

SAY NO TO CHILD LABOUR!

CHILDREN BELONG IN SCHOOL
ADULTS IN THE WORKPLACE



GUIDELINES FOR TRADE UNIONS IN COLLECTING BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CHILD LABOUR

"Developing National and International Trade Union Strategies to Combat Child Labour"
INT/96/M05/NOR

Bureau for Workers' Activities
International Labour Office
Geneva

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Table of Contents

Preface.....	5
Background.....	6
Step 1: What information is already available.....	
National level – public sources.....	8
National level – private sources.....	8
Non-governmental organizations.....	9
Regional/international level.....	9
	10
Step 2: International instruments.....	
ILO Convention 138 on the Minimum Age of Employment.....	11
ILO Convention 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms Of Child Labour.....	11
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.....	11
IPEC Memorandum of Understanding.....	13
	14
Step 3: National instruments.....	
Collective bargaining.....	15
	15
Step 4: Focus of union survey.....	
Qualitative research.....	17
.....	18
Yemen, a case study.....	19
Step 5: Campaigning activities.....	20
Education.....	20
Codes of conduct.....	21
Conclusion.....	25
Annexe 1: Abbreviations.....	26
Annexe 2: SIMPOC Methods of Generating Data on Child Labour.....	27

Preface

While the broad outlines of the problem of child labour are well known, a knowledge of its many faces in each industry and locality is required to work out strategies for its elimination.

This publication was therefore developed in order to provide guidelines for trade unions in collecting background information on child labour. Trade unions need detailed information about facts concerning child labour issues, and they can also contribute to its gathering. Few organizations know the world of work as well as trade unions, and individual trade union officials and activists often know not only their own workplace, but others in their industry or locality. This practical knowledge can be put to good use in investigating child labour.

We are grateful to Mr. Nick Grisewood, who acted as a consultant in the development of this publication.

This booklet has been produced within the framework of the ACTRAV Project "Developing National and International Trade Union Strategies to Combat Child Labour" (INT/96/M06/NOR), funded by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project has produced several other documents such as this one, and a set of booklets under the heading "Trade Unions and Child Labour".

Geneva, December 2000

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Background

Information is fundamental to the development of any trade union campaign. This is particularly true when it comes to the exploitation of children in the labour market. Child labour exists in many forms – some very difficult to identify and often hidden from public view. Without a clear understanding of where, how and why it is occurring, it will remain impossible to deal with effectively.

Child labour *is* a trade union issue. Unions have a responsibility to society and workers in general to ensure that core labour standards and legislation are respected by all employers at all levels. Trade unions should make it their objective to help take children out of the work place and replace them with adult workers. Removing children from the work place will also require a comprehensive programme of rehabilitation, education and social protection. Unions can be part of the solution and have a crucial role in the process. It is a proven fact that child labour will flourish where union penetration is either weak or non-existent. By ensuring that adults replace children in the work place, unions will do a great service to society and enhance their own profile, membership potential and political standing.

Children belong in school – Adults in the work place

Say NO to child labour!

To develop appropriate policies and strategies, unions need to gather detailed and credible information on the incidence, form and level of child labour nationally and locally. Through its direct contact with national labour markets and its widespread network of members and officials, the union movement is in a unique position to go to the very source of the problem of child labour. The results of this activity will assist both the union movement and national authorities in devising strategies incorporating direct, specific action to alleviate and eliminate the problem of child labour.

There are many reasons why child labour continues to flourish. Severe cut-backs in public expenditure in countries world-wide have had a significant impact on the ability of the civil authorities to keep track of labour market trends and monitor violations of labour legislation. However, there are a considerable number of other, equally important factors that should be taken into account, including tradition, culture, general lack of education of both children and parents, poverty and socio-economic problems, increase in the use of “piece-rate” work, peer pressure, natural disasters and civil conflict.

In investigating some of these factors, trade unions will have to enter and examine in detail the informal employment market. The informal sector is growing steadily in all parts of the world, particularly in developing countries. While it is an area of considerable abuse in terms of labour practice violations, especially the use of child labour, it is also a vast source of untapped membership for the union movement. Penetrating the informal sector is a win-win situation for unions and workers. Workers will benefit from improved working conditions and protection of their interests, and unions can launch organizing campaigns of considerable potential.

