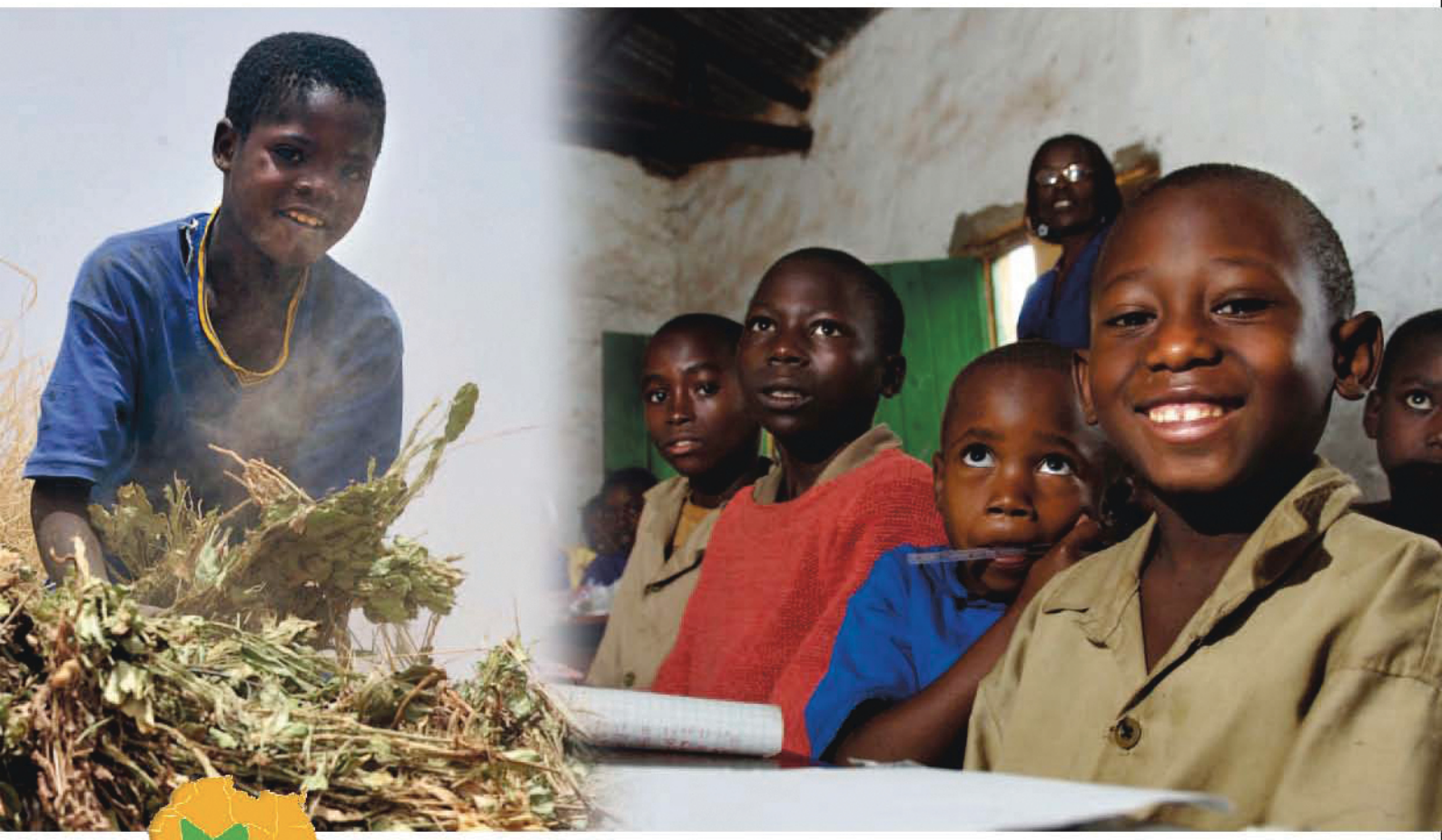
International Labour Organization

The twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalisation in the ECOWAS region



Understanding Children's Work
An Inter-Agency Research Cooperation Project

The twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalisation in the ECOWAS region

An overview

Pre-publication release

Foreword

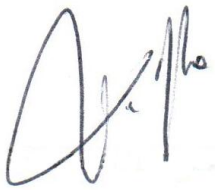
Child labour and educational marginalization represent major challenges in the ECOWAS region.

Child labour rates in the region are among the highest in the world – almost 21 million children aged 5-14 years, 25 percent of all children in this age group, are in child labour. At the same time, an alarmingly high number of primary school-aged children are out of school, often due to the demands of work.

As part of the efforts to address this urgent situation, Governments and regional institutions have developed the ECOWAS Child Policy and the accompanying Strategic Plan of Action for the ECOWAS Child Policy, as well as the West Africa Regional Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour (and especially its Worst Forms) and the Accra Declaration of the ECOWAS-ILO Symposium on West Africa Regional Action Plan. These plans signal the national intent to eliminate child labour and provide an essential framework for efforts to achieve this goal.

The ILO has produced this Report to help translate these plans into concrete actions. The Report is specifically aimed at building the evidence base necessary for the design and targeting of specific interventions against child labour.

It brings together the most recent available information from a variety of national household surveys to provide a detailed picture of child labour and the related challenge of educational marginalisation in the ECOWAS region.



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This Report is the result of strong team work. It benefited from a wealth of contributions and inputs by a range of experts within and outside the ILO. The contributions by the following persons in particular are gratefully acknowledged: Daniel O. Chachu (ILO-IPEC, Ghana), Honoré Djerma (ILO – DWT for West Africa), José Antonio Goncalves (ILO, Guinea Bissau), Stephen McClelland (ILO, Ghana) Giselle Mitton (ITC-ILO), Marie Ndiaye (ILO – IPEC – SIMPOC Dakar), Minoru Ogasawara (ILO-FRPW/IPEC, Africa), Dennis Zulu (ILO, CO Abuja) Olatunde Olayemi (Economic commission for West Africa States, ECOWAS), Project on the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour in West Africa (IPEC-AECID).

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The twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalisation in the ECOWAS region

An overview

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1. INTRODUCTION

1. Overcoming the twin challenges of child labour and educational marginalisation will be critical to progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in the ECOWAS region. Child labour rates in the region are among the highest in the world –almost 21 million children aged 5-14 years, 25% of all children in the age group, are in child labour. At the same time, an alarmingly high number of primary school-aged children are out of school, often due to the demands of work. The effects of child labour and educational marginalisation are well-documented: both can lead to social vulnerability and societal marginalisation, and both can permanently impair productive potential and therefore influence lifetime patterns of employment and pay. Child labour is also often associated with direct threats to children's health and well-being.

2. ECOWAS Ministers recognised the challenge of child labour, and signalled their commitment to addressing it, in developing the *ECOWAS Child Policy and the accompanying Strategic Plan of Action for the ECOWAS Child Policy 2009-2013*, as well as in adopting the *West Africa Regional Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour*[1]*, Especially its Worst Forms* in December 2012[2] and the follow-up *Accra Declaration of the ECOWAS/ILO Symposium on the West Africa Regional Action Plan* in May 2013.[3]

3. This Report promotes the translation of these plans into concrete action by helping build the evidence base necessary for the design and targeting of specific interventions against child labour. It brings together the most recent available information from a variety of national household surveys to provide a detailed picture of child labour and the related challenge of educational marginalisation in the ECOWAS region.

4. The Report benefited from a wealth of contributions and inputs by a range of experts within and outside the ILO. The preliminary results of the study were presented for feedback and comment during the ILO-ECOWAS Symposium in Accra (May 2013) that gathered representatives of the 15 ECOWAS member states. Further discussions were held with expert statisticians from selected countries during a technical meeting held in Dakar (November 2013)

5. The remainder of the Report is structured as follows. Chapter 2 discusses definitions and data sources as background for the descriptive statistics presented in the subsequent chapters. Chapter 3 reports both regional and country-specific estimates of children's involvement in employment and child labour, and how these estimates differ across countries and across population subgroups within countries. Chapter 4 assesses factors associated with children's employment. Chapter 5 looks at the characteristics of children's employment in order to shed light on children's workplace reality and their role in the labour force. Chapter 6 provides a more in-depth look at children's employment in the agriculture sector, where the overwhelming majority of child workers in ECOWAS are found. Chapter 7 assesses the interplay between children's employment and schooling, and in particular employment as a factor in educational marginalisation. Chapter 8 reports on out-of-school children, a

[1] *ECOWAS Child Policy*. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), ECOWAS Commission. Abuja, Nigeria, 2009

[2] *West Africa Regional Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour, Especially the Worst Forms*. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ministers of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs meeting on December 7 in Dakar, Senegal.

[3] *Declaration of the ECOWAS/ILO Symposium on the West Africa Regional Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour, Especially the Worst Forms*. Accra, Ghana 27-29 May 2013.Available at: *http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=22455*

closely-related policy concern in the ECOWAS region. Finally, Chapter 9 reviews policy priorities for addressing the issue of child labour.

Panel 1. **Understanding Children's Work (UCW) programme**

The inter-agency research programme, Understanding Children's Work (UCW), was initiated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNICEF and the World Bank to help inform efforts towards eliminating child labour.

The Programme is guided by the Roadmap adopted at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010, which lays out the priorities for the international community in the fight against child labour.

The Roadmap calls for effective partnership across the UN system to address child labour, and for mainstreaming child labour into policy and development frameworks. The Roadmap also calls for improved knowledge sharing and for further research aimed at guiding policy responses to child labour.

Research on the work and the vulnerability of children constitutes the main component of the UCW Programme. Through close collaboration with stakeholders in partner countries, the Programme produces research allowing a better understanding of child labour in its various dimensions.

The results of this research support the development of intervention strategies designed to remove children from the world of work and prevent others from entering it. As UCW research is conducted within an inter-agency framework, it promotes a shared understanding of child labour and provides a common platform for addressing it.

2. DEFINITIONS AND DATA SOURCES

6. Child labour is a legal rather than statistical concept, and the international legal standards that define it are therefore the necessary frame of reference for child labour measurement. The three principal international conventions on child labour – ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age)(C138), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms)(C182) together set the legal boundaries for child labour, and provide the legal basis for national and international actions against it (see Panel 2).

Panel 2. **International legal standards relating to child labour**

The term **child labour** refers to the subset of children's work that is injurious, negative or undesirable to children and that should be targeted for elimination. Three main international conventions – the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms) and ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age) – provide the main legal standards for child labour and a framework for efforts against it.

ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age) represents the most comprehensive and authoritative international definition of minimum age for admission to work or employment. C138 calls on Member States to set a general minimum age for admission to work or employment of at least 15 years of age (Art. 2.3) (14 years of age in less developed countries), and a higher minimum age of not less than 18 years for employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons, i.e., hazardous work (Art. 3.1). The Convention states that national laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons from 13 years of age (12 years in less developed countries) 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 (Art. 7).

ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour) supplements C138 by emphasising the subset of worst forms of child labour requiring immediate action. For the purposes of the Convention, worst forms of child labour comprise: (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, as well as forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties; and (d) 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 (Art. 3).

The **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC) recognises the child's right to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development (Art. 32.1). In order to achieve this goal, the CRC calls on States Parties to set minimum ages for admission to employment, having regard to other international instruments (Art. 32.2).

7. Translating these broad legal norms into statistical terms for measurement purposes is complicated by the fact that ILO Convention No. 138 (C138) contains a number of flexibility clauses left to the discretion of the competent national authority in consultation (where relevant) with worker and employer organisations. In accordance with C138, for example, national authorities may specify temporarily a lower general minimum age of 14 years. C138 also states that national laws may permit the work of persons from age 12 or 13 years in "light" work that is not likely to be harmful to their health or development or to prejudice their attendance at school. Children who are above the minimum working age are prohibited from involvement in hazardous work or other worst forms of child labour, but the Conventions (C138 and C182) leave responsibility for the compilation of specific lists of hazardous forms of work to national authorities. This means that there is no single legal definition of child labour across countries, and concomitantly, no single statistical measure of child labour consistent with national legislation across countries.

8. This point is illustrated in Table 1, which summarises key legislation relating to child labour in the ECOWAS countries. As shown, while all but Liberia have ratified ILO Convention No. 138, the minimum age specified at ratification ranges across countries from 14-16 years. Not all countries have provisions for

light work, and, among those that do have such provisions, there are differences in terms of the relevant age range and the make-up of light work. Similarly, not all countries have specified national lists of hazardous work, and there are large differences in contents among those that have drafted national lists.

