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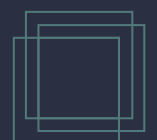


International
Labour
Organization



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR SURVEY 2016 ANALYTICAL REPORT TIMOR-LESTE





The Analytical Report of the Timor-Leste National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2016¹ presents key statistics on the magnitude, characteristics and main determinants of child labour in Timor-Leste, and analyzes working conditions and the consequences on children's health and education. Specifically, the NCLS collected information on socio-economic, demographic and educational characteristics, nature and type of work in terms of hours, working conditions, type of activity, and exposure to risks, among others. The survey results provide comprehensive statistical information for the identification of measures required for the effective elimination of child labour. This is a summary of key findings presented in the report.

Survey methodology

The 2015 general population census database was used as the sampling frame, from which 1,755 private households were sampled covering the urban and rural areas of all 13 municipalities of the country. A two-stage cluster sampling design was used with 117 enumeration areas randomly selected at the first stage (with probability proportional to size) and 15 households selected in each sampled enumeration area through systematic sampling. The target population of the survey was children 5-17 years old. Data collection took place between January 18 and February 19, 2016.

Concepts and definitions

The starting point for studying the extent and characteristics of child labour in Timor-Leste are the international conventions related to the rights of the child and child labour: the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989; ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour (1999); and related supplementary ILO Recommendations No. 146 and No. 190. The international legislative framework is supplemented by a set of instruments at the national level, including: the National Constitution of Timor-Leste; the Labour Code (Section II on the regulation of work of minors) and the Penal Code of Timor-Leste. For the transposition of legal instruments into statistical indicators, the report used the framework provided by the Resolution on child labour statistics adopted by the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

1 ILO, *Timor-Leste National Child Labour Survey 2016 – Analytical Report*, Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch (FUNDAMENTALS), Geneva, ILO, 2019. Available at: www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_719346/lang--en/index.htm.



Activities performed by children

Based on the 2015 General Population Census data, there are 421,655 children aged 5-17 years in Timor-Leste, with boys constituting 50.6 percent and girls 49.4 percent. Almost four in every five children (78.7 percent) live in rural areas.

Approximately 16.1 percent of children aged 5-17 years are economically active (employed). The prevalence of economic activity is 15.5 percent for boys and 16.5 percent for girls. There is a sharp increase in children's involvement in economic activities with age from 9.9 percent in the 5-12 year-old bracket to 28.8 percent for 15-17 year-olds. Children in rural areas are almost four times more likely to be in economic activity than their peers in urban areas (19 percent against 5.5 percent). The rural nature of children's economic activity is even more evident in absolute terms: rural children in employment number 62,710 while their counterparts in cities and towns number only 4,978. The percentage of children employed over the last year is overwhelmingly higher than that of working children over the past week in all three age groups and also by area of residence. Survey results indicate that about 1 percent (4,019) of non-working children aged 5-17 years were seeking work during the reference week.

It is estimated that 84 percent of children aged 5-17 years attended school in the current academic year (353,447 of 421,655 children). The school attendance rate stands at 83.4 percent among boys and at 84.4 percent among girls. School attendance rates are higher for children aged 13-14 years (89.8 percent), followed by children aged 15-17 years (83.1 percent).

Approximately 65.8 percent of children aged 5-17 years are engaged in household chores, including 61.5 percent of boys and 70.1 percent of girls. Engagement in household chores for boys and girls increases with age, but levels are systematically higher for girls than boys in all age groups. Cleaning utensils, house, washing-up, washing clothes and preparing and serving meals are the most common household chores performed by children in Timor-Leste. The average time spent by children on household chores equals 9.3 hours per week. Girls spend on average 0.8 hours more per week than boys. The intensity of household chores is systematically higher in rural areas than in urban areas for both boys and girls. In all age groups girls are overrepresented among children doing household chores above 14 hours per week. A non-negligible proportion of boys and girls within each age group conduct household chores for 24 hours or more per week, which clearly constitutes a potential impediment to their adequate participation in the education system.