Where to start? The hardest step is often the first. Therefore, this document has been designed to lead unions through the various steps from finding out what information is already available from a wide range of sources, supplementing this with the results of their own investigations to how best to use all the information available to take children out of the work place and put them back into school and secure environments, such as the family unit, where they belong.

The five steps to childhood reclaimed.

- Step 1: What information is already available**
- Step 2: International instruments**
- Step 3: National instruments**
- Step 4. Focus on union survey**
- Step 5: Campaigning activities**

Step 1: What information is already available

Information and statistics pertaining to child labour are often already available from a wide range of sources, including national government authorities, private bodies and regional and international organizations. Information is generally gathered by various bodies, which then limit its dissemination for any number of reasons, usually unintentionally. For example, a national statistics office may not have the resources to disseminate such information widely. If the information was gathered by a body such as the World Bank, the results of the survey will probably be used internally by the organization, may be sent to the government concerned or perhaps sold commercially. Therefore, do not be intimidated and ask for copies of any research that could help you in your work.

Before embarking upon your own activity, which will make heavy demands on valuable resources, explore every possible avenue of existing research. Obtain copies of any reports or publications that may be relevant to your needs and ascertain whether or not you will need further information of a more specific and detailed nature. In terms of what is available at the international level, contact the offices of the International Trade Secretariats (ITS) to which you are affiliated, the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) at the ILO, the individual organizations themselves or visit various related Internet sites if that facility is available to you.

The sections below pose the type of questions that you should ask when seeking sources of information. It is not an exhaustive list, but will provide guidance in identifying these various sources.

National level – public sources

- How does the government carry out social or economic research? For example, is this done through a National Statistics Office?
- How is this work carried out regionally and locally?
- What specific research has been carried out on:
 - the number of children at work?
 - the correlation between official school-leaving ages and children in the workplace?
 - the causes and effects of child labour?
- How have these bodies dealt with:
 - different sectors of the economy?
 - the informal sector?
 - hazardous work?
- How recent is this research?

- Will it be updated and what form will the update take?
- Do you have copies of existing research?
- How are the results relevant for your work?

National level – private sources

- Has the government privatized socio-economic research activities and, if so, in what way?
- How have the new bodies researched child labour?
- Are there other organizations that carry out research?
- Have you contacted them and, if so, describe your relations and communications?
- In what way are the results of their research relevant for your work?
- Can you contract their services to carry out research on your behalf?
- What procedures and processes are involved in contracting their services?

Non-governmental organizations

Partnerships forged between non-governmental organizations (NGO) and trade unions are crucial to the success of the campaign to eliminate child labour. If you have already established such partnerships and alliances, then you should seek to reinforce them in preparing your investigative activities.

- How have other NGOs conducted surveys or found other information sources on child labour?
- Have you contacted them to exchange information and experiences and what were the results?
- What other forms of co-operation and partnership could be established?
- In what way is the information useful in developing policies and activities?
- How have joint co-operation structures been established in which information and experiences can be continuously shared?

Regional/international level

Much research exists at the international level but is often not broadly disseminated at the national level. You should look widely for information at the international level and be prepared to ask for assistance from friendly organizations, such as ITSs, to which you are affiliated.

- Are you aware of any research on child labour in the country carried out by a regional or international body? For example, the ILO's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), UNICEF, Save the Children, Christian Aid, ITSs and regional economic integration bodies (European Union, NAFTA, CARICON, SADC).
- Have you contacted any regional or sub-regional trade union organizations to find out if research exists?
- What were the results of your efforts?
- How have ITS(s) helped in finding out if research exists at the international level?
- Does your organization have access to the Internet?
- How have you used the Internet to seek information on child labour research?
- When you visited the numerous sites where useful information can be found, such as those of the ILO, IPEC, World Bank, UNICEF, how did it help you in your work?

Step 2: International instruments

Having established what information is already available, and collected and analysed it, you should consider how you can gather information that would help your organization to go further with its campaign.

Treat existing research with caution and constantly ask yourself the question: “Does the information relate to reality?” The key features of any information-gathering process are the source of the information, the questions asked, the form they take and the presentation of the responses.

It will be on the basis of your own information-gathering process that you will begin to develop policies, strategies and action. Step 2 will assist you in shaping your own surveys.