Table 1. **Legislation relating to child labour in the ECOWAS countries**

Country	*C138 ratification*	*Minimum age specified*	*Light work provisions*	*Hazardous list*
Benin	Yes; 11 Jun. 2001	14 years	Yes; from 12 years (Arrêté n° 371/MTAS/ DGM/DT/SRE du 26 août 1987.)[a]	Yes (Decret N° 2011-029 du 31 Janvier 2011)
Burkina Faso	Yes; 11 Feb. 1999	15 years	Yes; from 13 years (Order No. 2008-0027-MTSS/SG/DGSST)[c]	Yes (Decree No. 2009-365/PRES/PM/MTSS/ MS/MASSN of 28 May 2009)[d]
Cabo Verde	Yes; 07 Feb. 2011	15 years	Yes; no minimum age specified (Section 262 Labour Code No. 5/2007)	No (national list formulated but not yet adopted)
Cote d'Ivoire	Yes; 07 Feb. 2003	14 years	Yes; from 12 years (Section 3D 356 of Decree No. 67-265 of 2 June 1967)[e]	Yes (Arrêté n° 009 MEMEASS/CAB du 19 janvier 2012 révisant l'arrêté n° 2250 du 14 mars 2005)
Gambia	Yes; 04 Sep. 2000[f]	14 years	No[g]	Yes (Section 44 of the Children's Act of 2005)[h]
Ghana	Yes; 06 Jun. 2011	15 years	Yes; from 13 years (Children's Act No. 560 of 1998, Section. 91.1)	Yes; from 13 years (Children's Act No. 560 of 1998, Section. 91.3)[i]
Guinea	Yes; 06 Jun. 2003	16 years	Yes; from 12 years (Arrêté n° 2791/MTASE/ DNTLS/96 du 22 avril 1996)[j]	Yes (Order No. 2791/MTASE/DNTLS/96 of 22 April 1996)
Guinea Bissau	Yes; 05 Mar. 2009	14 years	No	No
Liberia	No	No	No	No
Mali	Yes; 11 Mar. 2002	15 years	Yes; from 12 years (Section 189-35 of Decree No. 96-178/P-RM of 13 June 1996)[k]	Yes (Order No. 09-0151/MTFPRE-SG of 04 February 2009)
Niger	Yes; 04 Dec. 1978	14 years	Yes; from 12 years (2012 Labor Code)	No
Nigeria	Yes; 02 Oct. 2002	15 years	No	Yes (validated in 2013)[o]
Senegal	Yes; 15 Dec. 1999[l]	15 years	Yes; from 12 years (Arrêté n° 3748/MFPTEOP/DTSS du 6 juin 2003)	Yes (Arrêté n° 3750/MFPTEOP/DTSS du 6 juin 2003)
Sierra Leone	Yes; 10 Jun. 2011	15 years	Yes; from 13 years (Child Right Act of 2007, Sect. 127)	Yes; (Child Right Act of 2007, Sect. 128.3)[m]
Togo	Yes; 16 Mar. 1984	14 years[n]	No	Yes; (Arrêté n° 1464/MTEFP/DGTLS du 12 novembre 2007)

Notes:

(a) The Government indication that the National Labour Council approved a draft order amending Order No. 371 of 26 August 1987 issuing exemptions from the minimum age for admission to employment for children during its June 2010 session. According to the Government, this Order increases the minimum age for the admission of children to light work. (Source: ILO NORMLEX http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_ COMMENT_ID:2333585:NO).

(c) Order sets the age for admission to light work at 13 years or over. Furthermore, the Order prescribes the length of the working day (not more than four-and-a-half hours per day) and prohibits the performance of light work on Sundays and/or official or recognized holidays, and also at night between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. Children may not perform light work during the school term and may not be employed without the explicit permission of their parents or guardians. (Source: ILO NORMLEX http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:3076201:NO)

(d) This Decree, which defines a child as any person under 18 years of age, determines the list of hazardous types of work prohibited for children. The Committee observes that section 2 of the Decree specifically prohibits: work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of children; work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse; work performed underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces; and work performed with dangerous machinery, equipment or tools, or which involves the handling or carrying of heavy loads. Moreover, section 5 of the Decree establishes a list of hazardous types of work prohibited for children by sector of activity, including agriculture, stock rearing, fishing, agro-forestry and hunting, industry, mining, quarries and small-scale gold mines, construction and public works, the informal sector, craft industries, performing arts, transport, and the human and animal health sector.

(e) Section 3D 356 of Decree No. 67-265 of 2 June 1967 states that, under set conditions, exceptions are made to the provisions relating to the minimum age for admission to employment or work with respect to children of either sex of at least 12 years of age for domestic work or light work of a seasonal nature, such as harvesting or sorting work in plantations. It also notes that sections 3D 357 to 3D 361 of Decree No. 67-265 of 2 June 1967 lay down the conditions regulating the exception provided for in section 3D 356. Hence, under section 3D 357 of Decree No. 67-265 of 2 June 1967, no exception may be allowed which would be likely to jeopardize the provisions in force concerning compulsory schooling. Under section 3D 358, no child between 12 and 14 years of age may be employed without the express permission of his or her parents or guardian. Furthermore, section 3D 359(1) of the Decree states that individual permission given to children attending school shall not result in the duration of work referred to in the first article of the present chapter exceeding two hours per day, both on school days and during the holidays, or in the number of hours per day devoted to school and work exceeding seven hours. Under section 3D 359(2), subject to observation of the provisions of section 3D 357(1), the employment of children between 12 and 14 years of age may not exceed four-and-a-half hours per day. Section 3D 359(3) provides that, in all cases of employment of children between 12 and 14 years of age, work is prohibited on Sundays and public holidays. The same kinds of work are also prohibited at night at least for the period of 12 consecutive hours between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. (Source ILO NORMLEX http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:2294908).

(f) Government has, in its declaration appended to its ratification, indicated the exclusion of family undertakings and small-scale holdings from the scope of application of the Convention. Government has not yet adopted provisions permitting the employment of persons of at least 12 years of age on light work, in accordance with Article 7(1) and (4) of the Convention.

(g) As per Section 43(1) of the Children's Act, the minimum age for engaging a child for light work is 16 years.)

(h) Section 44 of the Children's Act of 2005 states that a child shall not be engaged in hazardous work which poses a danger to his or her health, safety or morals. Section 44(2) further lists the following types of work considered as hazardous: going to sea; mining and quarrying; carrying heavy loads; work in manufacturing industries where chemicals are used and produced; work in places where machines are used, and work in bars, hotels, and places of entertainment where a child may be exposed to immoral behaviour.

Table 1. **Legislation relating to child labour in the ECOWAS countries**

Night work between 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. is also prohibited to children (section 42). (Source ILO NORMLEX http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:2323057).
(i) As per Section 91.3 of the Children's Act No. 560 of 1998 hazardous work includes – (a) going to sea; (b) mining and quarrying; (c) porterage of heavy loads; (d) manufacturing industries where chemicals are produced or used; (e) work in places where machines are used; and (f) work in places such as bars, hotels and places of entertainment where a person may be exposed to immoral behaviour. The Government has indicated that it envisages reviewing and updating as necessary section 91 of the Children's Act, including the list of types of hazardous work, so as to be in compliance with the Convention. (Source ILO NORMLEX http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:3083622).
(j) Section 5 of the Child Labour Order provides that the age of admission to apprenticeship, which is set at 14 years, may, with the authorization of the labour inspector, be reduced to 12 years for the following types of work: light domestic tasks forming part of the work of a scullion, assistant cook, "small boy" or child minder; picking, gathering or sorting work performed in agricultural undertakings; light work of a non-industrial nature. Section 6 of the Child Labour Order allows the employment of young workers from 12 to 14 years of age, if the work is carried out in accordance with section 5 referred to above, and that a list must be submitted to the labour inspector within eight days, specifying the name of each worker, the nature of the work and the corresponding remuneration. Furthermore, section 7 of the Child Labour Order requires the written consent of the parent or guardian in the case of the employment of children aged from 12 to 14 years.
(k) Section 189-35 of Decree No. 96-178/P-RM of 13 June 1996 allows exceptions from the minimum age for admission to employment in the case of boys and girls of at least 12 years of age for domestic work and light work of a seasonal nature. The Government has indicated undertaking to raise the minimum age for domestic work and light work of a seasonal nature from 12 to 13 years. It is also preparing a draft order to determine light work activities and the conditions for their performance. (Source: ILO NORMLEX http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13100:0::NO:13100:P13100_COMMENT_ID:3147102)
(l) The Government declared in conformity with Article 5, paragraph 2, of the Convention that the provisions of the Convention do not apply to traditional pastoral or rural work without remuneration carried out in a family setting by children of less than 15 years of age and which aims at better integrating them in their social surroundings and the environment.
(m) As per Child Right Act of 2007, Sect. 128, work is hazardous when it poses a danger to the health, safety or morals of a person. (3) Hazardous work includes: (a) going to sea; (b) mining and quarrying; (c) porterage of heavy loads; (d) manufacturing industries where chemicals are produced or used; (e) work in places where machines are used; and (f) work in places such as bars, hotels and places of entertainment where a person may be exposed to immoral behaviour.
(n) Togo initially specified a minimum age for admission to employment or work of 14 years when it ratified the Convention, but section 150 of the Labour Code of 2006 provides that, "subject to the provisions respecting apprenticeship, children of either sex may not be employed in any enterprise or perform any type of work, even on their own account, before the age of fifteen (15) years".
(o) National Steering Committee on Child Labour validated the National Hazardous Child Labour list for Nigeria in 2013.

9. In view of these measurement challenges, and in order to facilitate cross-country comparisons, the Report uses two methods to approximate child labour. It first presents child labour estimates based on the methodology employed by ILO in its global child labour estimates. Following this, it relies on the broader concept of employment as an approximation of child labour. Children in employment are those engaged in any economic activity for at least one hour during the reference period.[4] Economic activity covers all market production and certain types of non-market production (principally the production of goods and services for own use). It includes forms of work in both the formal and informal economy; inside and outside family settings; work for pay or profit (in cash or in kind, part-time or full-time), or as a domestic worker outside the child's own household for an employer (with or without pay). It is worth repeating that these child labour approximations are not necessarily consistent with child labour as defined in legal terms in individual countries.

10. The Report focuses primarily on the 5-14 years age group, although it should be noted that international legal standards relating to child labour also extend to 15-17 year-olds.[5] The main reason for setting the upper age bound at 14 years relates to data shortcomings - data from the MICS/DHS survey instrument, used for ten of the 14 countries included in the study for child labour estimates, are limited to children up to the age of 14 years. In addition, even in countries where data for older children are available, it is very difficult to obtain information relating to the occupations included in the hazardous work lists from national survey datasets.

[4] The concept of employment is elaborated further in the Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization, adopted by the Nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 2013). The resolution is available at:

http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_230304/lang--en/index.htm

[5] The stipulations contained in ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 relating to hazardous work, excessively long work hours and unconditional worst forms, also extend to children aged 15-17 years. Likewise, the Convention on the Rights of the Child applies to all persons under the age of 18.

Table 2. **Listing of household survey datasets used in Report**

Country	*Survey name*	*Year*
Benin	Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)	2011-2012
Burkina Faso	Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)	2010
	Enquête Nationale sur le Travail des Enfants (SIMPOC)	2006
Cote d'Ivoire	Enquête Démographique et de Santé et à Indicateurs Multiples (EDS-MICS)	2011-2012
Gambia	Gambia Integrated Household Survey (IHS)	2008
Ghana	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)	2006
Guinea	National Child Labour Survey (SIMPOC)	2010
Guinea Bissau	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)	2006
Liberia	Labour Force Survey (LFS)	2010
Mali	Enquête Démographique et de Santé du Mali (EDSM-IV)(DHS)	2006
	Enquête Permanente Emploi Auprès des Ménages (EPAM)	2007
Niger	Enquête Démographique et de Santé et à Indicateurs Multiples (EDSN-MICS IV)	2012
	Enquête Nationale sur le Travail des Enfants (ENTE)(SIMPOC)	2009
Nigeria	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)	2010-2011
	General Household Survey (GHS)	2011
Senegal	Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)	2011
Sierra Leone	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)	2010
Togo	National Child Labour Survey (SIMPOC)	2009

11. The Report is based on the most recent available data from national household surveys in a total of 14 ECOWAS countries, as summarised in Table 2. Data for Cabo Verde were not available when the current study was conducted. Data for ten of the countries (i.e., Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone) are from the UNICEF Multiple Cluster Indicator (MICS) or the USAID Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) programmes, which share a common questionnaire on children's involvement in employment within or outside the household for the 5-14 years age group. As these surveys do not contain detailed information on the nature and characteristics of children's employment, they are augmented where possible with information from other (sometimes earlier) surveys in order to provide this information.