The survey found that 70.7 percent of children aged 5-17 years attend school exclusively, while about 13.2 percent of children aged 5-17 years are both in employment and school, and less than 2.9 percent are in employment exclusively (i.e., are working without also going to school). The remaining 13.2 percent of children aged 5-17 year are neither in employment nor in schooling. Children living in rural areas are about three times more likely to work exclusively (3.4 percent against 1.1 percent) and to work and study (15.5 percent against 4.4 percent) than their urban counterparts.



Characteristics of working children

Children aged 5-17 years are mainly working in “agriculture, hunting and forestry” and “other community, social and personal service activities”, as per the International Standard Industry Classification (ISIC Revision 3.1). These two industries concentrate nearly 83 percent of all working children in Timor-Leste.

Working children aged 5-17 years are largely employed in “field crop and vegetable growers” (56 percent) and as “housekeeping and restaurant service workers” (26 percent). The remaining 8 percent of working children are working as retail sales workers/street vendors. The gender analysis reveals important differences in terms of the occupations carried out by boys and girls. While boys and girls have a similar relative involvement as “field crop and vegetable growers” (55.7 percent and 54.7 percent, respectively), girls are more likely to work as “housekeeping and restaurant services workers” than boys (31.5 percent against 20.8 percent). Also in terms of area of residence “field crop and vegetable growers” are largely concentrated in rural areas, while “housekeeping and restaurant services workers” and “retail sales workers/street vendors” have a higher concentration in urban settings.

Working children aged 5-17 years are mainly categorized as “contributing family workers” (56 percent), followed by “own-account workers” (35 percent) and “employees” (9 percent).

Economically active children aged 5-17 years work an average of 16.3 hours per week. Data disaggregated by gender shows boys in this age group work on average 16.6 hours per week compared to 16.0 hours worked by girls. In urban areas, the average number of hours worked per week is greater than that found in rural areas (18.9 hours per week against 16.1 hours per week). Additionally, as age increases, so does the number of hours that children spend on economic activities. This increase is particularly pronounced in urban areas where children aged 15-17 years work an average of 8.6 hours more than their counterparts of 5 to 12 years.

The main reason for children to work in Timor-Leste is to “supplement family income” (58.4 percent). The second main reason why children work is to “learn skills” (28.5 percent). Help in a household enterprise and to help pay family debt complete the main reasons with 6.3 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively. The majority of working children work primarily at their family dwelling (46 percent), followed by work in plantations/farm/garden (38 percent) and fixed, street or market stall (5 percent).

Child labour and hazardous work

Child labour is statistically defined as children of both sexes, between the ages of 5 and 17 years, who were involved in one or more of the following types of economic activities during the reference week prior to the survey:

- ◆ Hazardous work for all children aged 5-17 years
- ◆ Child labour other than hazardous work, composed of:
 - ◆ Children aged 5-12 years performing at least one hour of economic activities during the last week and;
 - ◆ Children aged 13-14 years performing between 26 and 44 hours of work per week or more than 5 hours per day, or who did not take two full days of rest during the past week.

Out of the total children aged 5-17 years (421,655), 83.9 percent are not working, 12.5 percent are in child labour (52,651) and 3.6 percent are working in permissible forms of work (15,037). There is a sharp increase in children's involvement in child labour from 9.9 percent in the 5-12 year old age group to 20.8 percent of 13-14 year olds. Child labour prevalence decreases for 15-17 year olds (14.1 percent) as many of these children have attained the minimum age for admission to employment and are not involved in prohibited forms of hazardous work.

Children in rural areas are almost four times more likely to be in child labour than their urban counterparts (14.8 percent against

3.9 percent). In absolute terms, rural children in child labour number 49,102, while their counterparts in urban areas number 3,549. Gender disaggregation shows that girls have a higher prevalence of child labour than boys (13.4 against 11.5 percent). This observation holds true regardless of the area of residence and age group.