ILO Convention 138 on the Minimum Age of Employment

- Are you aware of the terms and conditions of ILO Convention 138?
- What are they and how can they help you?
- Has the government ratified Convention 138?
- Is there a minimum legal age of employment and how is this defined?
- If the government has not ratified Convention 138, what form of legislation regards minimum employment age has been introduced?
- How is the implementation of this legislation monitored by government authorities?
- How effective is the monitoring process?
- How does the court system penalize offending employers?

ILO Convention 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour

At the June 1999 session of the International Labour Conference, a new Convention, number 182, was adopted. This Convention targets the elimination of the worst forms of child labour and very clearly defines what these are. The accompanying Recommendation, number 190, urges those Member States which ratify the new Convention to declare the worst forms of child labour to be criminal offences and impose penal sanctions on those who perpetrate them.

While Convention 138 remains the fundamental tool for the long-term elimination of child labour, Convention 182 provides an immediate injection of adrenalin for the

international campaign. It basically calls for the worst forms to cease immediately. The ILO is seeking widespread ratification of the Convention, and union organizations should take advantage of the international support available to further their own campaigns at the national level.

- What are the terms and conditions of Convention 182?
- How can they help you in your work?
- When does the government plan to ratify the Convention?
- How can you accelerate the ratification process?
- What hazardous forms of child labour exist in your country?
- In what way are they specific to:
 - communities?
 - regions?
 - gender?
 - age group?
- Can you identify offending employers and how can you build a case file against them?
- How can children be protected from offending employers?
- What form of campaign has been established targeting the worst forms of child labour?
- What forms of joint action could be developed with the government to raise awareness and help individuals and communities in need?

In addition to the above, you should also be considering how to collect information on what forms of hazardous work children do in your country. This information will be invaluable in implementing the terms and conditions of the new Convention. This will require you talking in detail to children, parents and others involved in order to find out more about children's working environments. This would include:

- identifying children in working situations – sex, family status, and so on;
- describing their working environments, what they do and what they produce;
- finding out how many hours they work a day and a week;
- finding out who provides daily food for the children and what exactly they eat;
- finding out if the children do repetitive work or work with harmful chemical substances and what these are;
- finding out if the children have ever attended school;
- finding out if the children suffer pain, in which part of the body and how often;

- finding out if the children have ever received medical treatment for pains;
- finding out if accidents have occurred in the work place and what sort of accidents.

In order to assist you in the task ahead of you, the Convention defines the worst forms of child labour as:

- all forms of slavery or similar practices, such as debt bondage and forced labour;
- use of children in armed conflict;
- use of children for sexually related activities, including prostitution;
- use of children for illicit activities, such as drug trafficking;
- any work harmful to the health, safety or morals of children.

“Hazardous work” is defined as:

- work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;
- work with dangerous machinery or tools or which involves heavy loads;
- work in unhealthy environments which may expose children to hazardous substances, temperatures, noise or vibrations;
- work under difficult conditions, such as long hours, night work or where the child is confined to the premises of the employer.

No child should be subjected to the above treatment or environment. Trade unions have a critical role to play in the ratification campaign of the new Convention and its subsequent implementation and monitoring.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- What are the terms and conditions of this UN Convention, particularly Article 32 relating to child labour?
- How were you involved in the ratification process?
- What structures, processes and procedures have been created following ratification?
- How can these help you in your work?
- How could you develop a campaign against child labour based on the UN and ILO Conventions?

IPEC Memorandum of Understanding

- What is IPEC?
- Has the government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with IPEC?
- What are the terms and conditions of the Memorandum?
- How is the union movement represented in the National Commission established through the IPEC programme?
- What project proposals have you submitted for funding to IPEC, including research?

Step 3: National instruments

As a union organization, you have at your disposal a key instrument that can play a significant role in the campaign to eliminate child labour – collective bargaining. A daily tool of union organizations, it is often overlooked in terms of its capacity to cover much wider socio-economic issues. While its main thrust must be that of protecting the working environment and conditions of its members, and generally defending their interests, the collective agreement can do much more. You should begin to explore the strengths of this instrument and make it work much harder for the benefit of your members and society in general.

Collective bargaining

In piecing together policy and strategy to tackle child labour, you should start with a close examination and analysis of your existing collective agreements and the preparations for forthcoming collective bargaining rounds.