12. The ILO Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) surveys are the source for information on the extent and nature of children's employment in two countries (i.e., Guinea and Togo) and for information on the nature of children's employment in two others (i.e., Burkina Faso, Niger). The SIMPOC survey programme provides more detailed information on the extent, nature and hazardousness of children's employment across the entire 5-17 years age range. Data for Liberia is from a general labour force survey that collects information on labour force participation for persons from the age of five years onwards. Data for Gambia are from a general household survey, which is not explicitly designed to measure labour force participation, but collects this information alongside a range of other household and labour force characteristics.

13. The different survey instruments (as well as different survey reference years), mean that cross-country comparisons of children's employment should be interpreted with caution. It is worth also noting that the availability, reliability and timeliness of data on child labour is generally poor in the ECOWAS countries and more needs to be done to improve it. Better data to inform and guide policy

was also highlighted as a priority in the *Regional Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour* adopted by ECOWAS Ministers in December 2012.[6]

[6] *West Africa Regional Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labour, Especially the Worst Forms*. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ministers of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs meeting on December 7, 2012in Dakar, Senegal.

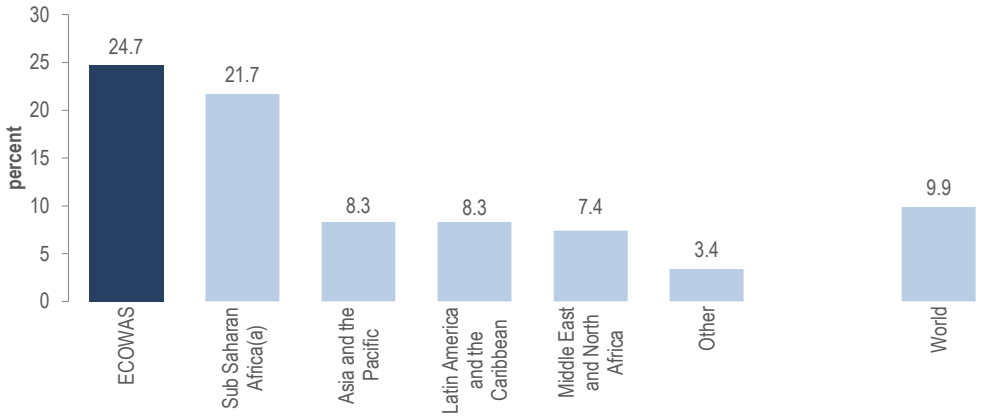
3. CHILDREN'S INVOLVEMENT IN CHILD LABOUR

3.1 Involvement in child labour based on ILO global estimates methodology

14. **Child labour as measured in accordance with the ILO global estimates methodology[7] remains very common in the ECOWAS region.** The share in the 5-14 years age group in child labour is 25 percent, or 20.6 million in absolute terms. Differences in child labour by sex are small for this age group - the percentage of boys in child labour exceeds that of girls by less than two percentage points. As reported in Figure 1, the incidence of child labour among 5-14 year-olds in the ECOWAS countries is highest of all regions in the world. Child labour for this age group in the ECOWAS region is three percentage points higher than that for the Sub Saharan region as a whole, and more than three times that in the Asia and Pacific, Middle East and North Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean regions.

Figure 1. **Child labour incidence in ECOWAS is highest of all regions in the world**

Percentage of children in child labour, 5-14 years age range, by region



Notes: (a) Estimate for Sub Saharan Africa includes the ECOWAS countries.
Source: ILO SIMPOC calculations based on ILO global estimates datasets.

15. **The proportion of older, 15-17 year-old, children in child labour is also very high in the ECOWAS region.** An estimated 11% of this age group, 2.2 million in absolute terms, are in child labour based on the ILO estimation methodology. Differences by sex in child labour incidence for this age group are very pronounced. The percentage of female 15-17 year-olds in child labour is only about one-third that of 15-17 year-old males.

Table 3. **Children's involvement in employment and child labour, 5-17 years age group, ECOWAS region, 2012**

Age range and sex		Children	Child labour [a]	
		No.	No.	%
5-14 years	Male	42,423,751	10,798,901	25.5
	Female	40,922,885	9,781,595	23.9
	Total	83,346,636	20,580,496	24.7
15-17 years	Male	10,370,894	1,739,728	16.8
	Female	10,071,911	502,515	5.0
	Total	20,442,805	2,242,244	11.0

Notes: (a) Child labour estimates are based on the ILO methodology used in the ILO Global Estimates publication series.
Source: ILO SIMPOC calculations based on ILO global estimates datasets.

[7] For details, see ILO-IPEC, *Making progress against child labour – Global estimates and trends 2000-2012.* Geneva, ILO, 2013. Available at: www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_221513/lang--en/index.htm.

16. **The regional child labour estimates mask substantial variation in child labour rates across countries.** Country-specific child labour estimates are provided in Table 4, again based on the methodology utilised by the ILO in its global child labour estimates.[8] As discussed above, they do not necessarily reflect child labour as defined by national legislation in each of the ECOWAS countries, but rather reflect a standardised approximation of child labour for comparative purposes.[9]

Table 4. **Estimates of child labour involvement, based on standard ILO global estimate methodology[(a)]**

Country	(a) children aged 5-11 years in economic activity		(b) Children aged 12-14 years excluding those in light work[(b)]		(a)&(b) Total in child labour, children aged 5-14 years	
	% of total age group	No.	% of total age group	No.	% of total age group	No.
Benin	18.2	438,819	6.4	52,117	15.2	490,936
Burkina Faso	34.8	1,285,780	39.0	519,370	35.9	1,805,150
Cabo Verde[(b)]	--	--	--	--	--	--
Cote d'Ivoire	27.1	1,063,112	17.6	249,146	24.6	1,312,258
Gambia[(c)]	33.9	49,390	14.0	11,358	26.8	60,749
Ghana	38.6	1,681,938	20.8	397,659	33.2	2,079,597
Guinea	33.0	690,342	41.3	320,387	35.2	1,010,729
Guinea Bissau	44.9	131,785	21.8	24,427	38.5	156,212
Liberia	14.6	84,355	15.7	38,447	14.9	122,802
Mali	41.0	1,069,235	--	--	--	--
Niger	39.7	1,779,055	14.3	191,718	33.8	1,970,773
Nigeria	28.0	9,592,152	7.7	852,921	23.1	10,445,073
Senegal	12.4	310,802	10.4	93,021	11.9	403,824
Sierra Leone	31.1	382,747	5.9	26,491	24.4	409,239
Togo	39.2	460,488	35.7	155,384	38.2	615,871

Notes: (a) Estimates based on this methodology provide an international statistical benchmark for comparative purposes but do not necessarily reflect child labour as defined by national legislation in each of the ECOWAS countries. For details on the methodology, see ILO-IPEC, *Making progress against child labour – Global estimates and trends 2000-2012*/ International Labour Office, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) – Geneva: ILO, 2013; (b) Data are not available for Cabo Verde; and (c) The lower age boundary for Gambia estimates is seven years.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

17. The estimates nonetheless provide an indication of the very high levels of child labour across almost all of the ECOWAS countries. At least one-fifth of all 5-14 year-olds are in child labour in all countries except Benin, Liberia and Senegal.[10] Child labour rates are highest in Guinea Bissau (39%), Togo (38%), Burkina Faso (36%), Guinea (35%), Niger (34%) and Ghana (33%). This ranking changes considerably when expressed in absolute terms, however. Populous Nigeria is host to by far the largest number of child labourers (10.5 million), followed by Ghana (2.1 million), Niger (1.9 million) and Burkina Faso (1.8 million).

[8] For details, see ILO-IPEC, *Making progress against child labour – Global estimates and trends 2000-2012.* Geneva, ILO, 2013. Available at: www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_221513/lang--en/index.htm.

[9] As discussed earlier, child labour is a legal rather than statistical concept, and the international legal standards that define it are therefore the necessary frame of reference for child labour measurement. However, translating these broad legal norms into statistical terms for measurement purposes is complicated by the fact that international legal standards contain a number of flexibility clauses left to the discretion of the competent national authority in consultation (where relevant) with worker and employer organisations (e.g., minimum ages, scope of application). This means that there is no single legal definition of child labour across countries, and concomitantly, no single statistical measure of child labour consistent with national legislation across countries.

[10] It is not possible to estimate child labour in Mali owing to a lack of information needed to identify light work among 12-14 year-olds.

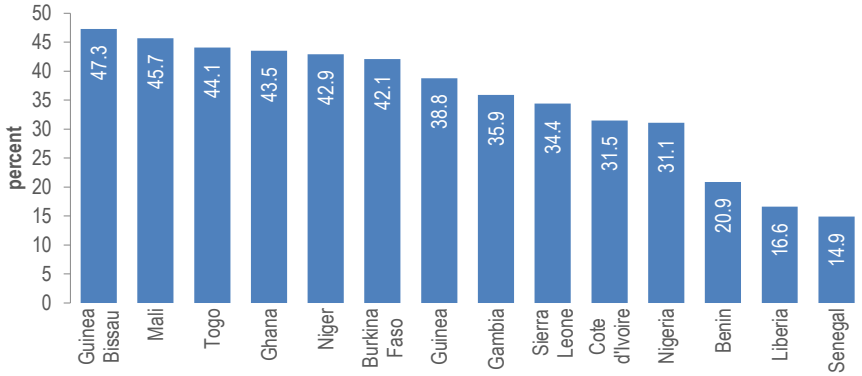
18. Consolidated estimates for the entire 5-17 years age group are not possible because of data limitations, and specifically because of a lack of country-specific information on hazardous work among 15-17 year-olds. These data limitations constitute an important constraint to informed policy making and again point to the need for additional investment in the regular collection of information on child labour in the ECOWAS region.

3.2 Involvement in children's employment

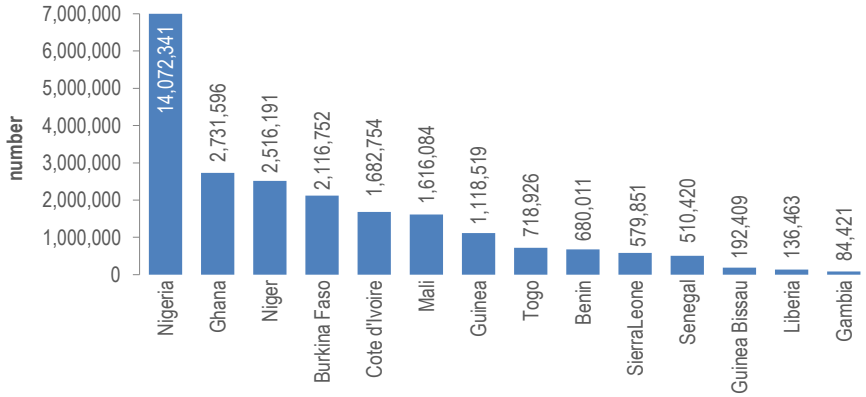
19. **Child labour as approximated by children's employment[11] is also very high across the ECOWAS countries**. Incidence of children's employment exceeds 40% in Guinea Bissau, Mali, Togo, Ghana, Niger and Burkina Faso and exceeds 30% in all but Benin, Liberia and Senegal (Figure 2a). Even in the best-performing countries children's employment levels substantially exceed the world average for the 5-14 years age group (of 12%). Again, the picture differs considerably when presented in absolute terms. Nigeria is host to by far the largest number of 5-14 year-olds in employment (14 million), followed by Ghana (2.7 million), Niger (2.5 million) and Burkina Faso (2.1 million) (Figure 2b).

