good (strong, heroic, determined, rightful) one side is, or how terrible (evil, weak, cowardly) the other side is.

Recognize that words used widely and without intended prejudice in one community can cause offence in another. Would you like to be described as a ‘tribal’ or ‘aboriginal’?

Show respect to other people. Find out how they themselves prefer to be described.
Recognize when your own bias appears in your reporting, and remove it.

Chapter 2. Child protection concerns: Abuse, neglect and exploitation

2.1. Understanding abuse, neglect and exploitation

There are many different ways children can be abused, neglected and exploited (sometimes also referred to as 'violence against children', or VAC). Internationally, violence against children is divided into four categories: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. These are frequently labelled collectively as 'child abuse'.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse occurs when someone physically injures a child, for example, by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing bodily harm. In extreme cases, physical abuse can result in death. Physical abuse can also occur: where a child is required to carry out work that exceeds the capacity of the child's growing body; where children are forced to adopt uncomfortable positions for a long time (such as crouching or bending over); or where the environment is dangerous to a child's health (for example, extreme heat or using chemicals). The Fiji Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) (2021) found that 80.5 per cent of children aged 1 to 14 had experienced physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the month prior to the survey.[10]

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet another person's needs. Emotional abuse can involve causing a child to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at or threatened.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all forms of mistreatment of children, especially where the perpetrator is known to the child, as this is a betrayal of trust.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse means involving a child in sexual activities. This can be both 'contact' and 'non-contact' abuse. Examples of contact sexual abuse include sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, kissing and sexual fondling. Non-contact abuse includes showing children pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) or taking pornographic images of them.


BUS STOP
TAXI

Some adults who wish to abuse children sexually may spend time developing a relationship with a child and give them gifts or favourable treatment (a process known as 'grooming'). Abusers can also use threats and bribery to coerce a child into participating in sexual activities. It is important to note that children cannot consent to their sexual abuse. This means that even if a child agrees to sex, if they are below the age of consent, it is still considered sexual abuse.

Although difficult to quantify actual figures, child sexual abuse is believed to be widespread in Fiji. In one study, 16 per cent of Fijian women reported that they had experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15 years old.[11] Most victims knew or were related to the perpetrators. Between 2019 and 2020, 469 cases of child sexual abuse were reported to the Department of Social Welfare. The most commonly reported perpetrator of sexual abuse was a relative of the child victim.[12] It is acknowledged that these reported cases likely represent only a fraction of actual incidents of child abuse.

Neglect

Neglect occurs when adults fail to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs to the extent that it could result in the impairment of the child's health or development. For example, the failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing; failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care. Neglect can also include failing to give love and affection. Of the 3,171 reported child abuse cases under the Child Welfare Act in Fiji between 2019 and 2020, 939 (29.6 per cent) were for child neglect, the most common type of reported child abuse during that period. The reported child neglect cases were predominantly a lack of supervision of the child resulting in injury, ingesting harmful chemicals, burns, medical or educational neglect of the child.[13]

Exploitation

Exploitation involves one or more of the main four categories of abuse, but with the added dimension that the abuser or another person benefits from the abuse. For example, a child involved in child labour may be physically abused and neglected. At the same time, their 'employer' gains some financial advantage by not having to pay wages to an adult employee.

In Fiji, a significant number of child labour cases were recorded by child labour officers in 2019, with 41 violations found out of 3,562 inspections, mostly involving children working in family retail establishments during school hours.[14]

MICS (2021) also provides data on child labour: 17 per cent of children aged 5–17 reported being engaged in some form of work detrimental to their education or overall development.[15]

Bullying

Although abuse, neglect and exploitation are typically considered as acts perpetrated by adults against children, it should be remembered that children can cause harm to other children, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse. This can include physical violence, intimidation, isolation and sexual harassment. Children can also exploit other children, for example, acting as 'recruiters' for involvement in illegal activities. Where a child abuses another child, this is frequently referred to as 'bullying'.

As well as bullying in the real world, children are also increasingly bullied online, including through social media, due to increased access to mobile phones and the internet.[16] There are reports that children have self-harmed and committed suicide because of cyber-bullying. Fights among school children in public places have also been linked to disagreements over social media posts.[17]

2.2. Vulnerabilities of children and drivers of abuse

Violence against children can occur in all settings[18] – at home, at school, in the community, in care and justice institutions. It can also happen online. Children may be vulnerable and at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation for numerous reasons, including the environment that the child lives in; the situation in the family/community; and the age, development and capacities of the child.

It can be very easy to stereotype and stigmatize children and families/communities. While it is true that factors such as poverty, lack of education and family breakdown can lead to children becoming abused, neglected and exploited, this is because these factors make it harder to cope with life. Not all low-income families abuse their children – and not all children from 'broken homes' become criminals.

Of course, in circumstances where it is difficult to meet daily needs, many children may be forced to drop out of school to help support their families and thus be vulnerable to exploitation. By doing so, children compromise their education. Thus, it is difficult to escape the cycle of poverty, as they are less able to secure well-paid employment when they are adults and have their own families.

Where children grow up in homes where parents use kava, alcohol or drugs, and where there are other problems such as domestic violence, they may be vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation. This is partly because their parents may be preoccupied with their own situations and concerns rather than meeting their children's needs.

To develop to their maximum potential and grow into a thriving adult, children need more than just their basic needs (such as food, clothing and shelter) to be met. Children also need to feel safe, loved, respected and valued. Exposure to family violence has been found to have a significant negative impact on children's emotional well-being and development, and on the nature of the adulthood (and relationships) that these children go on to experience. For example, according to the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, one of the risk factors for becoming a man who perpetuates violence is being regularly beaten as a child. Similarly, children with mothers who have experienced violence were twice as likely as other children to either drop out of school or to repeat years.[19]

Although many traditional values and social norms protect children – such as grandparents and other family members looking after children while their parents are absent – other practices can be harmful. For example, where physical violence is tolerated or accepted in the community, or where there are strong taboos regarding keeping what happens in the family private, this can place children at increased risk of violence or prevent them from receiving assistance.

Children may also engage in behaviours that are risky, such as drug-taking, or activities that can have negative consequences on their lives, for example, conflicts with the police or inappropriate use of the internet.

Reliable, comprehensive data regarding child protection incidents are difficult to obtain because many situations are not recognized as abuse, neglect or exploitation, or are considered part of everyday life. There may be other barriers to children speaking out about their difficulties, including fear or shame or a belief that nobody will believe their story. Children may also feel incredibly loyal to those who abuse them (especially if they are family members or known to them), or may think they are to blame.

A particular concern during the COVID-19 pandemic (but also the case for other infectious disease outbreaks and in emergencies) is that children are used for domestic work, and the risk of abuse increases because of the additional stress on families and communities. This is made worse as children are 'out of sight' and 'behind closed doors', and thus are not identified as needing assistance or are unable to access protection services.[20]

2.3. Addressing child protection concerns

The Government of Fiji, ILO and UNICEF, together with other key partners working to eradicate the abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, recognize that a multi-agency, holistic response is necessary to stop abuse and to address its root causes. This has two linked but distinct aspects:

1. **Response actions** include: identifying cases of actual/suspected child abuse, neglect and exploitation; reporting cases to the relevant authorities; ensuring the safety of children; and providing support and assistance to the child (and their family) to stop the abuse, help the child to recover from their experiences and minimize the chances of the situation happening again. This may include the provision of alternative care (such as foster care) and the criminal investigation of cases.
2. **Preventative actions** focus on reducing or eliminating the likelihood of abuse by providing support and assistance to families where children are especially vulnerable (known as 'early intervention' – discussed later in this chapter), and working with communities to address challenges that increase the risk to children.