- In what way do your existing agreements make reference to:
 - the age groups of workers?
 - their treatment?
 - working conditions?
 - wages?
 - work limitations?

- What recommendations or demands do you make?

- How are these based on existing minimum age legislation?

- Do they only refer to apprentices or other work-learning arrangements?

- In what way do your existing agreements make specific reference to child labour?

- How do your agreements request that employers must not use children below legal minimum age requirements?

- In what way do your agreements specifically demand that rather than use child labour, employers should pay a living wage and guarantee adequate working conditions?

- How do your agreements request that, in their contractual arrangements with suppliers and subcontractors, employers should insist that child labour is not used?

- How do your agreements deal with the issue of abusive labour practices?
- How do your agreements seek dialogue with employers on the issue of child labour to discuss areas of joint action, including:
 - raising awareness?
 - participation in the establishment of schools for child labourers?
 - campaigning to ask the government to ratify appropriate international labour standards?
- In what way do your agreements seek contributions from employers to help in developing:
 - awareness-raising programmes?
 - education programmes for workers?
 - specific programmes for child labourers themselves, their parents and families?
- Describe how effectively the collective bargaining process operates in your country/industry.
- Describe the type of dialogue you have with employers and its effectiveness.
- Does your union have to direct significant amounts of resources towards having its demands met? Why?
- What is being done to overcome existing difficulties?

The existence of child labour is as much an affront to trade unions as it is to society as a whole. As unions, you have a responsibility to your members and to society to ensure that child labour is stamped out and adults are in the work place, earning a living wage in decent conditions. In establishing an anti-child labour profile, you will further enhance the union's public image and establish and deepen relations with other NGOs and like-minded organizations. This will help you in many ways.

For example, in times of difficulty in terms of having demands met or in trying to influence legislation, you will have the option of putting your case to the public and encouraging their support for your demands and activities. Child labour is destructive – it damages the children themselves, families and deprives a country of its most valuable asset: people. It seriously undermines any possibility of sustainable development through the creation of an educated work-force.

Step 4: Focus of union survey

Unions should concentrate their energies and resources on the areas where they are strong and have structures and systems in place. A great deal of information is available at the work place level – where trade unions are strongest. Do not be too ambitious in developing your own survey. Focus your attention on such areas as:

- Where is child labour prevalent geographically and sectorally?
- What class of children are affected:
 - impoverished?
 - middle income?
 - certain ethnic groups?
- Are girls more affected than boys?
- What role does education, or lack of it, play in the prevalence of child labour?
- Are there schools in areas where it exists?
- Do girls and boys have equal opportunity to go to school?
- Are parents educated?
- What are the illiteracy rates in the area?
- Do unions have members in the area where child labour exists?
- Do unions have members in the sectors, or even companies, where it exists?
- Do union members work alongside children?
- Has any organization of any nature been involved in anti-child labour activities in your country?
- Has any public stance been taken by the government or local authorities?
- Are people generally aware of its existence, or even that it is wrong and should not happen?
- Are traditional leaders or community organizations aware of the dangers and destruction of child labour?

There are different types and levels of research, some of which are best left to experts in the field, for example, qualitative research.

Qualitative research

Qualitative research is a professional occupation. A great deal of skill, qualifications and professional training is involved in designing questionnaires or research briefs, collecting the information, analysing and presenting it. Trade unions cannot be expected to operate their own surveys at this level. Not only would it be difficult, but it would be an inappropriate use of precious resources.

Within the ILO, the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) was created to improve the information base and data collection methodology on child labour¹. SIMPOC was launched in 1998 as an interdepartmental programme, managed by IPEC with technical assistance from the ILO's Bureau of Statistics, to assist member countries in establishing the following:

- a programme for the collection and use of quantitative and qualitative data on the scale, distribution, characteristics, causes and consequences of child labour;
- a basis for child labour data analysis which would be used in planning, formulating and implementing interventions, monitoring their implementation and assessing the impact of policies and programmes;
- a database on child labour consisting of information on institutions and organizations active in this field, child labour projects and programmes, industry-level actions, and national legislation and indicators; as well as
- data which could be compared across countries.