For the purpose of statistical measurement, children engaged in hazardous work include all persons aged 5-17 years who, during a specified time period, were engaged in one or more of the following categories of activities:

- ◆ Working long hours (45 hours per week or more);²
- ◆ Working in hazardous conditions: carrying heavy loads, operating machinery / heavy equipment or working in an unhealthy environment (such as hazard exposures or working with dangerous tools)³ and;
- ◆ Night work (between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.).⁴

If a child's work falls in any of the above-mentioned categories, then their work is classified as hazardous work.

In Timor-Leste, 29,195 children aged 5-17 years, or 6.9 percent in the total age group, are involved in hazardous work. More than half (55.5 per cent) of children in child labour are classified in "hazardous work".

The survey shows that 41.9 percent of children in hazardous work perform their working activities during the night shift (between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.), 12.8 percent of children perform hazardous work for more than 44 hours per week, and approximately

2 The threshold of "long hours" for hazardous work reflects the maximum hour threshold permitted for adult work (Article 25, Normal hours of work, Labour Code, 2012).

3 Reflecting special protection clauses of the Labour Code, 2012 (Articles 67 and 68).

4 Operational statistical definition of night work adopted for this specific survey.



6 out of 10 children are working in hazardous conditions.

Children in hazardous work aged 5-17 years are prominently concentrated in "agriculture, hunting and forestry" and "other community, social and personal service activities". These two industries concentrate 87.2 percent of all children in hazardous work in Timor-Leste. Boys in hazardous work have a relatively higher involvement in agricultural activities than girls (48.2 percent against 37.3 percent), and a considerably lower involvement in "other community, social and personal service activities" (35.5 percent against 52.6 percent).

Children in hazardous work on average perform 20.5 hours of work per week, which is approximately 4 hours more than the average for children involved in economic activities.

Educational characteristics

Overall, about 84 percent of children, or 353,447 in absolute terms, attend school in 2016. Children in child labour aged 5-17 years are two percentage points less likely to attend school than children not in child labour (82.1 percent against 84.1 percent). Adolescent children in child labour are the most disadvantaged in school attendance: the school attendance of adolescent in child labour is almost 16 percentage points less than that of children not in child labour (69.4 percent against 85.3 percent).

Children in child labour who are at the same time attending school log an average of about 15 hours of work per week. Children in child labour and out of education work on average about 27 hours per week – 10 hours per week more than children in other employment and not attending school. Differences by gender in working hours by child labour and school attendance status are marginal. The number of average weekly working hours spent by children in child labour increases with the age. Children in child labour and not attending school living in rural areas log an average of 8 hours more per week compared to their urban counterpart (27 versus 19 hours per week respectively). On the contrary, average working hours of children in child labour who are also attending school are higher among those living in urban areas (20.9 hours per week) compared to their rural counterpart (14.5 hours per week).



There are 22,400 children engaged in hazardous work and at the same time attending school, representing about 76.7 percent of the total 29,200 children engaged in hazardous work. Children involved in hazardous work appear to be disadvantaged in terms of school attendance compared to those not involved in hazardous work.


About 43,000 children reported that they never attended school. More than 50 percent of children reported that “they are too young, as a reason for never having been at school.”⁵ Reasons related to lack of interest in school are cited by 13 percent of children, followed by the cost of schooling (cannot afford schooling - 9.9 percent) and because of disability/illness (8 percent). About 7 percent of children cited education is not considered valuable and other 5 percent declared that the family does not allow schooling or schooling is too far away (3.3 percent). Only two percent of children reported that they can not attend school because of the need to carry out household chores at home.

5 It is worth noting that only half of children reporting to be too young for going to school are aged 5 or 6 years. This result call for the need of awareness raising campaign addressing household and community leaders.

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