Key responsibilities for protecting children[21]

As identified in Fiji's Inter-agency Guidelines on Child Abuse and Neglect (2020), "protecting children is everyone's responsibility, and anyone who is aware of a child who may be in need of care and protection has an ethical obligation to report the matter to the Department of Social Welfare, a Child Welfare Officer, a police officer, or other mandatory reporter so that action can be taken to protect the child." Children may also report and seek help for themselves or for another child.

It is essential for journalists and communicators reporting on child protection issues to publicize information that highlights the importance of people referring cases where they are concerned about the safety and well-being of a child, and how to do this in a responsible way. It is also critical that children understand they have a right to be protected and to know how to reach out for support. Everyone, including journalists, should raise theirs concerns to someone who can assess if the child needs support.
The easiest way for anyone, including a child, to report their concerns about the care or protection of a child is to contact the 24-hour **Toll-Free National Child Helpline (1325) of the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation**.

In addition, under the **Child Welfare Act 2010**, specified professionals have a legal obligation to report to the Department of Social Welfare if they suspect that a child has been, is being or is likely to be harmed. This mandatory requirement includes Welfare Officers, teachers, police, Medical Officers, and legal practitioners.

At the government level, there are six primary agencies responsible for child protection, prevention and response:

1. Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation (Department of Social Welfare)
2. Fiji Police Force
3. Ministry of Health and Medical Services
4. Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts
5. Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations
6. Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs

Although all these agencies have their own mandates (such as the Police to investigate crimes and arrest perpetrators, and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services to provide medical care and treatment), the Department of Social Welfare is responsible for managing cases that are referred in order to ensure that there is an appropriate and timely response. This includes coordinating the actions of other agencies and service providers.

More than 1,700 cases of concern were referred to the Department of Social Welfare in 2020, the highest number of cases since 2012 when disaggregated data capture began.[22]

In addition to these main government agencies, advocacy and support are also provided by other government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), faith-based organizations and civil society organizations. Communities can also play a part in protecting children, for example, by identifying cases and establishing ways of assisting children and families in their community.

Collectively, this wide range of stakeholders forms the national child protection system for response and prevention.

Enhancing the national child protection system

As the lead agency responsible for the care and protection of children, the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation and partners support the Government of Fiji to strengthen the multi-sector child protection system to prevent and respond to child neglect, abuse and exploitation.

A critical element of enhancing the child protection system is developing the capacity of those working with vulnerable families, such as social workers/Child Welfare Officers, health professionals, teachers, police, and court officers, to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to work with children in need of care and protection, as well as with their families and communities.

Other activities to be undertaken include drafting child protection legislation and developing policies and procedures, such as the aforementioned Inter-agency Guidelines for Child Abuse and Neglect (2020), which strengthen coordination and collaboration between stakeholders and establish standards. An integral component of any child protection system is the provision of quality support for children and families, including early intervention and family strengthening, and response services such as counselling and alternative care.

Early intervention and family strengthening

Early intervention and family strengthening (also known as 'family support') is an umbrella term that relates to a range of services and assistance designed primarily to support families and prevent child abuse. Typically, such services are targeted at families where children are assessed as being particularly vulnerable. This may be an individual child, such as a child with a disability, or groups of children, for example, children under eight years old or from a marginalized community. However, early intervention and family strengthening services can also be used as part of a response in a case of abuse (depending on the circumstances) to reduce risk and the chances of the abuse recurring in the future.

Early intervention and family strengthening services include: helping parents to manage stress; improving parents' knowledge of child development and parenting skills; addressing negative dynamics within the family (such as domestic/intimate partner violence); and providing concrete support, such as assistance with housing and meeting basic needs and access to services. For example, support can be provided to get children – including those who were out of school before COVID-19 because they were working – back into school. **Social protection and other cash/benefit assistance schemes** can help families avoid sending their children to work. Social protection plays a fundamental role in addressing the social, economic and health challenges that families face – challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated.

In Fiji, the Government is working towards promoting social inclusion, reducing inequality and alleviating poverty through programmes to support children and other vulnerable groups, including:

- Poverty Benefit Scheme – assists over 25,000 households.
- Care and Protection Allowance Program – helps over 8,000 households.
- Food vouchers and the Expanded Food Voucher for Rural Pregnant Women.

New assistance programmes introduced as a response to COIVD-19 include free sanitary pads for students.

Developing children's capacities

While young children are almost entirely dependent on their parents and families for protection, as they grow and their capacities develop, they become critical stakeholders in efforts to keep themselves safer and promote their own well-being.
Children can give unique insights into the risks and challenges they face, as they experience the risk involved and know their situations best. However, recognising and acknowledging the responsibility for protecting children always remains with adults.

Involving children in efforts to prevent child abuse has significant benefits for children's development – for example, helping them to develop problem-solving and social skills, increasing confidence and resilience – and also fulfils children's right to participate (as per Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989).

Ways in which children can participate include: life-skills programmes; helping children identify risks; teaching children how to speak out about abuse (together with whom to contact); and establishing anti-bullying and anti-violence schemes in schools.

Community engagement and empowerment

Children rely on their parents and family for safety and protection, and families are part of communities. Ensuring children are safe in their communities means actively engaging communities and empowering them to be involved in efforts to protect children, which can both be a response strategy and a prevention strategy.

This can be achieved in various ways, from raising awareness of the main threats to children, to more extensive community dialogue and social behaviour change programmes. These aim to tackle attitudes and practices in communities that compromise children's care and protection. In work with communities, it is essential to recognize that all communities, even those in very difficult circumstances, can make significant contributions to protecting children. For example, in emergency situations, communities can ensure that children are not out alone, and intervene if they see a child from their community without their parents and who may be at risk of becoming separated or lost.

Activities with communities can include support to set up community-based mechanisms such as child protection committees to recognize and report cases of concern, through to identifying and developing action plans to address specific issues. In Fiji, for several years, the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation and the Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs have been using a community child protection facilitation package titled 'Children are a Precious Gift from God' with communities. This package aims to raise awareness of child development and child protection and to equip communities with the necessary knowledge to better protect children and promote their well-being.

A recent review of the use of the Children are a Precious Gift from God materials uncovered numerous ways in which community members were taking an increased level of interest and responsibility in child protection.[23]

Examples of how community members were more active in protecting children and supporting families included women's group members helping single mothers, and agreed rules being established in communities regarding expectations of parents in terms of time spent with children and on the use of drugs and alcohol (which contribute to domestic violence).

Chapter 3. What is child labour?

3.1. Child labour defined

The term 'child labour' refers to work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and/or mental development.[24]
It refers to work that:

- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children.
- interferes with their schooling by:
  - depriving them of the opportunity to attend school.
  - obliging them to leave school prematurely.
  - requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Simple work done after school like gardening and helping parents at home is not considered to be child labour, as this is part of a child's development. However, children are expected to be in school during school hours, and any work carried out during normal school hours is considered a child labour activity as it affects the child's education and learning.

The following are six key concepts related to children and work:

Children in employment are those working in any form of market production and certain types of non-market production (principally, the production of goods such as agricultural produce for own use). This group includes children in forms of work: in both the formal and informal economy; inside and outside family settings; for pay or profit (in cash or in kind, part-time or full-time); and domestic work outside the child's own household for an employer (paid or unpaid). It includes children who are engaged in child labour, as well as children above the relevant minimum age who are engaged in forms of work that are permitted for children of that age.

Children in child labour constitute a narrower category than children in employment. It excludes children in employment who are in permitted light work and those above the minimum age for work whose work is not classified as a worst form of child labour, or, in particular, as 'hazardous work'.

Children in the worst forms of child labour are those in the categories of child labour set out in Article 3 of ILO Convention No. 182. These categories comprise:

1. all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.
2. the use, procuring, or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography, or for pornographic performances.
3. the use, procuring, or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties.
4. 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 (also known as 'hazardous work').