In many countries where IPEC is working, SIMPOC is collaborating with national statistical services and Ministries of Labour to develop a data collection methodology and through that, proper statistics on child labour. If SIMPOC has been operating in your country, it may be that a national survey exists.

¹ See Annexe 2, Mr. Okutho, *SIMPOC Methods of Generating Data on Child Labour*, SIMPOC

Yemen, a case study

In order to provide a clearer understanding of the level and complexity of advanced research techniques, this document takes a brief look at the design of a study of child labour in Yemen commissioned by ACTRAV. Its purpose was to explore how children are engaged in various forms of work in Yemen and took into account such factors as school attendance, socialization, personal development and health in general.

The study used various qualitative techniques. First, group discussions or “focus groups” were held to establish a list of economic sectors that should be explored for child labour activity. Second, the same focus groups helped elaborate the criteria for selection of children to be interviewed that would guarantee coverage of all situations. Third, for each case, a set of interviews was defined in order to obtain views and information from the children themselves and their parents, employers and teachers.

Research design has to take into account local tradition and the cultural environment, for example, interviewing children who work at home or as domestic workers. Interviewing children themselves is also a challenge. Field-workers often have to take the time to explain questions over again in order to get the most accurate answer from children.

Other difficulties encountered in Yemen included interviewing illiterate parents who could not handle some of the questions. Fieldwork is conducted over an extended period of time and can cover a significant number of people. In Yemen, the trade union movement helped in identifying appropriate work places, geographical areas and local traditions. It also helped in encouraging employers and parents in responding to field-workers.

Appropriate statistical analysis techniques were used to interpret the results and prepare a final report on the findings. Qualitative research is a complex and intricate process that should be left to those qualified to design and implement systems and analyse data. The trade union movement, however, can play a role in the data collection process.

Because of their very nature, trade unions can obtain information in areas that would be difficult, if not impossible, for professional researchers to penetrate. Workers and their children, and sometimes employers themselves, will respond more openly to trade union representatives. After all, in many cases, the trade union representative will know the working children personally, their parents and probably the employer as well. Indeed, the situation could even arise in which the child or his/her parents are related to the union representative. They have a key role to play in the overall campaign to eliminate child labour and it is crucial that they face up to the challenge.

Step 5: Campaigning activities

Campaigns are becoming more and more a part of trade union activities. They provide an effective parallel to the development of “project-based work” in the business world today. Each union campaign is a project with clearly defined aims and objectives, tools to reach those objectives, a system of continuous monitoring and the definition of means by which to measure results.

This report deals with two crucial areas of campaigning to work towards the goal of eliminating child labour. First, education which must underpin union efforts to raise awareness and eliminate child labour; and second, the implementation and monitoring of codes of conduct which are becoming increasingly popular as a means to oblige employers to respect fundamental international labour standards.

Education

Like all things in life, qualitative research has its failings. It can be carried out by foreign researchers with no experience of the country, or it might not take national or local situations or environments enough into account. It can be statistical research of a very impersonal nature. Unions can make a critical difference by providing a much broader, in-depth and socio-economic analysis. They can either offer a vital supplement to qualitative research, or can supply significant information in themselves.

Information gathering of this nature does not have to be an expensive process, and widespread use should be made of the grassroots membership network. This will involve the development of an education programme for members to raise their awareness of child labour. In order to supply the union with relevant information, members need to know exactly what they are looking for, what questions they should ask of themselves and others, and how to analyse the information they gather.

- What education programmes do you already have in place for your members?
- How would you develop a child labour module that could be integrated into the overall union education programme?
- How would you develop a separate programme for child labour ?
- What material do you already have that could be used to raise the awareness of your members?
- How would you develop new material?
- In what ways have you contacted various bodies, ILO/ACTRAV, ITS(s), or other bodies or agencies in order to find out what material is already available which you could adapt for your own purposes?

- What is the most effective way to raise the awareness of your members?
- In which areas and sectors is child labour prevalent in your country?
- How would you go about targeting information campaigns to members in those areas?
- Are the children of some of your members child labourers?

Awareness-raising programmes should target your members in two ways: first, as trade unionists, and second, as responsible and concerned parents.

Make contact with education institutions at all levels, primary, secondary and tertiary, in order to share resources and ideas.

It is important to enlist the concern and participation of young people and children in fighting child labour. Peer pressure and peer education are among the most powerful and influential forces on young people.