Figure 2. **Children's involvement in employment remains extremely high in the ECOWAS region**

(a) Percentage of children in employment, 5-14 years age group,[(a)] by country[(b)]



(b) No. of children in employment, 5-14 years age group,[(a)] by country[(b)]



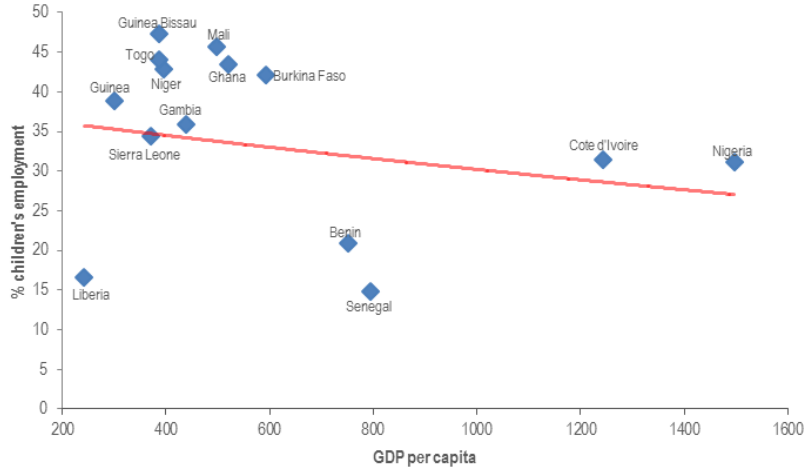
Notes: (a) Estimates for Gambia refer to the 7-14 years age range; (b) Cross-country comparisons of children's employment should be interpreted with caution, as estimates are based on different reference years and are derived from different survey instruments.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

[11] Recall that children in employment are those engaged in any economic activity for at least one hour during the reference period. Economic activity covers all market production and certain types of non-market production (principally the production of goods and services for own use). It includes forms of work in both the formal and informal economy; inside and outside family settings; work for pay or profit (in cash or in kind, part-time or full-time), or as a domestic worker outside the child's own household for an employer (with or without pay).

4. FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CHILDREN'S EMPLOYMENT

20. **Children from poorer countries are more to be found in employment**. But it is interesting to note that while there is a negative correlation between children's involvement in employment and national income, this correlation is imprecise at best. As illustrated in Figure 3, levels of children's employment are low relative to national income in some countries while in others the opposite is true. The existence of countries doing better with fewer resources suggests significant scope for policy intervention against child labour. Policies promoting quality education as an alternative to child labour can be particularly important in this context.

Figure 3. **There is only a weak negative correlation between national income and children's employment**
Percentage of children in employment, **5-14 years age group**,[(a)] and GDP per capita,[(b)] by country[(c)]

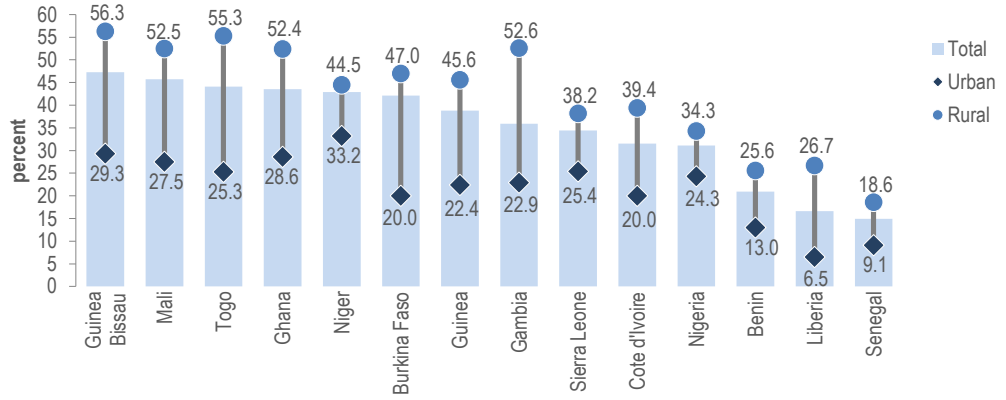


Notes: (a) Estimates for Gambia refer to the 7-14 years age range; (b) Reference years for GDP per capita estimates correspond to reference years for the child labour surveys indicated in Table 2; and (c) Cross-country comparisons of children's employment should be interpreted with caution, as estimates are based on different reference years and are derived from different survey instruments.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

21. **Children's employment in the ECOWAS countries is much more common in rural areas.** The large rural-urban gap extends to all 14 ECOWAS countries. In eight of the countries, the share of rural 5-14 year-olds in employment is at least twice that of urban children in the same age group. The relative rural-urban gap is highest in Liberia, where 27% of rural children work in employment against seven percent of urban children, in Burkina Faso (47% versus 20%) and in Gambia (53% versus 23%). Why are rural children more prone to involvement in employment? Differences in the rural and urban economies, and in particular the key role of informal family-based agriculture in rural areas, is undoubtedly one important factor. Higher levels of poverty, poorer basic services coverage, and less access to schooling, particularly at the post-primary level, in rural areas also likely play an important role influencing relatively more rural households to send their children to work. As discussed further in the next section, the *nature* of the work children perform also differs considerably between urban and rural areas.

Figure 4. **Children's involvement in employment is generally much higher in rural areas**

Percentage of children in employment, 5-14 years years age group, by residence and country[a]

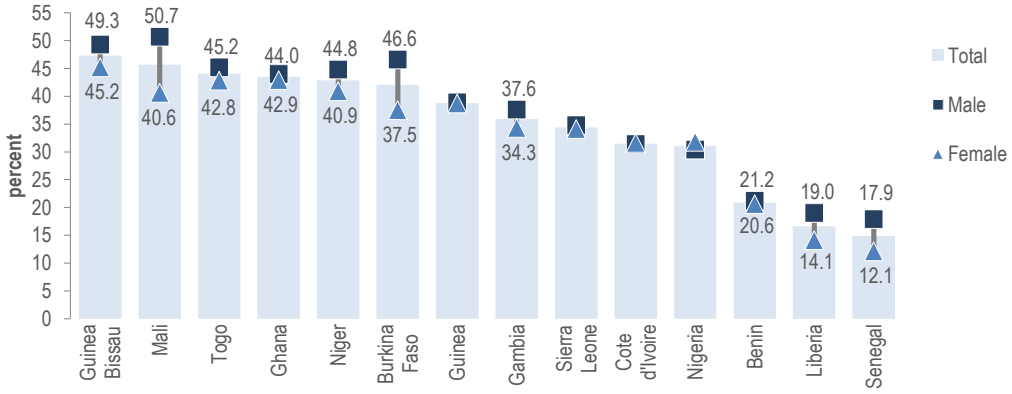


Notes: (a) Estimates for Gambia refer to the 7-14 years age range
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

22. **Gender factors appear relevant in determining the extent of children's involvement in employment**. For the ECOWAS region as a whole, male children in employment outnumber their female counterparts by about 1.1 million for the 5-14 years age group (Table 3). At the country level, the share of boys in employment exceeds that of females in nine of the ECOWAS countries (i.e., Guinea Bissau, Mali, Togo, Ghana, Niger, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Liberia and Senegal) while in no country does the opposite pattern hold. The gender gap in employment in "favour" of boys is particularly marked in Mali (51% versus 41%) and Burkina Faso (47% versus 38%). It is worth recalling, however, that these figures do not capture the performance of household chores, the burden for which falls disproportionately on females in most contexts. It is also worth underscoring that girls are often disproportionately represented in less visible and therefore underreported forms of child labour such as domestic service in third party households. Employment estimates alone, therefore, may understate girls' involvement in child labour relative to that of boys.

Figure 5. **A higher share of male compared to female children are involved in employment in most of the ECOWAS countries**

Percentage of children in employment, 5-14 years years age group, by sex and country[a]



Notes: (a) Estimates for Gambia refer to the 7-14 years age range
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

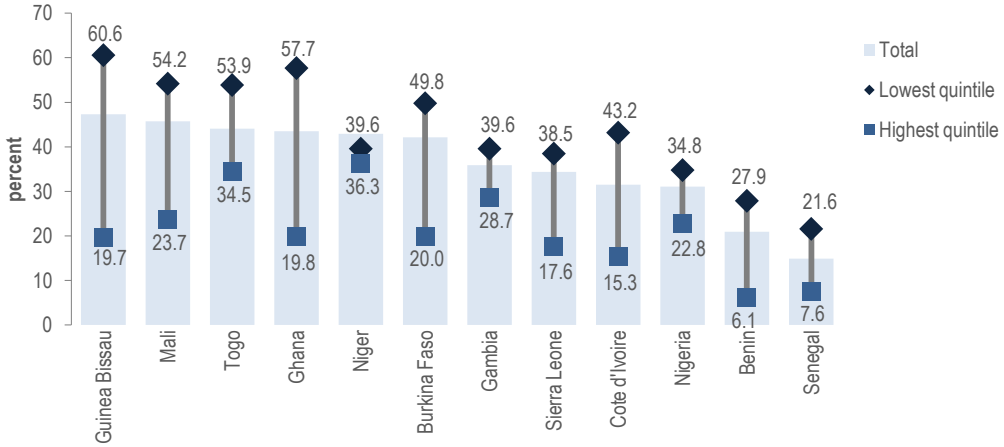
23. **Involvement in employment is consistently higher among children from poorest households.** As shown in Figure 6, the correlation between poverty and children's employment is positive and strong across all of the ECOWAS countries.

In Guinea Bissau, for instance, 61% of children from poorest households are in employment compared to 20% from their peers from the richest ones. These results are consistent with a wide body of international evidence indicating that poverty (approximated by income, consumption, wealth index, etc.) is an important factor in child labour. The poverty-child labour link is straightforward – poverty makes it more likely that households have to rely on their children's income or production to help make ends meet, particularly when they are faced with an unforeseen shock. Former child labourers are themselves more likely to be poor and reliant on child labour as adults, thereby continuing the vicious cycle of poverty and child labour.

24. It is worth noting, however, that children's employment is by no means limited to poorest households. Indeed, as also shown in Figure 6, the share of children in employment even in the richest households is far from negligible in most ECOWAS countries. This suggests that while poverty reduction is an important part of the answer to child labour, it is not, in and of itself, a complete answer.

Figure 6. **Children from poor households are much more likely to be involved in employment**

Percentage of children in employment, 5-14 years years age group, by income and country[(a)]

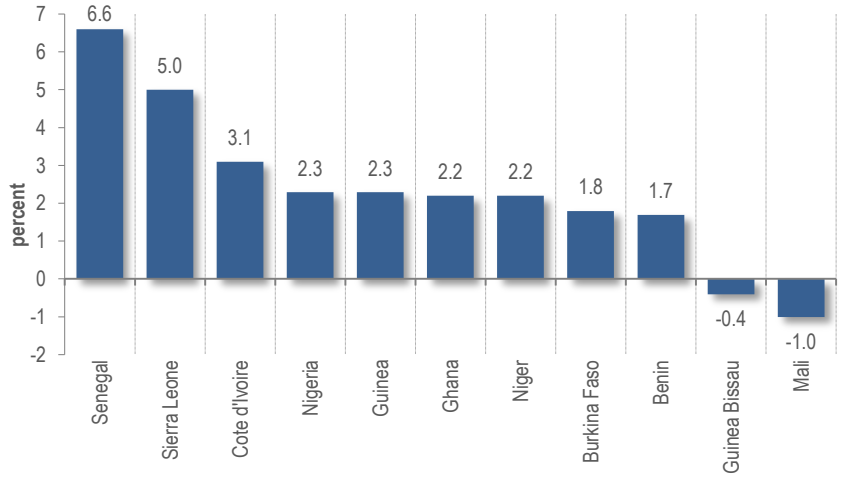


Notes: (a) Estimates for Gambia refer to the 7-14 years age range
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

25. **Orphanhood appears to increase vulnerability to child labour in the ECOWAS countries.** Orphanhood is common in the ECOWAS region and the effect of orphanhood on children's involvement in employment is therefore of considerably policy interest. Figure 7 indicates that a higher share of orphans compared to non-orphans are in employment in all countries where data are available except Guinea Bissau and Mali. These simple correlations do not of course offer insight into why this is the case, i.e., whether it is orphanhood *per se* that increases children's risk of work or whether is it factors associated with orphanhood, such as household poverty, driving the correlation.