Children in hazardous work are those involved in any activity or occupation that, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm their health, safety, or morals. In general, hazardous work may include:

- night work and long hours of work.
- exposure to physical, psychological, or sexual abuse.
- work underground, under water, at dangerous heights, or in confined spaces.
- work with dangerous machinery, equipment, and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads.
- 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 their health.

Hazardous work by children is often treated as a proxy category for the worst forms of child labour. This is for three reasons. First, reliable national data on the worst forms of child labour 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 of child labour. Third, children in the three other worst forms of child labour are also commonly exposed to hazards likely to harm their health, safety, or morals.

Children in light work. According to Article 7 of the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), national laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons 13 to 15 years of age on light work which is: (a) not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and (b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received.

Children performing household chores refers to those performing domestic and personal services for consumption within their own households. Household chores include caring for household members; cleaning and minor household repairs; cooking and serving meals; washing and ironing clothes; and transporting or accompanying family members to and from work and school.

3.2. Causes of child labour

The causes of child labour are numerous and vary from country to country and across all economic sectors. Several social conditions, however, are often present.

- Poverty is a determining factor. Poor families send their children to work (or ask them to work in the family business) because they do not have enough income or access to decent work themselves.
- Having existed for so long, child labour is still often viewed as acceptable. In such contexts, families are happy to receive the income generated by a child labourer, while employers see themselves as providing a social service. What is required, though, are economic and social conditions that discourage children from taking up work.
- Children are a cheap supply of workers. In some places, the significant availability of child labourers undermines decent working conditions for adult workers, keeping wages low and making it even harder for families to meet their financial needs.
- Informal work encourages the use of child labour, as it happens without oversight, lacking both regulations and inspections.
- Lack of quality education limits the chances of a child worker to escape from the cycle of poverty.[25] Educational gaps negatively impact child labourers' lives as they move into adulthood with low levels of literacy and without professional degrees or diplomas. This prevents them from securing decent work that could lift many out of poverty.
- Girls in particular tend to have less access to education than boys, a problem that persists among certain ethnic groups. This inequality creates conditions favourable to child labour. [26]
- Other causes can include tradition, remoteness, debt or shocks such as failed harvests or natural disasters.

Sexual exploitation of children and its causes

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is the exploitation by an adult with respect to a child or an adolescent – female or male – under 18 years old, accompanied by a payment in money or in kind to the child or adolescent (male or female) or to one or more third parties. This is considered to be among the worst forms of child labour. [27]

International child monitoring agencies have found that some families sell their daughters into marriage at a very early age for financial benefit. Some CSEC victims are from poor rural families who placed the children in the care of relatives in urban areas in the hope of securing better education and work opportunities, only for them to be coerced to engage in sexual activity in exchange for food, clothing and shelter or to meet school needs. Children from single parent or broken homes have also been left in the care of elderly grandparents, who may lack adequate financial resources. As a result, some of these children are forced to undertake any type of activity – from child labour to commercial sexual exploitation – in order to survive. [28]

3.3. The impact of child labour

Health

Hard labour and exploitation have a marked impact on the physical and mental well-being of children. Journalists should be familiar with the health consequences:

1. Children's bones and muscles are not fully developed. Dangerous working conditions may lead to skeletal deformity, muscle fatigue and growth and development disorders.
2. Pulmonary ventilation capacity (the inhalation and exhalation of air) is limited for children. Their respiratory rate is faster, which increases their risk of absorbing toxic substances. The damage from this exposure is more severe than for adults, and can result in death.
3. Children have a higher heart rate than adults, which means their hearts have to beat faster to pump blood, and they tire more quickly than adults when performing the same tasks.
4. Children's nervous systems are not fully developed, and exposing them to work pressures can bring on headaches, insomnia, dizziness, tachycardia, and concentration and memory problems, all of which negatively affect academic performance. The psychological toll of this stress on the body fosters low self-esteem, sadness and fear.
5. A child's body produces more heat than an adult's when subjected to demanding tasks, causing dehydration and a high level of fatigue.
6. Children have softer skin than adults, making them more vulnerable to harm from physical, mechanical, chemical and biological elements.
7. In children, organs such as the liver, spleen, kidneys, intestines and stomach are still growing, which places them at a higher risk of exposure to toxic products.
8. Children have narrower peripheral vision compared to adults. They cannot perceive as well what is happening around them. Because work tools and protective equipment are not designed for small children, they are more prone to workplace accidents.
9. Hearing sensitivity is higher in children than in adults. They are at risk of serious and rapid hearing loss due to workplace conditions.
10. The impact of work hazards and accidents on adult workers is often more pronounced in children. Child victims of labour accidents are at risk of incurring spinal injuries and other disabilities, which can have a profound effect on their development and further limit their future work prospects.

A brake on development

Child labour is just one facet of poverty – albeit one with a very high human cost. And during the COVID-19 pandemic with thousands of Fijian families' livelihoods being affected, news media have reported that children are being put to work to bring in an income and to help put food on the table.

However, individuals who have been victims of child labour are less able to successfully transition to gainful employment, hindering poverty reduction for the whole population. The uneducated and low-skilled workforce that is generated as a result of child labour may also impact upon a country's economic competitiveness.[29] Continuing child labour practices ensures that a part of Fiji's society will remain impoverished.

A threat to democracy

Ending child labour requires an appropriate legal framework with concrete programmes guaranteeing quality education, poverty reduction and social protection for all without discrimination. Without strong commitment on these issues from the Government and other key stakeholders, child labour can become a threat to democracy and peacebuilding processes. [30]

3.4. The legal framework – Legislation in Fiji and international conventions

National legislation

Legislation on child labour is specifically covered under chapters 8 and 10 of the Employment Relations Act 2007 (ERA), which sets the minimum age for employment at 15 years. It determines the hours, types and conditions of work; and protects children from child labour, particularly the worst forms of child labour. The Act also sets out the penalty for labour offences committed against children.[31]

Fiji has developed a robust labour inspection system through the implementation of the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System. This mechanism ensures proper standards are followed while conducting labour inspections and encompasses a system through which children are withdrawn from child labour activities and returned to school.

A total of 34,173 labour inspections and spot checks on child labour and terms and conditions of work were carried out between 2010 and 2020, resulting in the withdrawal of 247 children who were then referred to the mainstream education system, including for technical and vocational training. [32]

International conventions[33]

- Fiji ratified the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child in 1993 – a Convention that seeks to protect the interests as well as the rights of the child. Since then, both the Government and NGOs have introduced initiatives such as law and policy reforms so that the socioeconomic environment of the nation reflects the spirit of the Convention. Heinous acts against children such as CSEC and sexual abuse are in direct violation of Articles 19, 34 and 36 of the Convention.
- Fiji signed the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in 1996. Upon becoming a signatory, the Government undertook appropriate action to protect its children against commercial sexual exploitation.
- Fiji ratified the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), in 2002. The term 'the worst forms of child labour' comprises:
    1. all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict. the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
    2. the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances.
    3. the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties.
    4. 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 (Article 3).
- Fiji ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), in 2003. One of the most effective methods of ensuring that children do not start working too young is to set the age at which children can legally be employed or otherwise work. The aim of ILO Convention No. 138 is the effective abolition of child labour by requiring countries to:
    1. establish a minimum age for entry into work or employment; and
    2. establish national policies for the elimination of child labour.
- Fiji also ratified the ILO Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), in 2008, and under the Convention the functions of the system of labour inspection shall be:
    1. to secure the enforcement of the legal provisions relating to conditions of work and the protection of workers while engaged in their work, such as provisions relating to hours, wages, safety, health and welfare, the employment of children and young persons, and other connected matters, in so far as such provisions are enforceable by labour inspectors.