Codes of conduct

Over the last few years, there has been an increasing demand from the international trade union movement and a number of concerned international NGOs to introduce the concept of “Codes of Conduct” or “Codes of Labour Practice”. Basically, these are agreements developed, negotiated and signed with individual companies, employers’ federations or representative organizations. The agreements set out fundamental principles to be respected covering a wide range of labour practices, and particularly child labour. They apply to the entire production chain, from high street shops down to subcontracting factories in any country in the world.

These instruments are becoming more and more widely used. However, they are a very recent development and like all new developments they have to ascend a learning curve, so their impact is varied. All parties are involved in this learning process and, as time advances and practical experience comes into play, these tools are slowly becoming better honed for the purpose for which they were created.

The biggest problems that have had to be overcome are the implementation of the codes and verification. It is one thing for the codes to be signed between the concerned parties; it is another to ensure that they are implemented in relevant countries and that the results are monitored by independent bodies. It is in this area that trade unions can have a significant role to play. Ask for copies of such codes from bodies such as ACTRAV/ILO, ITS(s), the ICFTU or other NGOs known to you. Study the terms and conditions of these codes and the areas in which trade unions can play a positive role.

Find out if any such codes exist that might involve companies that are either multinational in nature and operate in your country, or where companies in your country are implicated as suppliers or subcontractors. Contact the same bodies as above to establish whether codes exist involving companies in your country and find out as much as possible about the implementation and verification aspects.

In reflecting on what else you can and should do, consider the following:

- What copies of various codes of conduct do you have?
- What are the terms and conditions of these codes?
- What impact can they can have in the fight against child labour?

If codes do operate in your country, then establish a role for your organization. Find out more about the companies concerned:

- Where do they operate?
- How do they operate?
- What working conditions do they offer employees?

Talk to their employees:

- Does your union organize these workers?
- Recruit them – find out their needs and demands. Can you help?
- Do they have a collective agreement? Remember – codes of conduct should insist that workers enjoy freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively.

Tell the workers about the code and what its terms and conditions mean for them. Talk to the employer and ensure that all aspects of the code are being implemented. If the employer rejects your approaches, then send a report to the ITS or organization which negotiated the code.

Insist that appropriate action is taken. Most of all, find out if child labour is being used by these companies. Collect evidence by interviewing the children and their parents and send a full report to the organizations concerned.

Find out more about why child labour exists in that area, factory, community:

- Do you have members there?
- Is it a poor area?
- Does child labour exist for reasons other than poverty?

It is important to provide a comprehensive report on the socio-economic environment as this will help considerably in developing solutions:

- Are there government schools where the children can go nearby?
- Do schools need to be established for the children to provide alternatives?
- Will the government fund their establishment?

Monitor on a regular basis the activities and employment policies of companies implicated in codes of conduct. Use the monitoring process as an organization tool to expand and enhance your own membership base.

Let it be known to the company and the local government authorities that you are playing this role. It will greatly assist the process for these bodies to realize that an independent organization is keeping an eye on the implementation of the code's terms and conditions.

In addition to getting to know more about existing codes, begin to analyse and discuss whether your own organization should develop codes of conduct with identified companies. Approach employers' federations or individual employers to discuss the issue. Base your discussions on ILO Conventions 138 and 182 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Talk about growing public awareness and international opinion on the issue of child labour and abusive labour practices world-wide. Raise the issue of ethical trading initiatives and the need for companies to assume their responsibilities in the country's socio-economic development. Point out the advantages of national codes of conduct already being in place before multinational companies begin to impose their own.

International trade will develop more quickly and efficiently if foreign companies learn that appropriate labour standards and international conventions are already integrated into national instruments.

Seek external help from the ILO, ITS(s) and international NGOs on developing such codes. Create alliances and partnerships with like-minded organizations in the development and implementation of such codes.

Involve communities, schools, the media, local authorities and the broader trade union movement in the process. Such support will go a long way in ensuring their effective implementation and verification. Look also to your sister organizations in your region for assistance and support on this issue.

The regional and global economic integration process is a key issue here. Many companies in your country are, in all likelihood, trading in neighbouring countries. Use and develop your existing contacts with unions in these countries.