Figure 7. **Orphan children appear more at risk of involvement in employment in most countries**

Percentage point difference in involvement in employment between orphan and non-orphan children, 5-14 years years age group, by country

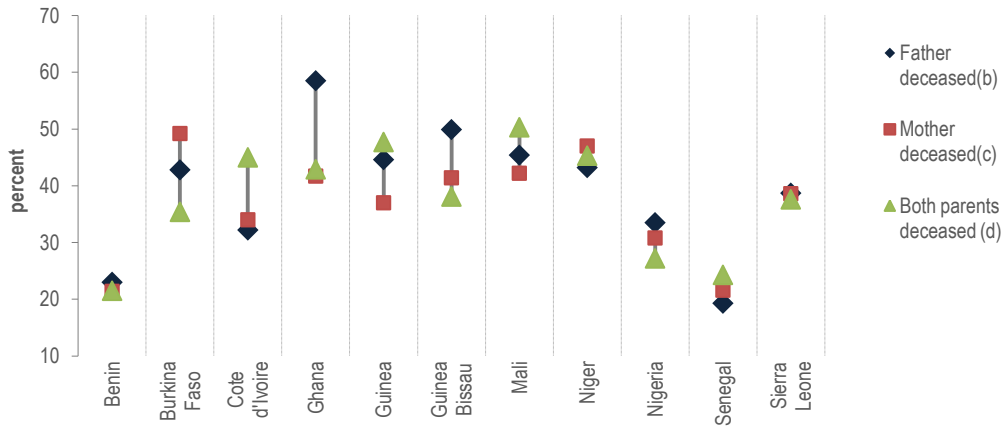


Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

26. The link between orphanhood and work appears to depend in part on whether the deceased parent is the mother or the father, or whether both parents are deceased (Figure 8). Patterns in this regard differ across countries, however. In Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali and Senegal, children who have lost both their parents face the greatest risk of work. In Ghana, Guinea Bissau and Nigeria, employment is highest among children who have lost only their fathers while in Burkina Faso and Niger it is highest among children who have lost their mothers. Again, explaining these correlations requires further research, although they are likely in part driven by the efficacy of traditional and State support systems, including systems for fostering.

Figure 8. **The link between orphanhood and work appears to depend in part on whether the deceased parent is the mother or the father or both**

Percentage of children in employment, 5-14 years years age group, by orphan status and country[a]

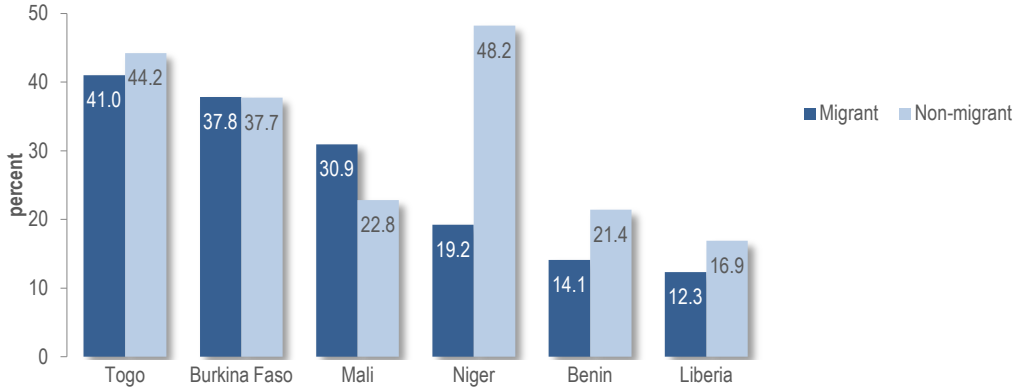


Notes: (a) Estimates for Burkina Faso are based on Enquête Nationale sur le Travail des Enfants (SIMPOC), 2006 and for Mali on Enquête Permanente Emploi Auprès des Ménages (EPAM), 2007. (b) Father deceased; (c) Mother deceased; (d) Both parents deceased.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

27. **Migration does not appear to consistently increase children's risk of employment**. Indeed, if anything, the opposite pattern appears to hold. In four of the six countries where data are available, there is a smaller share of migrant

compared to non-migrant children in employment (where migrant children are defined as those who have changed location during the last five years). Mali is the only one of the six countries where migrants are at greater risk of employment. But there are important distinctions within the child migrant population that may be relevant to their susceptibility to involvement in employment. Evidence from Senegal, for instance, indicates that the subgroup of children that migrate unaccompanied and that migrate to urban areas are at greater relative risk of child labour and educational marginalisation.12 Also of concern are the group of children left behind by migrating parents, whose family support systems are disrupted and whose vulnerability therefore may be increased.[13]

Figure 9. **There is no clear pattern in terms of migrant status and involvement in employment**
Percentage of children in employment, 5-14 years years age group, by migrant status and country[(a)]



(a) Estimates for Mali refer to the 10-14 years age range
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys *(see Table 2).*

[12] UCW Programme, *Migrations, changements climatiques, travail des enfants et emploi des jeunes*. UCW Document de travail, Rome, Septembre 2011. Available at: http://www.ucw-project.org/attachment/Migration_travail_des_enfants_emploi_des_jeunes20120427_181759.pdf

[13] For a further discussion of this point, see UCW (2010). *Joining forces against child labour. Inter-agency report for The Hague Global Child Labour Conference of 2010* /Understanding Children's Work (UCW) Programme – Geneva: ILO, 2010, pp. 54-59. Available at: www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_126870/lang--en/index.htm

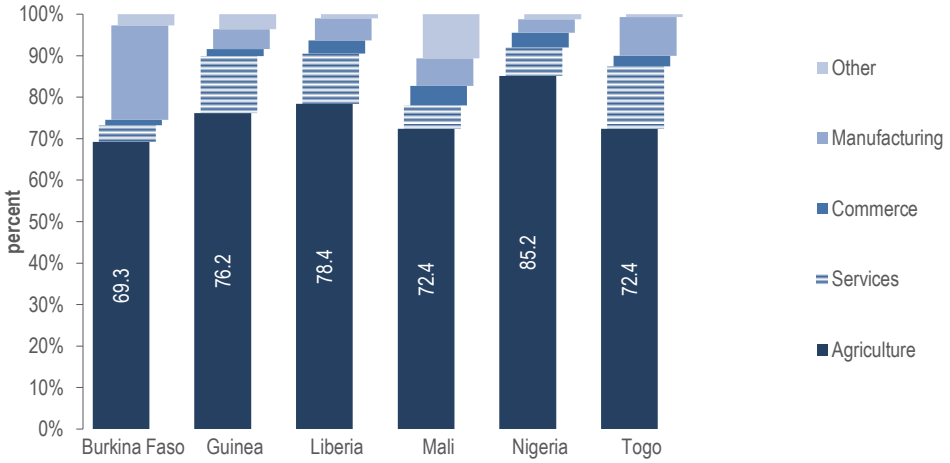
5. NATURE OF CHILDREN'S EMPLOYMENT

28. Information on the various characteristics of children's employment is necessary for understanding children's workplace reality and their role in the labour force. This section presents data on broad work characteristics that are useful in this context. For children's employment, the breakdown by industry is reported in order to provide a standardised picture of where children are concentrated in the measured economy. A breakdown by children's status in employment is also reported to provide additional insight into how children's work in employment is carried out. Average working hours and exposure to dangerous conditions are reported to provide an indirect indication of the possible health and educational consequences of children's work.

29. **The agriculture sector accounts for by far the largest share of children's employment**. The agriculture sector accounts for at least two of every three children in employment in all countries (Figure 10). The predominance of agriculture is a particular concern in light of the fact that this sector is one of the three most dangerous in which to work at any age, along with construction and mining, in terms of work-related fatalities, non-fatal accidents and occupational diseases.[14] Children working in agriculture can face a variety of serious hazards, including operation of dangerous equipment, pesticide exposure, excessive physical exertion and heavy loads.

Figure 10. **Children's employment is concentrated overwhelmingly in the agriculture sector**

Sectoral composition of children's employment (% distribution), 5-14 years years age group, by country[(a)]



Notes: (a) Estimates for Mali refer to the 10-14 years age group.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

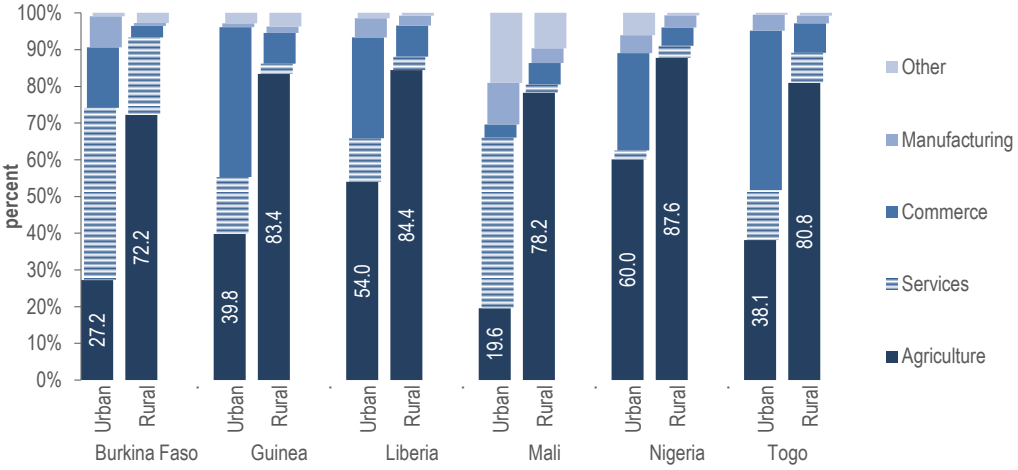
30. **The sectoral composition of children's employment differs considerably between rural and urban areas.** This is a reflection of the important underlying differences in the rural and urban economies (Figure 11). Agriculture work not surprisingly predominates in rural areas, while the composition of children's employment in urban areas tends to be more varied, with the services, commerce and agriculture sectors all playing important roles. Employment in the services sector includes domestic service in third-party households, a form of

[14] For further details, please visit the "Child labour in agriculture" section of the ILO-IPEC website: http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm.

work that is hidden from public view and can leave children especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Figure 11. **The sectoral composition of children's employment differs considerably between rural and urban areas**

Sectoral composition of children's employment (% distribution), 5-14 years years age group, by residence and country[a]



Notes: (a) Estimates for Mali refer to the 10-14 years age group.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

31. **Children's employment is heavily concentrated within the family unit in most of the ECOWAS countries.** The share of children in employment who work for their own families is highest in Burkina Faso (93%), Guinea Bissau (92%) and Cote d'Ivoire (87%) (Figure 12a). Non wage employment outside the family, in self-employment or in other work arrangements, is also important in some of the ECOWAS countries, involving, for example, 64% of all children in employment in Niger and 54% in Sierra Leone. Children's status in employment also varies somewhat between urban and rural places of residence, with wage and non-wage employment playing a relatively larger role in urban contexts (Figure 12b).