2. to supply technical information and advice to employers and workers concerning the most effective means of complying with the legal provisions.
3. to bring to the notice of the competent authority defects or abuses not specifically covered by existing legal provisions (Article 3(1)).

Any further duties which may be entrusted to labour inspectors shall not be such as to interfere with the effective discharge of their primary duties or to prejudice in any way the authority and impartiality which are necessary to inspectors in their relations with employers and workers (Article 3(2)).

3.5. The impossibility of justification

Even when the law prohibits it, some people continue to justify the need for child labour. The table below may help journalists and communicators understand how to refute false arguments:

FALSE	TRUE
Children and teenagers have to work to help their families survive.	The duty of the family is to help their children, not use them. If the family is unable to meet its obligations, the Government must help, not the children.
The working child becomes more capable and acquires professional skills for adult life.	Working at an early age has never been a necessary step to becoming successful in life. It does not provide formal qualifications and is ineffective for social advancement.
Labour brings dignity to the child. It's better to work than to steal!	This justification argues that for generally poor children and adolescents, working inhibits social and moral disorder. In reality, child labour marginalizes children from families with little resources compared to those from wealthier families.
Work is a good substitute for education.	This justification is simply invalid. Work is not an adequate replacement for education. This argument is also frequently used for children with learning difficulties. In such cases, education should be inclusive and accessible to all children.
Child labour promotes social integration.	Child labour hurts social ties. First, during childhood, when the child loses the opportunity to play, study and learn. Second, in adulthood, when job opportunities are lost due to lack of professional qualifications. And third, in old age when he/she is isolated without a livelihood.

3.6. Initiatives to address child labour

Employers

The Fiji Commerce and Employers' Federation has pledged to improve responsible business conduct and eliminate child labour in the country's business practices. The Federation will set up a committee to support training and awareness-raising programmes for businesses, specifically targeting the informal sector. A report on the seminars/training will be compiled and shared with partners, and the Federation will also share stories and articles through the local media.

MAP-16 Project

The Measurement, Awareness-Raising and Policy Engagement Project to accelerate action against child labour and forced labour (MAP-16 Project) is a development cooperation project managed by the ILO and funded by the United States Department of Labor.

Fiji is one of the countries implementing the project with support from: the Ministry of Employment, Productivity, and Industrial Relations; the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation; and the Fiji Trades Union Congress. To date, this work has included building the knowledge base on child labour through stakeholder consultation at the national, industry and community levels, and advancing awareness in communities by collaborating with key stakeholders who work with children.


SUVA
POINT
What is wrong
with this picture?

Chapter 4. Journalism in practice[34]

4.1. Media as advocates

Issues affecting children need a voice, and journalists and communicators can be powerful and effective allies to provide this voice in an accessible way. While the Fijian media do not have 'specialists' reporting on child rights and children's issues, newsrooms could establish incentives and awards for reporting on child-related topics.

Journalists can engage with civil society organizations for improved networking, training and workshops to enhance their knowledge of child rights and issues related to children. Stories that make a difference and result in positive change are those that the audience can relate to or those written in such a powerful and compelling way that they force the reader or viewer to sit up and take notice of events that are unfolding in society.

Most international days of importance are celebrated by schools across the country, spearheaded by the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts. International days provide the perfect opportunity for journalists to highlight the significance of the day by delving deeper into issues surrounding children. Instead of focusing on the celebration, journalists could write stories leading up to the day in question, highlighting child abuse, exploitation and labour issues. The stories could have links to the various helplines and agencies available to assist children going through crises.

Story optimization

The platform used to broadcast the story plays a crucial role in getting the message across – a story written for **online/Facebook/Instagram** consumption would need a compelling picture, while print also needs strong headlines. Standout quotes are what capture the attention of people engrossed in the fast news cycle of **Twitter**.

Date	Events
May 15	World Family Day
June 12	World Day Against Child Labour
June 26	International Day Against Drug Abuse & Trafficking
August 12	International Youth Day
November 20	Universal Children's Day

Broadcast/TV/vloggers on YouTube can take viewers into the sanctity of people's homes and lives, engaging on a more intimate level, and delivering a more in-depth narrative in a very powerful and personal manner.

When you construct a story, think about the platform for which it is best and most suitable and where it can reach the widest possible target audience. Ensure the content is tailored to suit the platform.

Stories that inspire

Human interest pieces can inspire, highlight child-related issues, generate discussion and foster change.

For example, the story of Tae Kami. Her bold and courageous battle with cancer inspired other cancer sufferers and also led to the formation of Walk On Walk Strong (WOWS) Kids Fiji, an organization that today is at the forefront of cancer awareness, support and rehabilitation efforts across the country.[35]

Not all stories have to be negative

Positive stories can be powerful and provide information that can both prevent situations of abuse and improve public perception of the issue. They can highlight how someone overcame their situation and give hope to children in vulnerable situations.

Amplifying stories of overcoming abuse can inform and educate people about the scale and nature of the problem and give others the confidence to speak out about their plight. This could serve as a warning to children who may be unaware that they are being exploited.

Concepts such as 'constructive journalism'[36] or 'solution journalism' [37] might also be a source of inspiration.

4.2. Children's rights

The media play a significant role in forming and influencing people's attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, it is important that journalists educate themselves on the power they have to build or break people, especially the vulnerable, through the images and language they use.

While most media houses have their own Code of Ethics/Conduct defining the good standards of practice required for journalists to carry out their work, Fiji's supreme law – the 2013 Constitution – outlines the rights children enjoy and that must be always respected. The rights of children are enshrined in section 41 of the Constitution, and include protection from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, any form of violence, inhumane treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labour.

In addition, the Convention on the Rights of the Child [38] sets out four guiding principles for dealing with children:

1. Non-discrimination: "States parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's parents or legal guardian, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, poverty, disability, birth or other status" (Article 2).
2. Best interests of the child: "In all actions concerning children whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institution, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration" (Article 3.1).
3. The right to survival and development: "States parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child" (Article 6.2).child" (Article 6.2).
4. The views of the child: "States parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the rights to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the view of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child" (Article 12.1).


THE MEDIA
WORRYING ABOUT FAMILY & FRIENDS
ONLINE LEARNING
BETTER TO WORK THAN TO STEAL
LABOUR BRINGS DIGNITY TO THE CHILD
SCHOOL CLOSED
LONG HOURS HOT SUNSHINE
QUARANTINE
HOME ISOLATION
MOVEMENT RESTRICTION
HEALTH PROTOCOL
FUTURE
SKILLS FOR ADULT LIFE
MISSED MEALS
IS WORK A GOOD SUBSTITUTE
FEED THE FAMILY
POVERTY
CLIMATE CHANGE
COVID 19
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
UNEMPLOYMENT
HOSPITALISATION
SHAME
CURFEW
DEATH
UNCERTAI

Media laws on dealing with children

Fiji's media is governed by the Media Industry Development Act 2010, which clearly outlines the conditions under which the media should conduct its work in relation to children:

Under section 7 of the Act:

a. Media organizations cannot interview or photograph a child in the absence of, or without the consent of a parent or guardian or other adult responsible for the child.
b. Children should not be approached by the media, and should not be interviewed or photographed at any school without the permission of school authorities and prior consent of the parents or guardian.
c. Publication without consent of material about a child's private life cannot be justified solely by the fame, notoriety or position of his or her parents.

Section 8 states that for victims in sexual offence cases:

a. Media organizations must not identify victims of sexual assaults or publish or broadcast material likely to contribute to their identification, even when free by law to do so.
b. Media organizations shall not identify children either as victims or witnesses in cases alleging sexual offences.
c. Reports of cases alleging sexual offences against a child may identify an adult concerned, provided they are not related, but must not identify the child, and must not include facts which imply a close relationship between the accused adult and a child victim.
d. Where either party is identifiable, the word 'incest' should not be used.