Are structures already in place for communications and the exchange of information? Make sure communications structures are in place. The key issue in codes of conduct

is that of communications and the ability to respond quickly and efficiently to new situations.

Find out which companies from your country are operating in the region, and likewise find out which companies from neighbouring countries are operating in yours. Exchange information on the operations and activities of these countries and prepare a strategy to persuade these companies to negotiate regional codes of conduct.

Conclusion

The road ahead is long and arduous and you should plan with a view to the long-term objective of eliminating child labour. Before undertaking any form of survey or information-gathering process, you need to clearly establish what sort of information you would require to help in eliminating child labour. There are numerous sources for such information today and ILO/ACTRAV and ITS(s) can help you in identifying these sources.

You will also need to have a very clear idea of what your union would like to do in terms of eliminating child labour. This will require assessing the availability of resources and what can be done with what is available.

You should establish a list of priorities – a wish list – of what you would like to achieve within specified deadlines. Develop this list on regional and international levels, for example, discuss the possibility of transnational partnerships with sister unions in neighbouring countries. Contact ITS(s) and explore possible areas of co-operation and field projects.

However, it is crucial that any programme is long-term, action-oriented and self-sustainable. Having analysed the information that exists, you will already have a clearer idea of what the overall situation is like. You can then develop your own surveys and education programmes and begin to go about the key process of raising awareness and initiating action.

Do not be too ambitious in the initial stages. The simple act of collecting information and disseminating it to your members, and to regional and international organizations, will do much to assist the overall campaign to eliminate child labour. It will effectively supplement more qualitative research that has either been carried out or is planned.

Aim to begin your programme with the information-gathering process and plan your future work and strategy on the basis of these results. Do not underestimate your own strengths and abilities and do not hesitate to call on other organizations for assistance, advice and support.

Child labour can only be eliminated through concerted global, regional, national and local action, supported by political will, appropriate resources and committed trade union organizations. On such a basis we will be able to take children out of the work place, put them back into schools and their homes where they belong, and put adult workers back in their place. Say **NO** to child labour.

Abbreviations

ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities
CARICON	The Caribbean Community and Common Market
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPEC	ILO's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour
ITS	International Trade Secretariats
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
SADC	South African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

SIMPOC Methods of Generating Data on Child Labour

This is a short note on the three current methods being used for generating child labour statistics and information, namely National Child Labour Surveys (household based), Rapid Assessment Method and Baseline Surveys.

National Child Labour Surveys

These are country-wide sample child labour inquiries intended to generate information on children (aged 5-17) activities i.e schooling and working in and outside the household. It is household-based for the main reason that the decision of whether a child will go to school or work or do both has a lot to do with the circumstances of the households where they live and its composition. Understanding the dynamics of the household is therefore crucial in underpinning the reasons for and consequences of child labour. It also provides opportunity to establish the regional distribution in that particular country and between sectors as well as gender issues. Information collected includes, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Demographic and socio-economic characteristics: levels of education and training (enrollments and attendance), economic and non-economic activities, occupation and skill-levels, hours of work, earnings and other working and living conditions. The health and safety issues as well as the risks they face at work.
- b) Characteristics of the sectors where children are working. These are normally classified as public sector (further broken down into central government, local government, provincial government, etc.) or private sector. While public sector establishments are formal, private sector establishments are either informal or formal.
- c) Where and how long the children have been working and the factors that lead children to work or families to put children to work. The perceptions of the parents/guardians, children and employers about child labour, regulations, laws and legislation, etc.

The measurement of children activities is based on the international definition of economically active persons. That is, persons who are involved in work for pay in cash or kind, profit and family gain (including unpaid family work) during the reference period (often twelve months and the previous one week before the date of interview) for **at least** one hour on any day of the week. It must be clarified that NOT all economically active children constitute child labour as defined broadly to mean those activities that have adverse effects on the physical, mental, moral development and education of children.

In order to focus to this kind of activities (child labour), certain criteria have to be applied.

These are type of job/occupation, sector or activity, and hours of work. The major variation here is hours of work - to determine the minimum number of hours above which a child becomes **vulnerable or at risk**. Because of this, non-economic activities such as housekeeping and/or household chores carried out in parents or guardians' households are also included.