Figure 12. **The largest share of children in employment work without wages within their own families**

(a) Children's status in employment, percentage distribution,[a] 5-14 years years age group, by country

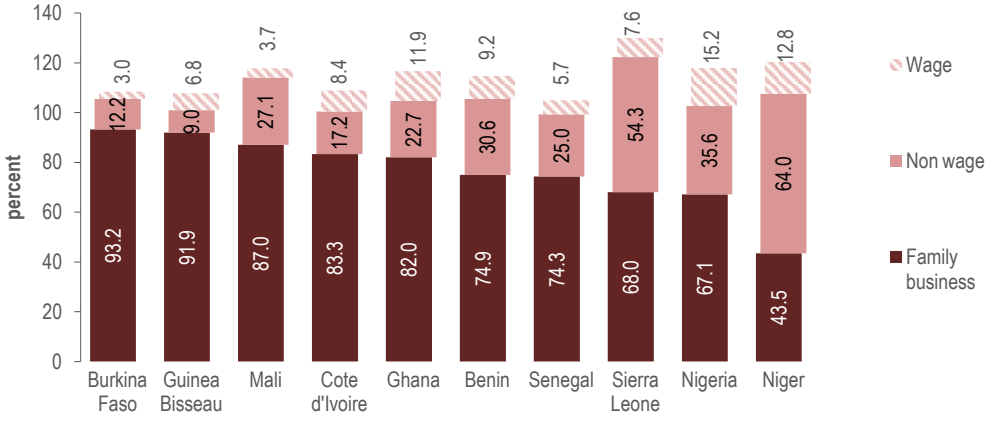
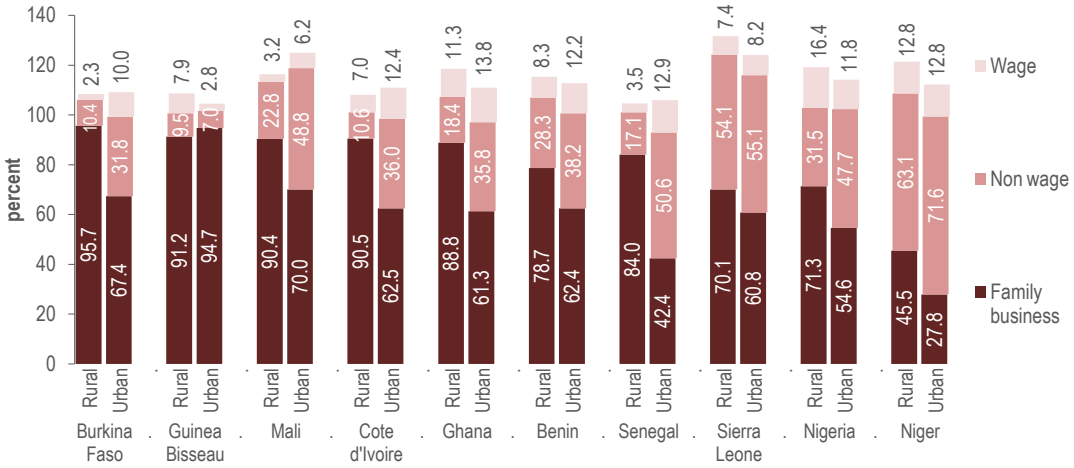


Figure 12.Cont'd

(b) Children's status in employment, percentage distribution,[a] 5-14 years years age group, by country



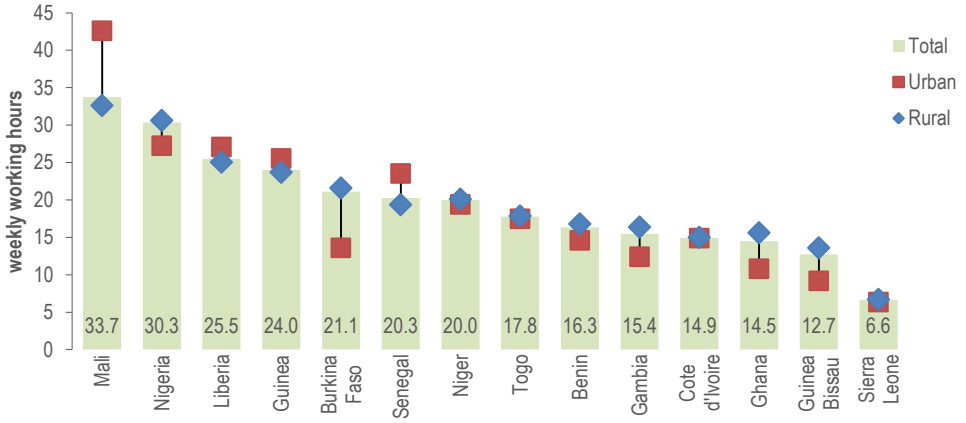
Notes: (a) Distribution sums to more than 100 because some children are in more than one status category; (b) Estimates for Mali refer to the 10-14 years age group.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

32. **Many children in employment work long hours with obvious consequences for time for study and leisure.** Children's total working hours vary considerably across the ECOWAS countries, and between rural and urban areas within countries. Average weekly working hours range from almost 34 hours in Mali[15] to a little under seven hours in Sierra Leone. Differences in children's weekly hours between rural and urban areas are largest in Mali (where urban children work longest) and Burkina Faso where rural children work longest). In interpreting these figures on working hours, it is worth noting that many children in employment, and especially girls in employment, also spend a non-negligible amount of time each week performing household chores in their own homes, adding significantly to the overall time burden posed by work. It is also important to note that working hours can be affected by seasonality. Children in agriculture, for instance, may work for very different amounts of time each week in different agricultural seasons. Estimates of working hours, it follows, can be influenced by when during the year a survey is fielded.

[15] Although it should be recalled that the estimate for Mali refers to the 10-14 years rather than to the 5-14 years age group.

Figure 13. **Children in employment put in extremely long hours**

Average weekly working hours, 5-14 years years age group, by residence and country[(a)]



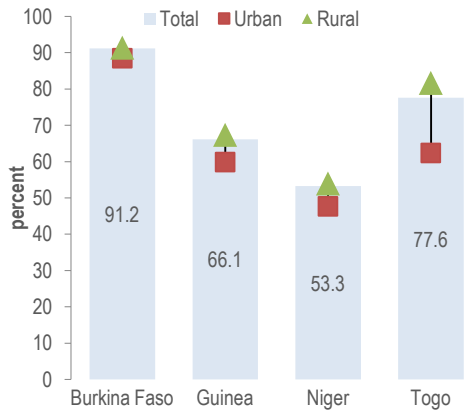
Notes: (a) Estimates for Gambia refer to the 7-14 years and for Mali to the 10-14 years age range.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

33. **Children's employment is frequently dangerous in nature for younger and older children alike.** Information from the ILO SIMPOC surveys, conducted in four of the ECOWAS countries, permit a more detailed look at the actual conditions faced by children in the workplace. These surveys suggest that children have an alarmingly high rate of exposure to dangerous conditions in the workplace (including heavy loads; work with gas, fire, flames, chemicals, explosives or toxic substances; work in environment with excessive noise or vibration; work in a dusty or smoky environments; underground work or work at heights; work in dark or confined spaces; work in insufficiently ventilated spaces; and work during the night). Exposure to these dangerous conditions among working children in the 5-14 years age range varies from 91% in Burkina Faso to 53% in Niger (Figure 14a). It is worth noting that the employment of 5-14 year-olds does not appear safer than that of older children. Indeed, the proportion of 15-17 year-old working children exposed to the same set of dangerous conditions closely mirrors that of their younger counterparts in the four countries (Figure 14b).

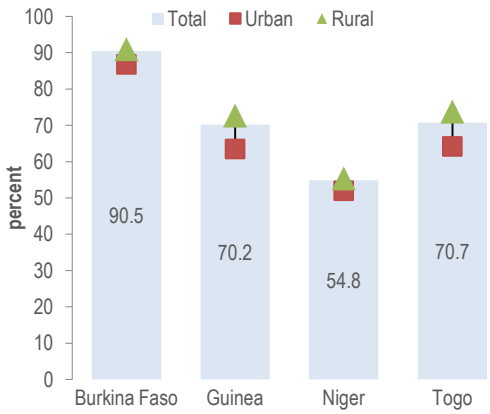
Figure 14. **Children's employment is frequently dangerous in nature for younger and older children alike**

Percentage of children in employment exposed to one or dangerous conditions,[(a)] by residence, age group and country

(a) 5-14 years age group



(b) 15-17 years age group



Notes: (a) The hazardous conditions include the following: carrying heavy loads, work with gas, fire, flames, chemicals, explosives or toxic substances; work in environment with excessive noise or vibration, work in dust or smoke environment; underground work or work at heights; workplace is too dark or confined; workplace has insufficient ventilation; work during night; etc.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

6. CHILDREN'S AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT

34. As most working children in the ECOWAS region are found in the agriculture sector, it is worth looking in more detail at the nature and characteristics of children's work in this sector.

35. **Almost all children in agriculture work within their own families.** Figures for the seven ECOWAS countries where data on status in employment are available make clear the children's agricultural work takes place overwhelmingly on the family farm (Table 5). At least nine in ten child agricultural workers are found on family farms in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria and Togo. In Mali, 87% of all children in agriculture work for their families while in Liberia the figure is 81%. The only other significant work modality in the agriculture sector is self-employment, which accounts for 19% and 10 percent, respectively, of child agricultural workers in Liberia and Mali. Very few children in agriculture work for wages in any of the seven countries.

Table 5. **Children's status in agricultural employment, 5-14 years age group, by sex, residence and country**

	Non-wage family	Wage	Self	Other	Total
Burkina Faso	98.8	0.5	0.8	-	100
Guinea	96.8	0.0	2.0	1.2	100
Liberia	80.8	0.0	18.7	0.4	100
Mali[(a)]	87.4	1.1	10.1	1.4	100
Niger	90.2	2.7	6.2	0.9	100
Nigeria	96.1	0.7	2.0	1.2	100
Togo	93.7	0.6	5.7	-	100

Notes: (a) Estimates for Mali refer to the 10-14 years age range.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

36. **Most children in agriculture work in crop and animal production**. Children are heavily concentrated in crop production in Guinea, Mali and Togo, whereas both crop and animal production are important in Burkina Faso, Liberia, Niger, and Nigeria (Table 6). Guinea is the only country where an appreciable share of child agricultural workers is found in logging (six percent); only a small share of children in agriculture work in fishing in the seven ECOWAS countries where data are available. Children are involved in the production of a variety of specific crops. Cereals appear most important in this regard, although vegetable production is also relevant in Niger (Table 7, Table 8 and Table 9).

Table 6. **Children's occupation category in agricultural employment, 5-14 years age group, by country**

	Crop production	Animal production	Crop and animal production	Forestry/oggin g	Fishing	Total
Burkina Faso	66.9	30.6	0.6	2.0	0.0	100
Guinea	92.5	1.3	-	5.9	0.3	100
Guinea Bissau	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liberia		96.5		3.0	0.5	100
Mali[(a)]	90.6	6.4	-	0.8	2.2	100
Niger	47.5	47.8	2.5	--	0.9	100
Nigeria[(b)]	77.5	10.3	12.2	-	-	100
Togo	97.1	2.6	-	-	-	100

Notes: (a) Estimates for Mali refer to the 10-14 years age range; (b) Nigeria for children aged 6-14. Figures based on the post-harvest round of the NGHS (child labour information derived from the agriculture module).
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2)

Table 7. **Distribution of children in crop production by crop type, 5-14 years age group, Guinea and Niger**

	Growing of cereals and other crops	Growing of vegetables, horticultural specialties and nursery products horticulture	Growing of fruit, nuts, beverage and spice crops	Total
Guinea	78.7	19.4	1.9	100
Niger	46.5	44.9	8.6	100

Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

Table 8. **Distribution of children in crop production by crop type, 5-14 years age group, Burkina Faso**

	Cereal	Tubers and vegetables	Other crops	Legumes	Horticulture	Total
Burkina Faso	88.3	0.3	0.6	7.3	3.5	100

Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

Table 9. **Distribution of children in crop production by crop type, 5-14 years age group, Nigeria[(a)]**

	Sorghum	Beans/ cowpeas	Millet	Maize	Others	Yam	Nuts	Fruits and vegetables	Cassava	Total
Nigeria	38.4	29.2	28.2	25.9	18.4	16.7	16.4	14.5	12.9	200.6[(b)]

Notes: (a) Nigeria for children aged 6 to 14. Figures based on the post-harvest round of the NGHS (child labour information derived from the agriculture module). (b) Figures sum to more than 100 because many children are involved in the production of more than one type of crop.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

37. **Children in Mali and Liberia are more likely to work on farms with relatively small-sized workforces.** In both Mali and Liberia (the two countries where these data are available) most children are located on farms with from two to 10 workers (Table 10 and Table 11). In Liberia, a comparatively larger share of the adult agricultural workforce is found at both ends of the farm size spectrum. In Mali, a comparatively greater share of the adult agricultural workforce is found on smallest (one worker) farms.