Section 10 deals with crime and says media organizations must pay particular regard to the context, time of transmission and probable effect and the likely audience or readership of such items. Special attention must be paid to the likelihood of such material being read, seen or listened to by children.

Children are also protected from viewing distressing material, as the Act requires special consideration must be given before publication or transmission of particularly disturbing images, including violence or ill-treatment of children.

4.3. Interviewing a child

Any decision to interview a child should be carefully considered. In seeking informed consent for the interview, it is necessary to make sure that the child and his or her parents or caregiver agree with the interview being done.

Journalists should think about how best to protect the children they are interviewing.[39] Because of the 'small' community we live in, journalists must use caution when choosing the venue for the interview and minimize any risk of the child being identified, as this could lead to stigmatization and vilification.

- Children can feel embarrassed or self-conscious in public places or when among strangers or adults, and this could distort their responses and/or expose them to danger and certain forms of reprisal.
- Identify yourself and clearly articulate the reason for the interview and why the story is important.
- Be upfront with the parent/guardian/child about the types of protections available to them – speaking anonymously, no photographs or use of non-identifying photographs (eg. silhouette or a picture of a hand), and concealment of voice and face. Be upfront as well on the possible consequences for the child or his relatives of the story being published.
- Be sensitive to the child's situation and how some questions could make him/her relive a traumatic event – these should be avoided.

How to establish trust with a child during an interview

- Try to make the child feel at ease before starting the interview by placing yourself at the same level/height of the child – do not stand or speak over him/her. Introduce yourself and explain in age-appropriate language why you wish to speak with him/her, e.g. "I will be asking you some questions…Is that alright?"
- Slide into the interview by asking general questions about friends, school, sports or music – do not rush them because you have a deadline to meet. It is equally important to end the interview with general questions to avoid concluding on the account of traumatic experiences. Frame the questions in a way that the child finds comfortable in answering – do not use suggestive questions or else the child may imply an expected answer.
- Microphones and recording equipment can be intimidating to a child – do not put it too close to the child, nor leave it in his/her hands. In simple terms explain what each equipment does to gain the attention and interest of children.
- Try not to scare the child while obtaining information during the interview.
- Be sensitive and respectful when asking questions and use encouragement, not leading questions, to coax answers from a child.
- Rephrase the same question in several different ways to test the reliability of the child's answer.
- If the child offers conflicting responses, move onto another question instead of insisting the initial question be answered.

When to protect a child's identity and how to do it

- Identity protection should always be considered. It becomes necessary in the following contexts:
    1. A child who is a victim of or has witnessed physical or sexual abuse. In some situations, particularly when ethnic conflict is a concern, care should be taken to not exacerbate possible violence.
    2. A child convicted of or alleged to have committed a crime.
    3. A child with a mental or physical illness, or who is differently abled, to prevent stigmatization.
    4. A child who has made the streets his/her home.
- Put yourself or a loved one in the place of a child, and be aware of the child's circumstances. Avoid identifying the child at all costs if you know it will harm him/her in any way.
- Be creative and use the tools at your disposal to protect the child.
- For video and television journalists, use voice scramblers and use a non-identifying angle (eg. silhouette or filmed from behind).
- For print journalists, obscure the face and shoot pictures where the background is unidentifiable, or use drawings or cartoons.
- You can also take pictures and footage from angles that hide the identity of the child, such as from behind, or alternatively, the focus could be on the child's hands or feet to show how the child labour activity they were involved in is impacting on their health and well-being. Be careful about the fact that the environment where images are taken and the clothes that the child is wearing can also lead to the source of information being recognized.
- In most cases, you should change the names of the child and parents; use pseudonyms if their names are not necessary information in the story. Do not provide too many other identifying details that could expose the child

4.4. Digital platforms

The World Wide Web is a space that lets journalists reach the public in innovative and creative ways. Internet-related forms of communication include social networks that give people the chance to engage with journalists and their work. Understanding content management in this context is important.

Web journalists have responsibilities beyond the publication of their work. Special attention should be paid to where news items (including photos and videos) have been republished by third parties. Monitoring comments written by readers and viewers is also extremely important, as they may endanger the children portrayed.

Journalists should check all links on the web page where their work is posted and ensure rigorous monitoring. If in doubt, journalists should not take the risk of endangering the child interviewed but rather delete comments or links.

Finally, web journalists should never reply to internet users requesting personal information for a child who appears in their videos, photography or written articles.

4.5. Storytelling choices

People are always interested in what is happening with other human beings, which is why human interest stories are so powerful, because they put people at the heart of issues. People can relate to a good human interest story, and if written well, its impact will evoke emotions that bring awareness to a whole host of issues.

Positive stories are also powerful. They can motivate, inspire and instil hope. Positive stories can also help create awareness and prevent situations of abuse. Journalists can also report on positive stories on changes in policies, law, and business practices, and how these changes affect people.
When telling stories, journalists can use fact files with data to capture the attention of readers and viewers. These will encourage reflection on a topic. See the example below.

FACT FILE

In February 2020 it was estimated that 45,724 households or 22.9 per cent of Fiji's population lived below the poverty line.[40] This meant that about 258,053 individuals were living in poverty. A month later Fiji recorded its first COVID-19 case. Businesses started shutting down and the tourism sector reported 115,000 had lost their jobs [41] Unemployment in other sectors surged, and the job market took a battering when the second wave of the pandemic swept through the country on 21 March. Also, last year about 90,000 Fijians, including over 30,000 children, were affected by Tropical Cyclones Harold, Yasa and Ana.[42] In these stricken times of border and school closure, there is a significant rise of children 'working' openly and in full view of the public, reversing years of progress in the fight against child labour in Fiji. Children are used as hawkers – selling food, masks, green coconut, and household items at night when they should be in the safety of their homes.

4.6. Avoiding sensationalism

Children are very vulnerable. It is critical journalists get it right first time. There is no room in journalism for getting things 'roughly right':

- Report the news fairly and honestly. Be aware of the gaps in your story, and ask the questions that will fill in those gaps.
- Know the difference between comment, conjecture and fact.
- Know that different parts of life are connected – listen to the interview and visualize.
- Reach out to your networks/experts to verify information. Then ask yourself: Is it news? Does it have the right news angle? How will the child/audience/society benefit or be affected?
- Will the children portrayed become vulnerable to even harsher reprisals?
- Avoid generalizing on the basis of one incident.

Terminology

Language and word selection can strongly affect how children are perceived. Certain terms may encourage stigmatization or legitimize bad practices. The table below provides suggestions on how to phrase with care.

Do not say	Rather say
Illegitimate child	Child born to unmarried parents
Child criminal	Child in conflict with the law
Child prisoner	Child deprived of liberty
Child prostitution	Commercial sexual exploitation of children
Disabled children	Children with disabilities

Conclusion

1. Child labour and other forms of child abuse, neglect and exploitation need to be highlighted by the media because of the wide-ranging impact they have on Fijian society.

While the media focus has mainly been on the types of activity vulnerable children may be involved in, journalists need to tell the whole story. This includes how child labour and abuse negatively affect children's lives, perpetuate the vicious cycle of poverty and impact on the country's economic and social development.

When you are conducting your interviews, think about the whole landscape and how your story is part of the broader context of issues.

Your story may be about one child, but the implications will impact on other families, communities and ultimately the country.

Another important point to consider is that in its most extreme forms, child labour involves the deprivation of basic human rights and exposure to serious hazards and illness.