With regards to the worst forms of child labour, only those activities classified as hazardous are normally captured during the survey. The other hidden types like child prostitution, child trafficking, etc., a different methodology is recommended, and this is discussed below.

The Rapid Assessment Method (RAP)

RAP is a methodology used for gathering information in a quick and simplified way within small, clearly defined geographical areas, for example small communities, towns, villages, urban area, etc, on working and life circumstances of children by means of discussions and interviews. It uses semi-structured questionnaires or none at all; in-depth interviews and conversations; careful and attentive observation; and background information derived from a variety of sources, such as survey findings, reports, case studies, key informants or knowledgeable persons.

Its scope is therefore limited and local, and it focuses on areas, which are suspected or known to have substantial concentrations of children involved in activities or occupations difficult to identify and quantify. Its output is primarily qualitative and descriptive. Some numerical data may be obtained as background information or through interviews, but these usually cannot be generalized to larger populations.

Rapid Assessment thus seeks to strike a reasonable balance between statistical precision and impressionistic data gathering. It can generate information quickly that is realistic and very useful for raising public awareness, programming, planning, in-depth research and also for complementing the findings of national household-based surveys which fail to fully capture illegal or immoral activities of anyone (adults or children).

For example, SIMPOC has launched RAP in 38 locations (in 21 countries and one border area) to study specific type of the worst forms of child labour. These are: prostitution, street children, drug trafficking, child soldiers, child domestic workers, children in bondage, child trafficking, and hazardous child labour in selected commercial agriculture, fishing, garbage dumps, mining, certain small workshops and urban environment.

Baseline Surveys

There are number of large IPEC projects in specific sectors or geographical area (both within country and regional) with requirement for large-scale baseline survey to identify the target groups and to establish underlying information to monitor and evaluate project interventions. Baseline surveys have started in a number of

programmes; namely: footwear and fishing projects in S.E Asia, coffee projects in Central America, and trafficking projects in Africa.

Take the example of the Central America Action Programme entitled "Combatting Child Labour in the Coffee Industry of Central America and the Dominican Republic" 1999-2001. The goal of this programme is to prevent and progressively eliminate child labour in the coffee industry of Central America and the Dominican Republic by (i) preventing and removing children from full-time and hazardous work; (ii) providing the target children and families with viable alternatives through a package of social protection measures; (iii) mobilising support and working in close partnership with the coffee producers, communities, families, NGOs, and the Governments in the region in order to sustain action to prevent child labour; (iv) designing and implementing a credible child labour monitoring system; and (v) promoting the sharing of experience in the prevention and elimination of child labour in the coffee sector at the national and subregional levels. Six countries are to participate in this programme: Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

In this case, a baseline survey is required for setting clear indicators and assessing the achievements made during programme implementation. Work undertaken include, but not limited, to the following:

- a) Identification and listing of the coffee plantations using child workforce or suspected to use child workforce, based on lists/directories of coffee producers' associations, government institutions, unions, cooperatives as well as NGOs active in this field, if available. Alternatively, based on local enquiries in the area to be investigated comprising discussions with coffee producers' associations, unions, government agencies, NGOs, community organizations, community leaders, religious groups and charitable associations; as well as labour inspection registries; specialized surveys; publications, case studies and special reports including newspaper and magazine reports; among other sources of information;
- b) Mapping the coffee plantations in the area under investigation, showing their major physical features and layout selection of the plantations and the locations of child workers;
- c) Selection of the coffee plantations to be surveyed. If the list established in (a) is small, all plantations may be investigated. Otherwise, a sample should be designed according to (b) above and the main objectives of the programme;
- d) Finalization of the survey questionnaires and the interviewers' manual according to the national circumstances and collection, analysis and publication of the results.

It should be noted that baseline surveys could be a combination of the two techniques describe above. It can use the semi-structured interviews of key informants, generate quantitative data but limited to the specific area (geographical) or sector being targeted.

Concluding Remarks

The three methodologies outlined above are not mutually exclusive instead they are complimentary. A national child labour survey would determine the “big picture” and areas for concentration; upon which more focused studies (RAP and Baseline studies) can be designed and executed. Understanding child labour situation from the viewpoint of Conventions No.138 and 182 would necessitate use of all these approaches. Of course, the strategic choice should not be only guided by the question of cost but the longer-term impact on the immediate concern and the bigger picture.