Table 10. **Distribution of children in agricultural employment by farm workforce size and age group, Liberia**

	One worker	2-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50 or more	Total
5-14 years	3.4	58.1	34.1	3.9	0.4	0.1	100
15-17 years	4.4	54.8	33.9	6.4	0.4	0.2	100
18+ years	12.4	61.0	19.2	4.8	1.6	1.0	100

Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

Table 11. **Distribution of children in agricultural employment by farm workforce size and group, Mali**

	One worker	2-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	Total
10-14 years	4.2	63.2	23.7	7.0	1.9	100
15-17 years	11.7	49.1	23.7	12.5	2.7	0.4
18+ years	18.4	53.0	19.1	7.1	2.0	0.4

Notes: (a) Estimates for Mali reference to the 10-14 years age range.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

38. **Children and youth in Nigeria are more likely to work on larger smallholder family farms, where farm size is measured in terms of land area.** Figure 15, which reports the distribution of workforce and total hours in harvest work by farm size (quintile),[16] illustrates this point. Over one-third of 6-14 year-olds in harvest work are found on farms in the largest size quintile (i.e., over nine acres) against

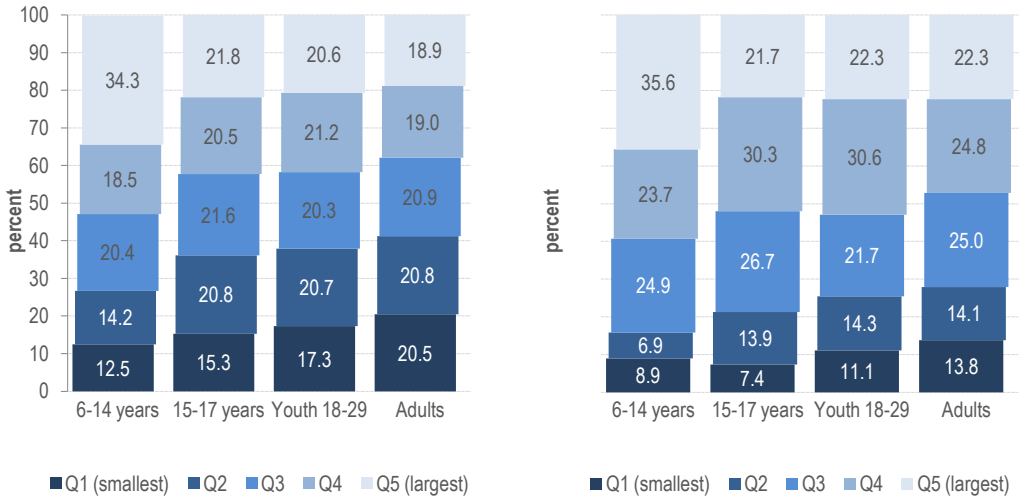
[16] Farm size quintiles are as follows: Q1=0-0.3 acres, Q2=0.3-1.5 acres, Q3=1.5-4 acres, Q4=4-9 acres, and Q5= >9+ acres.

only 13% in farms in the smallest-sized quintile (i.e., 0.3 acres or less) (Figure 15a). Looking at the distribution of total working hours does not alter the picture – a similar proportion of *total hours* in harvest work for this age group are logged on largest farms (Figure 15b). These results suggest that families with more land to work have greater need for their children's farm labour. Children aged 15-17 in harvest work are also less likely to be found on farms in the smallest size quintile, but are distributed more evenly across the other sized farms. Young adults aged 18-29 years and other adults are more evenly split across the farm size quintiles, especially when measured in terms of the workforce (rather than the working hours) distribution.

Figure 15. **Children in harvest work are concentrated in larger-sized farms**

(a) Distribution of farm *work force*, by farm size quintile[a] and age group, Nigeria

(b) Distribution of farm *total working hours*, by farm size quintile[a] and age group, Nigeria



Notes: (a) Farm size quintiles are as follows: Q1=0-0.3 acres, Q2=0.3-1.5 acres, Q3=1.5-4 acres, Q4=4-9 acres, and Q5= >9+ acres.
Source: UCW calculations based on Nigeria GHS agriculture questionnaire (post-harvest round), 2011.

39. **Children play an important role in overall agricultural production in most ECOWAS countries.** Not answered in the statistics presented above is the question of the *relative* importance of children's labour agriculture. In other words, what is the "child labour content" of agriculture in the ECOWAS countries? These questions are taken up below by looking at the share of the total agricultural workforce (Table 12) and of total working hours (Table 13) in agriculture accounted for by child workers. Children account for 29% of the overall agricultural workforce in Togo, for around one-quarter of the workforce in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Niger and for one-fifth of the workforce in Nigeria (Table 12). The role of children is also important when measured in terms of total working hours. Again, this is especially the case in Togo, Burkina Faso and Guinea, where children account for about one-fifth of total agricultural working hours (Table 13).

Table 12. **Children as percentage of total workforce, 5-14 years age group, by agricultural subsector and country[(a)]**

	Agriculture sector	*Livestock production subsector*	*Crop production subsector*	*Forestry/ logging subsector*	*Fishing subsector*
Burkina Faso	24.3	47.1	19.8	34.7	0.0
Guinea	25.7	34.5	25.2	36.5	8.9
Liberia	17.2	17.0		25.5	10.7
Mali	7.3	10.0	7.2	3.6	8.3
Niger	24.0	40.9	17.6	13.6	16.1
Nigeria	19.0	-	-	-	-
Togo	29.4	32.4	29.3	_-	-

Notes: (a) Estimates for Mali refer to the 10-14 years age range.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

Table 13. **Children's working hours as percentage of total working hours, 5-14 years age group, by agricultural subsector and country[(a)]**

	Agriculture sector	*Livestock production subsector*	*Crop production subsector*	*Forestry/ logging subsector*	*Fishing subsector*
Burkina Faso	20.6	44.5	16.1	35.2	0.0
Guinea	18.2	32.6	17.8	28.3	5.3
Liberia	11.0	10.8		23.5	10.2
Mali	6.2	10.3	6.1	0.6	4.8
Niger	17.6	36.6	11.4	4.0	6.9
Nigeria	13.8	-	-	-	-
Togo	20.1	30.0	20.0	-	-

Notes: (a) Estimates for Mali refer to the 10-14 years age range.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

40. Children appear to play an especially important role in livestock production. Table 12 and Table 13 also report children as percentage of the workforce and of total working hours in specific agriculture subsectors. This breakdown suggests that livestock production is especially dependent on children in many of the ECOWAS countries. Children account for almost half (47%) of all workers in livestock production in Burkina Faso, 41% of livestock workers in Niger and for about one-third of livestock workers in Guinea and Togo. It is interesting to note that children play an important role even in forestry and logging. Over one-third of all forestry/logging workers are children in Burkina Faso and Guinea, and over a quarter of all workers in this subsector are children in Liberia.[17]

[17] Statistics from other sources offer further insight into the forestry/logging sector and its environmental consequences in these countries and are available at http://www.fao.org/forestry/fra/fra2010/en and http://www.illegal-logging.info/regions. An estimated 38% of Sierra Leone is covered by forests, 86% of which is owned by local and indigenous communities. While only 4% of Sierra Leone's forest areas are primary forest, the vast majority is naturally regenerated, with only 1% comprising plantations Some 27% of Guinea's land is forested, and just 0.3% of this land is covered by primary forest. Much of Guinea's rainforests have been destroyed by fires or cleared for agriculture. All of the country's forests are state-owned, and 4% are designated as protected areas . Guinea experienced an average annual rate of deforestation of about 0.5% over past twenty years . Forests cover 45% of Liberia's land, though these forests have been disappearing at an annual rate of between 0.6% and 0.7% over the past twenty years Only 4% of Liberia's primary forests remain, and illegal logging has long been a significant problem in the country.

7. CHILDREN'S EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATIONAL MARGINALISATION

41. Not discussed up to this point is the interaction between children's employment and their schooling in the ECOWAS countries. Does employment make it less likely that children attend school? And, for those children combining schooling and employment, to what extent does employment impede learning achievement? These questions are critical for assessing the extent to which child labour is linked to the issue of educational marginalisation in the ECOWAS region. This section looks at evidence of the educational impact of children's work.

42. One way of viewing the interaction between children's employment and schooling is by decomposing the child population into four non-overlapping activity groups – children in employment only, children attending school only, children combining school and employment and children doing neither. This decomposition, reported in Table 14 and Figure 16, varies considerably across the ECOWAS countries. Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger stand out as having very high shares of children in employment only (over one-quarter) and very low shares of children in school only (less than one-third). Senegal, Niger and Mali stand out as having especially large share of children neither in employment nor in school (over one-quarter). Many of these ostensibly inactive children are likely performing household chores in their own homes, a form of work falling outside the formal definition of employment. Others may be in worst forms of child labour beyond the scope of standard household surveys. Those inactive children who are not currently in child labour are at increased risk of future child labour involvement, and therefore also constitute an important policy priority.

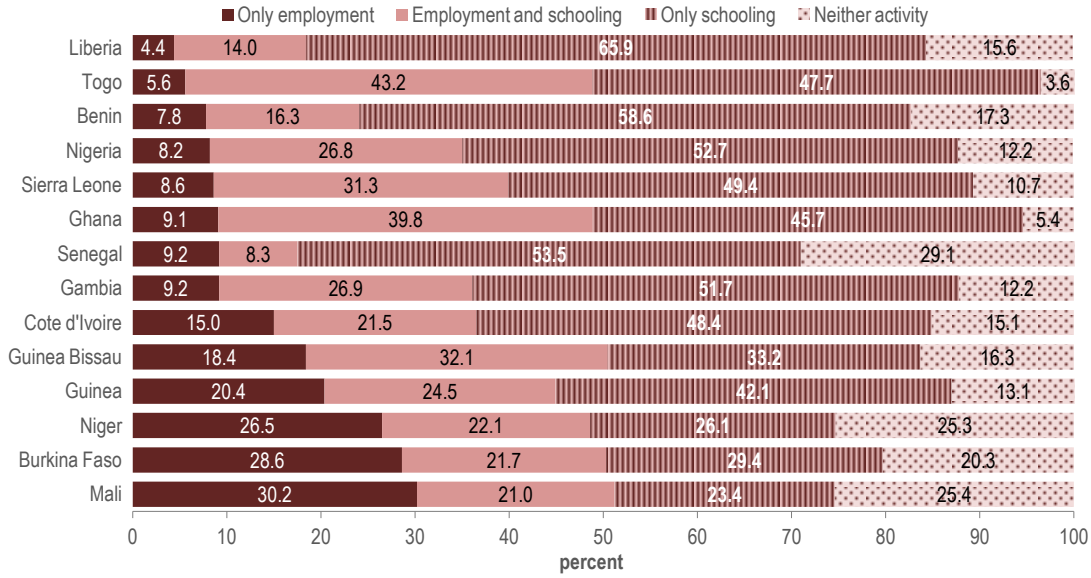
Table 14. **Children's involvement in employment and schooling, 7-14 years age group, by country**

Country	Mutually exclusive activity categories				(a)&(c) Total in employment	(b)&(c) Total in school	(a)&(d) Total out of school
	(a) Only employment	(b) Only schooling	(c) Employment and schooling	(d) Neither activity			
Benin	7.8	58.6	16.3	17.3	24.1	74.9	25.1
Burkina Faso	28.6	29.4	21.7	20.3	50.3	51.1	48.9
Cote d'Ivoire	15.0	48.4	21.5	15.1	36.5	69.6	30.4
Gambia	9.2	51.7	26.9	12.2	35.9	77.4	22.6
Ghana	9.1	45.7	39.8	5.4	48.9	85.5	14.5
Guinea	20.4	42.1	24.5	13.1	44.9	66.6	33.4
Guinea Bissau	18.4	33.2	32.1	16.3	50.5	65.3	34.7
Liberia	4.4	65.9	14.0	15.6	18.4	80.0	20.0
Mali	30.2	23.4	21.0	25.4	51.2	44.3	55.7
Niger	26.5	26.1	22.1	25.3	48.5	48.1	51.9
Nigeria	8.2	52.7	26.8	12.2	35.1	79.6	20.4
Senegal	9.2	53.5	8.3	29.1	17.4	61.8	38.2
Sierra Leone	8.6	49.4	31.3	10.7	39.9	80.7	19.3
Togo	5.6	47.7	43.2	3.6	48.8	90.9	9.1

Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

43. Differences by sex are pronounced (Table A2) in many of the countries. Male children are more likely to combine school and employment whereas female children are more likely to be inactive. These statistics highlight the need for policy responses to child labour that take into account the important gender dimensions of the phenomenon.