2. Fijians are drawn to a good story, especially one they can relate to.

When working on a child labour issue, avoid relying too much on data and statistics to tell the story. Use the human interest angle to outline the reason or reasons why the child ended up in child labour or being sexually exploited, and show the human cost of child labour. Draw the reader, viewer or listener in by using as much detail as possible without exposing the child or making the situation worse for the child. You must stay ethical in your approach and take extreme care in protecting your sources.

3. Provide context to show causes and consequences of child labour

Try to tell your story in a way that shows how the negative impacts of child labour ripple through society over time. From the immediate harm done to a child, to its long-lasting toll on physical and mental health, to how families are changed – show how one child labour issue may be relevant and harmful to a family, to a community and to society as a whole.

Your story should make readers, listeners or viewers more aware of child labour and inform them on how they can contribute to bringing an end to it.

4. **Fijians like positive stories, so when and where possible, share examples of resilience!**

Write stories or put together radio and television shows that present examples at the national and international level that show success in the fight against child labour. If there is a child labour success story where the victim is willing to be interviewed about how or she managed to break the cycle of poverty, tell it!

Annex I. Useful contacts

Fijian government agencies

NAME	MAIN RESPONSIBILITY	RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS	CONTACT
Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations	Labour inspection, labour law enforcement	Child Labour Unit	www.employment.gov.fj Ph: (679) 3303 500
Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation	Child protection, child welfare, raises awareness on child labour, protection and exploitation	Department of Social Welfare	www.mwcpa.gov.fj Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation Ph: (679) 331 2199 National Domestic Violence 24-hour toll-free helpline 1560 24-hour toll-free Child helpline Fiji 1325
Ministry of Education	Education of early child-hood, primary and secondary school students	Curriculum Devel-opment Unit	www.education.gov.fj Ph: (679) 322 0402
Ministry of Sugar Industry	Looks after sugar industry stakeholders, raises awareness about child labour in cane farms		www.sugar.gov.fj Ph: (679) 666 4724
Ministry of Agriculture	Oversees all agriculture-related activity	Research Division, Animal Health and Reproduction Division	www.agriculture.gov.fj Ph: (679) 3384233
Ministry of Youth and Sports	Facilitates youth and sports development	Youth Training Centres, Youth Grants	www.youth.gov.fj Ph: (679) 3315 960

Fijian employers', workers' and non-governmental organizations

NAME	MAIN RESPONSIBILITY AND SECTORS OF INTERVENTION	GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE	CONTACT
Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation	Looks after the interests of private sector organizations in Fiji. Represents employers in tripartite forums	Fiji-wide	www.fcef.com.fj (679) 331 3188
Fiji Trades Union Congress	Looks after the interests of employees in Fiji. Represents employees in tripartite forums	Fiji-wide	https://ftuc.org.fj (679) 331 5377
Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission	Records and investigates all human rights and discrimination issues	Fiji-wide	www.fhradc.org.fj Ph: (679) 3308 577
Fiji Council of Social Services	A civil society organization that strengthens people and communities through advocacy and training.	Fiji-wide	fcossinfo@gmail.com Ph: (679) 331 2649
Fiji Women's Crisis Centre	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre provides 24/7 telephone crisis counselling for women and children in Fiji who have experienced or are at risk of domestic violence. Trained counsellors are available, and emergency assistance can also be provided, by ringing: 3313 300	Fiji-wide	http://www.fijiwomen.com/ Suva: (679)331-3300 (679)920-9470 Nadi: (679)670-7558 (679)918-2884 Ba: (679)667-0466 (679)923-9775 Rakiraki: (679)669-4012 (679)912-9790 Labasa: (679)881-4609 (679)937-7784

International institutions and organizations

NAME	MAIN RESPONSIBILITY AND SECTORS OF INTERVENTION	GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE	CONTACT
International Labour Organization (ILO)	The ILO promotes access to decent work for all Fijians. **Main sectors:** The fight against child labour, forced labour and trafficking. Enhance social dialogue, raises awareness and works with tripartite partners to strengthen efforts to combat child labour and exploitation.	Fiji-wide	www.ilo.org/suva Ph: (679) 331 3866
UNICEF	UNICEF operated in the Pacific from the mid-1970s until 1997, when it estab-lished the hub for a dedicated Pacific Multi Country Office in Fiji. **Main sectors:** Children's rights, Child Protection, revision of the Children's Law, systems building and capacity-development.	Fiji-wide	www.unicef.org/pacificislands/ Ph: (679) 3300 439

International institutions and organizations

NAME	MAIN RESPONSIBILITY AND SECTORS OF INTERVENTION	GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE	CONTACT
Save the Children Fiji	Save the Children Fiji was established in Fiji in 1972. It is the country's peak child rights organization and has been helping make meaningful change in the lives of children for more than 40 years. **Main sectors**: Health, education, child protection and child participation	Fiji-wide	www.savethechildren.org.fj Ph: (679) 3313 178
Fiji Red Cross Society	The Fiji Red Cross Society was first established as a branch of the British Red Cross in 1952. The Fiji Red Cross was registered as a National Society in 1971. **Main sectors**: Provides health and humanitarian assistance	Fiji-wide	www.fijiredcross.org Ph: (679) 3314 133

Fijian media organizations

NAME	ADDRESS	CONTACT
The Fiji Times	177 Victoria Parade Suva	177 Victoria Parade Suva www.fijitimes.com Ph: (679) 3304111 timesnews@fijitimes.com.fj
The Fiji Sun	20 Gorrie Street Suva	www.fijisun.com.fj Ph: (679) 3307555 fijisun@fijisun.com.fj
Fiji TV	78 Brown Street Suva	www.fijione.tv Ph: (679)3305100 info@fijitv.com.fj
Fiji Broadcasting Corporation	69 Gladstone Road Suva	www.fbcnews.com.fj infocenter@fbc.com.fj Ph: (679) 3314333
Mai TV	Spring Street Suva	www.maitv.com.fj admin@maitv.com.fj Ph: (679) 3275051

Annex II. Relevant excerpts from Fijian law

Fiji's media is governed by the Media Industry Development Act 2010 which clearly states the conditions under which media organizations can conduct their work in relation to children

Schedule 1

6. Discrimination

(a) Media organisations shall avoid discriminatory or denigrating references to people's gender, ethnicity, colour religion, sexual orientation or preference, physical or mental disability or illness, or age.

(b) Media organisations shall not refer to a person's gender, ethnicity, colour, religion, sexual orientation, or physical or mental illness or age in a prejudicial or pejorative context except where it is strictly relevant to the matter reported or adds significantly to readers', viewers' or listeners' understanding of the matter.

(c) Media organisations shall be sensitive to and particularly careful about the possible effects of discriminatory references to vulnerable minorities in prejudicial or pejorative contexts.

7. Children

(a) Media organisations shall not interview or photograph a child in the absence of, or without the consent of a parent or guardian or other adult responsible for the child.

(b) Children shall not be approached by the media organisations, and shall not be interviewed or photographed at any school without the permission of school authorities and prior consent of the parents or guardian.

(c) Publication without consent of material about a child's private life cannot be justified solely by the fame, notoriety or position of his or her parents.

8. Victims in sexual cases

(a) Media organisations must not identify victims of sexual assaults or publish or broadcast material likely to contribute to their identification even when free by law to do so.

(b) Media organisations shall not identify children either as victims or witnesses in cases alleging sexual offences.

(c) Reports of cases alleging sexual offences against a child may identify an adult concerned, provided they are not related, but must not identify the child, and must not include facts which imply a close relationship between the accused adult and a child victim.

(d) where wither party is identifiable, the word “incest” should not be used.

10. Crime

(b) Media organisations must pay particular regard to the context, time of transmission and probable effect and the likely audience or readership of such items. Special attention must be paid to the likelihood of such material being read, seen or listened to by children.

25. Distressing material

(b) (iv) special consideration must be given before publication or transmission of particularly disturbing images, including violence or ill-treatment of children.

Fiji’s supreme law, the 2013 Constitution outlines the rights children enjoy and which must be respected at all times.

2013 Constitution

Rights of children

41.—(1) Every child has the right—

(a) to be registered at or soon after birth, and to have a name and nationality;

(b) to basic nutrition, clothing, shelter, sanitation and health care;

(c) to family care, protection and guidance, which includes the equal responsibility of the child's parents to provide for the child—

(i) whether or not the parents are, or have ever been, married to each other; and

(ii) whether or not the parents are living together, have lived together, or are separated;

(d) to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, any form of violence, inhumane treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labour; and

(e) not to be detained, except as a measure of last resort, and when detained, to be held—

(i) only for such period of time as is necessary; and

(ii) separate from adults, and in conditions that take account of the child's sex and age.

(2) The best interests of a child are the primary consideration in every matter concerning the child.

Fiji's labour laws clearly outline the conditions under which children are allowed to work.

Employment Relations (Administration) Regulations 2008

Part 8 – Children

Conditions of work

40.-(1) A child must not be employed or permitted to be employed in any of the following situations:

(a) in situations of direct hostilities;

(b) any work for which the child has little capacity;

(c) any work which is hazardous to the child's health, mental, spiritual or social development;

(d) in an environment which subjects the child to physical harm, psychological torture, any form of neglect, torture, any form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or which does not foster the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

(2) An employer who does not comply with sub regulation (1) commits an offence.

Hours of work for children and night employment

41. - (1) For the purposes of section 97 of the Promulgation, a child must not be employed for more than 8 hours during day light hours.

(2) Each child employed during daylight hours must be given a 30-minute paid lunch break.

(3) For the purposes of section 98 of the Promulgation, no child may work beyond 10pm at night.

(4) Each child employed during night employment must be given a 30-minute paid dinner break within 2 hours of starting work.

(5) No child may be employed for more than 8 hours per day.

(6) Any employer who does not comply with this regulation commits an offence.

Employment Relations Act 2007

Part 10 — Children

Objects of this Part

90. The objects of this Part are—

(a) to prohibit 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;

(b) to establish the circumstances and ages at which children may work; and

(c) to confer certain rights on children and provide protection in view of their vulnerability to exploitation.

Prohibition of worst forms of child labour

91. The following forms of child labour are prohibited—

(a) all forms of labour slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and any form of forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children in armed conflict;

(b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties; or

(c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances, and a person who engages a child in such prohibited form of child labour commits an offence.

Minimum age for employment

92. The age of 15 years is the minimum age for employment of children.

Employment of children under 15 years

93.—(1) A child under the age of 15 years must not be employed in any capacity other than in accordance with subsection (2) and a person who contravenes this subsection commits an offence.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply to a child of 13 to 15 years of age engaged in employment or light work or in a workplace in which members of the same family or of communal or religious group are employed provided that-

(a) the employment is not likely to be harmful to the health or development of the child; and

(b) the employment is not such as to prejudice the child's attendance at school, participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by a competent authority or capacity of the child to benefit from the instruction received.

Trade union rights

94. A child who is 15 years or over has the right to join a trade union and to vote in trade union elections where the child is a member.

Certain restrictions on employment of children

95.—(1) A child must not be employed underground in a mine.

(2) The Minister may, after consulting the National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Board established under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1996 and by order in the Gazette, declare any employment or workplace to be a prohibited or restricted employment or workplace for the purposes of this Part on the ground that it is injurious to health or is hazardous, dangerous or unsuitable, including attendance on machinery, working with hazardous substances, driving motor vehicles, heavy physical labour, the care of children or work within security services.

(3) An employer must not, after being served with a copy of an order made under subsection (2), continue to employ the child.

(4) If a child's employment is discontinued under subsection (2), the child must be paid any outstanding wages or any other entitlement the child may have earned up to the date of the discontinuance under the terms of the contract of service.

(5) An employer who—

(a) employs a child underground in a mine or in an employment or workplace declared under subsection (2); or

(b) contravenes subsection (3), commits an offence.

Children not to be employed against the wishes of parent or guardian

96.—(1) An employer must not continue to employ a child after receiving notice, either orally or in writing, from the parent, guardian or Ministry, that the child is employed against the wishes of the parent or guardian.

(2) An employer who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence.

Hours of work for children

97.—(1) A child must—

(a) not be employed or permitted to be employed for more than 8 hours in a day; and

(b) be given at least 30 minutes paid rest for every continuous 4 hours worked.

(2) A child must not be employed or permitted to be employed during a period when the child is required to attend school or for a period which prejudices the child's educational participation.

(3) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to a child employed under a contract of apprenticeship lawfully entered into under the provisions of any written law.

(4) An employer who contravenes subsections (1) or (2) commits an offence.

Conditions on night employment

98. The Minister may, after consultation with the Board, by order in the Gazette, prescribe conditions for the employment of children between 6 o'clock in the afternoon of any day and 6 o'clock in the forenoon of the following day in a workplace.

Employers of children to keep register

99.—(1) An employer of children in a workplace, or in an occupation which forms part of a workplace, must—

(a) keep a register of all the children and the register must include particulars of their ages, the date of commencement and termination of their employment, the conditions and nature of their employment and any other prescribed particulars; and

(b) must produce the register for inspection when required by a labour officer or labour inspector.

(2) The register must be maintained separately and apart from any other register.

(3) An employer who fails to keep a register as required by subsection (1) or who fails or refuses to produce a register when required to do so commits an offence.

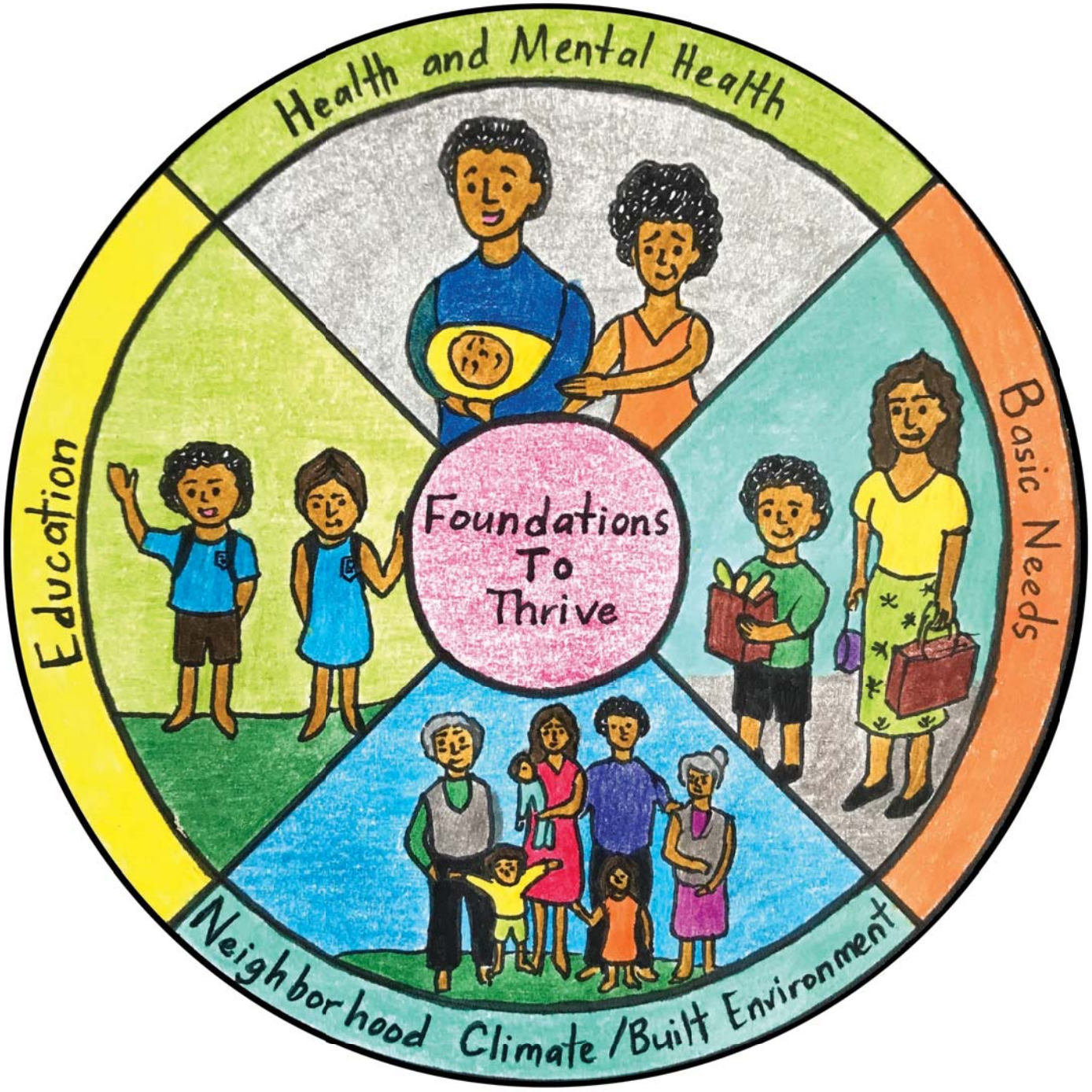
EndNotes

1. For more, see: https://www.endchildlabour2021.org.
2. Target 8.7 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms
3. ILO and UNICEF, Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward, 2021.
4. For more, see: https://www.alliance87.org.
5. ILO, "Impact of COVID19 on Employment and Business in the Pacific: Findings of the Rapid Assessment (RA) in Fiji and Samoa", ILO Brief, 2020; United Nations, Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Fiji, 2020;
6. Vishaal Kumar, "'Sexual Exploitation of Children Prevalent in Urban Areas' – Report", in The Fiji Times, 29 September 2020.
7. ANDI and ILO, Piores Formas de Trabalho Infantil: Um guia para jornalistas, 2007; and ANDI and ILO, Boas Práticas em Comunicação: Um guia para fontes de informação, 2007.
8. ILO, "Reporting on Forced Labour and Fair Recruitment: An ILO Toolkit for Journalists".
9. Ethical Journalism Network, "About the EJN".
10. Fiji Bureau of Statistics. Fiji Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2021: Fact Sheet, 2021.
11. Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business!, 2013.
12. Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Department of Social Welfare, Child Services Unit, Child Welfare Act Referrals, 2020 Fiscal Year Analysis Report, 2021; and Child Services Unit, 2019 Data.
13. Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Department of Social Welfare, Child Services Unit, Child Welfare Act Referrals, 2020 Fiscal Year Analysis Report, 2021; and Child Services Unit, 2019 Data.
14. US Department of State, "2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Fiji"; and Anish Chand, "No Probe on Child Labour Violation", in The Fiji Times, 27 August.
15. Fiji Bureau of Statistics. Fiji Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2021, Fact Sheet, 2021.
16. ECPAT International. Fiji: ECPAT Country Overview – A Report on the Scale, Scope and Context of the Sexual Exploitation of Children, 2019.
17. Government of Fiji, "Press Release on Commission Works to Prevent Suicide", 5 February 2019.
18. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children (United Nations, 2006).
19. Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business!, 2013.

20. It should be noted, however, that in a global survey of 26,258 children from 137 countries by the #CovidUnder19 initiative, 36 per cent of children reported feeling safer during lockdown. This reflects that for many children the source of abuse, neglect and exploitation is outside of their homes. For more information see: #CovidUnder19, "Children's Rights during Corona-virus: Children's Views and Experiences", Thematic Summary, 2021.
21. Information for this section is derived from the Government of Fiji's Inter-agency Guidelines on Child Abuse and Neglect, revised 2020.
22. As per 2020 data from Department of Social Welfare's Child Welfare Act (CWA) National Database. Please note, children may have been referred for various reasons, including abuse, neglect, exploitation and other welfare concerns, such as malnutrition.
23. As per a forthcoming review and study report commissioned by UNICEF.
24. The ILO has developed an illustrated InfoStory that can be helpful to understand the impact of child labour, zooming in on the agricultural sector. For more see: https://www.ilo.org/infostories/en-GB/Stories/Child-Labour/Child-Labour-In-Agriculture.
25. ILO, "Causes of Child Labour".
26. ILO, A Practical Guide for Journalists: Fighting Child Labour and Promoting Children's Rights in Myanmar's Media, 2019.
27. ILO, "What is meant by commercial sexual exploitation of children?", at https://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/CSEC/lang--en/index.htm.
28. See UNICEF, UNESCAP and ECPAT, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in the Pacific: A Regional Report, 2006; and UNESCAP, Pacific Perspectives on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth, 2009.
29. ILO, "Consequences of Child Labour".
30. ILO, "Consequences of Child Labour". For more on this, see ILO and PBSO, Sustaining Peace through Decent Work and Employment, 2012, and ILO, Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience, ILC.105/V/1 (2016).
31. For the complete text of the Employment Relations Act 2007, see: https://www.laws.gov.fj/Acts/DisplayAct/2910.
32. Government of Fiji, "Press Release on Robust and Consistent Effort by the Fijian Government in Tackling Child Labour in Fiji", 9 April 2021.
33. This section is based on information from:
    - Parliament of Fiji, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, Review Report to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, Parliamentary Paper No. 252, 2020.

- Lechuga Foundation and Sexual Rights Initiative, "Report on Fiji: 7th Round of the Universal Periodic Review – February 2010", 2010;
- ILO, "Fiji: Legislation".
- Government of Fiji, "Press Release on Robust and Consistent Effort by the Fijian Government in Tackling Child Labour in Fiji", 9 April 2021.

34. This chapter is based on content derived from:
    - The Constitution of the Republic of Fiji;
    - The Media Industry Development Act 2010;
    - ILO, A Practical Guide for Journalists: Fighting Child Labour and Promoting Children's Rights in Myanmar's Media, 2019.
    - ANDI and ILO, Piores Formas de Trabalho Infantil: Um guia para jornalistas, 2007;
    - ANDI and ILO, Boas Práticas em Comunicação: Um guia para fontes de informação, 2007.
    - ILO, "Reporting on Forced Labour and Fair Recruitment: An ILO Toolkit for Journalists".
    - UNICEF, "Guidelines for Journalists Reporting on Children".
35. Tae Kami Foundation, "WOWS – Walk on Walk Strong – Tae's Song, Tae's Message".
36. For more information, see: Constructive Institute, "Why".
37. For more information, see: Solutions Journalism Network, "Homepage".
38. The complete text of the Convention is available at: https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text.
39. The DART Center for Journalism & Trauma provides useful guidance on covering children and youth, including tips for interviewing.
40. Fiji Bureau of Statistics, "2019–20 Household Income and Expenditure Survey: Preliminary Release", Statistical News No. 4, 2021
41. Government of Fiji, "Press Release on Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum's 2020-2021 National Budget Address", 17 July 2020.
42. UNICEF, "Press Release on Over 30,000 Cyclone Affected Fijian Children and Their Families to Receive Support under New UNICEF–Government of New Zealand Partnership", 25 June 2021.


Health and Mental Health
Basic Needs
Neighborhood Climate /Built Environment
Education
Foundations To Thrive

International Labour Organization

unicef

for every child