Figure 16. **Working children are divided between those that work only and those that combine school and work**
Children's activity status (% distribution), 7-14 years age range, by country

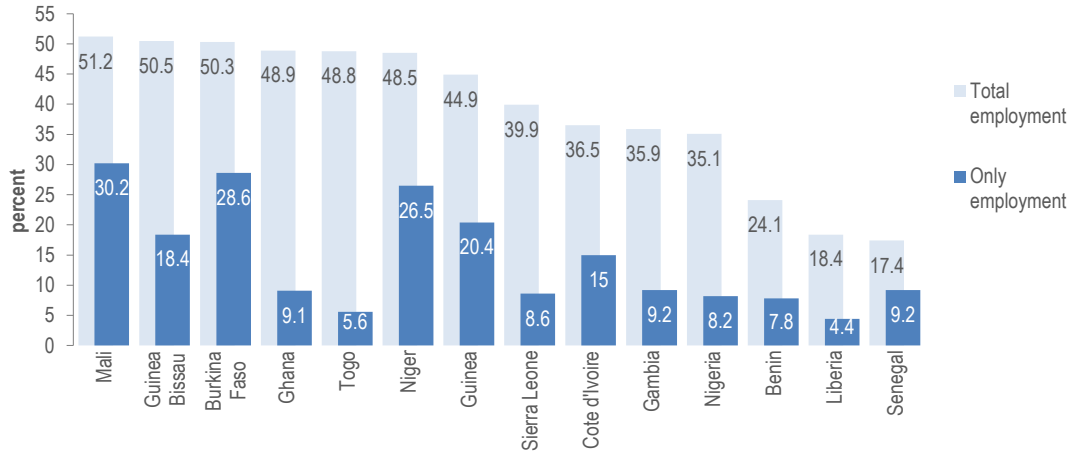


Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

44. **Work and schooling are mutually exclusive activities for many working children in the ECOWAS region.** Figure 17 reports working children that do not attend school as a percentage of total working children in each of the ECOWAS countries. It suggests that children in employment are not able to attend school in many instances. At least one-half of all working children in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Senegal, and at least one-third in Guinea Bissau, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire are out-of-school and therefore educationally marginalised. *Why* these children are unable to attend school is a key question for policy and requires further investigation. In many cases it is undoubtedly the demands of work on children's time and energy that directly preclude schooling. In other instances a lack of access to adequate school services can mean that families do not have the option of choosing school over work because the former is not available (see also discussion in next section). Decisions concerning children's education can also be influenced by the value given to education by families and by family perceptions of the returns to education in the labour market.

Figure 17. **Employment precludes school attendance for many working children in the ECOWAS region**

Children in employment only (i.e., not attending school) and total children in employment, 7-14 years age range, by country



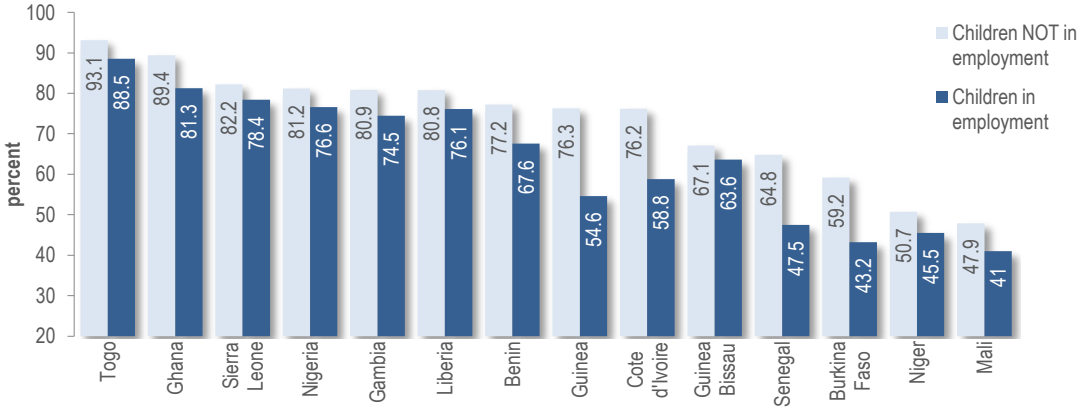
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

Whatever the cause, it is this group of working children not in school whose long-term prospects are likely to be most compromised. Clearly, if children are denied schooling altogether then they have little chance of acquiring the human capital necessary for more gainful employment upon entering adulthood.

45. **Children in employment are much less likely to attend school than their non-working peers.** Comparing the school attendance of working and non-working children is a way of assessing the *relative* educational disadvantage of the former group. This comparison, reported in Figure 18, indicates that working children lag substantially behind their non-working peers in almost all of the ECOWAS countries. The attendance gap between working and non-working children is especially pronounced in Guinea (22 percentage points), Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal (17 percentage points) and Burkina Faso (16 percentage points). Attendance, however, is far from universal even among those not burdened with work responsibilities. Data are not available on the regularity of school attendance, i.e. the frequency with which children are absent from or late for class, but attendance regularity is also likely adversely affected by involvement in employment.

Figure 18. **Children in employment are much less likely to attend school than their non-working peers**

Percentage of children attending school by work status, 7-14 years age range, by country

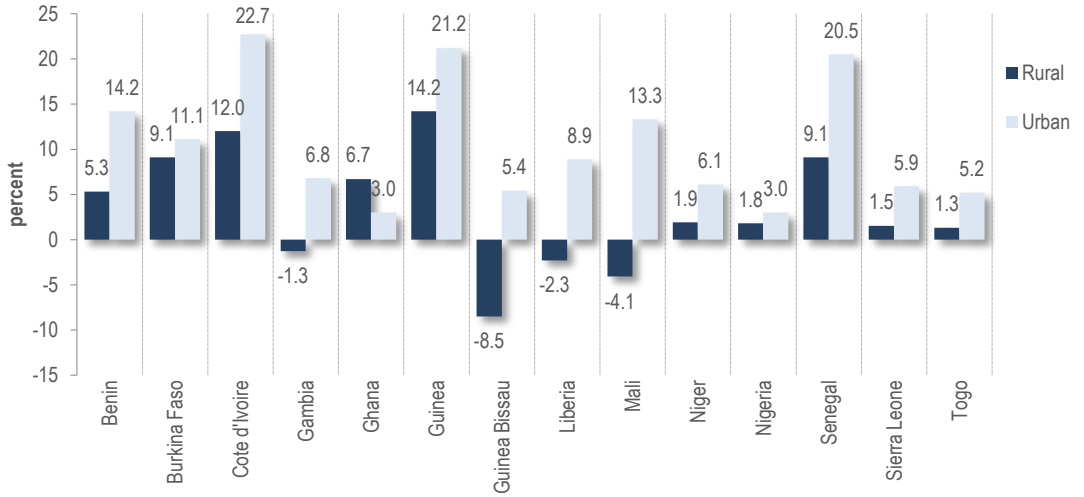


Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

46. **The attendance gap between working and non-working children is higher in urban areas.** This point is illustrated in Figure 19, which reports the percentage point difference in attendance rates between working and non-working children in rural and urban areas. The gap between working and non-working children in Senegal, for example, is 20 percentage points in urban areas compared to nine percentage points in rural areas. A similar pattern prevails in all but one country (Ghana).[18] In other words, urban working children face a greater attendance disadvantage vis-à-vis their non-working peers than is the case in rural areas. School attendance, on the other hand, is lower in rural areas, but the difference between working and non-working children in this regard is smaller. This lends credence to the argument that factors beyond work itself – including access to adequate schooling facilities – may also be important in explaining absence of rural working children from school.

Figure 19. **The attendance gap between non-working children and working children is higher in urban areas**

Percentage point difference in attendance rates between non-working and working children, by residence and country



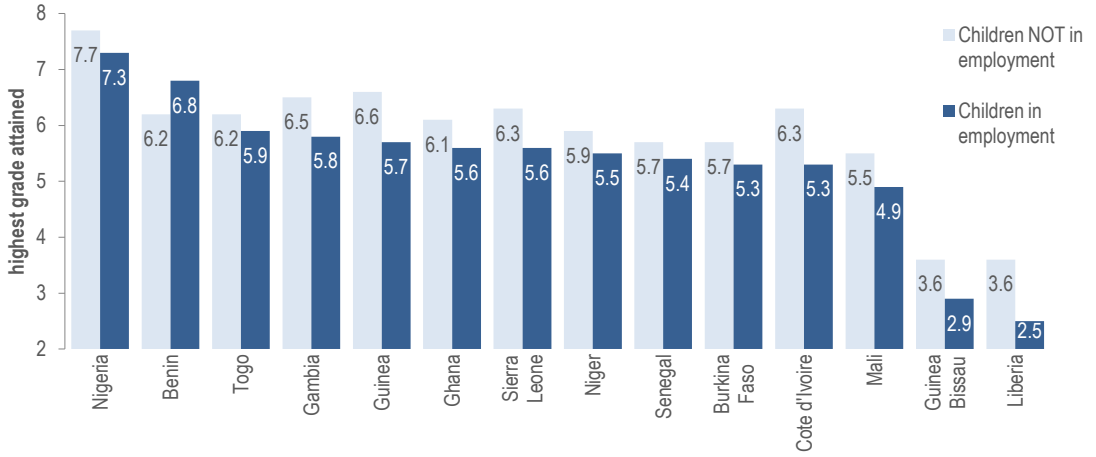
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

47. **A large share of working children do in fact attend school in the ECOWAS countries, so a key question is how work affects their school performance.** Data on the highest grade completed show that children in employment lag behind their non-working counterparts in terms of grade progression in all 14 ECOWAS countries (Figure 20). Moreover, because child workers are more likely to drop out after primary school, and because drop outs are presumably those with higher accumulated delay, the gap in grade-for-age reported in Figure 20 is likely to underestimate the true gap in completed grades between working and non-working children, i.e., the gap that would be observed in the absence of selective drop out. The difference in grade-for-age is likely in large part a reflection of higher repetition arising from poorer performance, but information on learning achievement scores is needed to obtain a more complete picture of the impact of work on children's ability to benefit from their time in the classroom. It stands to reason, however, that the exigencies of work limit the time and energy

[18] It is worth noting that in four countries, the attendance of rural working children is actually higher than that of rural non-working children. The reasons for this require further investigation, but one possibility is that children's income or production from work makes it easier for the household to bear the costs associated with schooling.

children have for their studies, in turn negatively impacting upon their academic performance.

Figure 20. **Children combining school and work lag behind their non-working peers in terms of grade progression**
Highest grade completed at age 14 years, children currently attending school, by involvement in employment, by country



.Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

8. OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

48. **Out of school children constitute an important related policy priority in the ECOWAS region.** The share of out-of-school children in the 7-14 years age group stands at 56% in Mali, at around one-half in Niger and Burkina Faso, and at least one-third in Senegal, Guinea Bissau and Guinea. At least one-fifth of children are out of school in all countries except Ghana and Togo, underscoring the distance the region must still travel to reach universal primary enrolment (Figure 21). Some of these out-of-school children are simply late entrants, i.e., children who will eventually enter school but have not yet done so. But even when the reference group is limited to the 10-14 years age group to exclude most potential late entrants the share of out-of-school children is very high in most of the ECOWAS countries.

Figure 21. **A very high share of primary school-aged children remain out of school in the ECOWAS countries**

Percentage of out of school children (OOSC), by age group and country

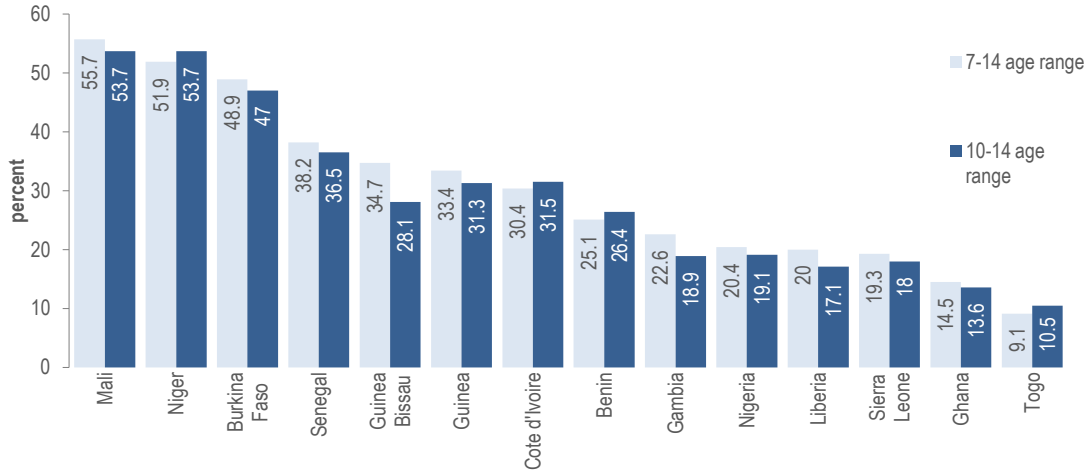
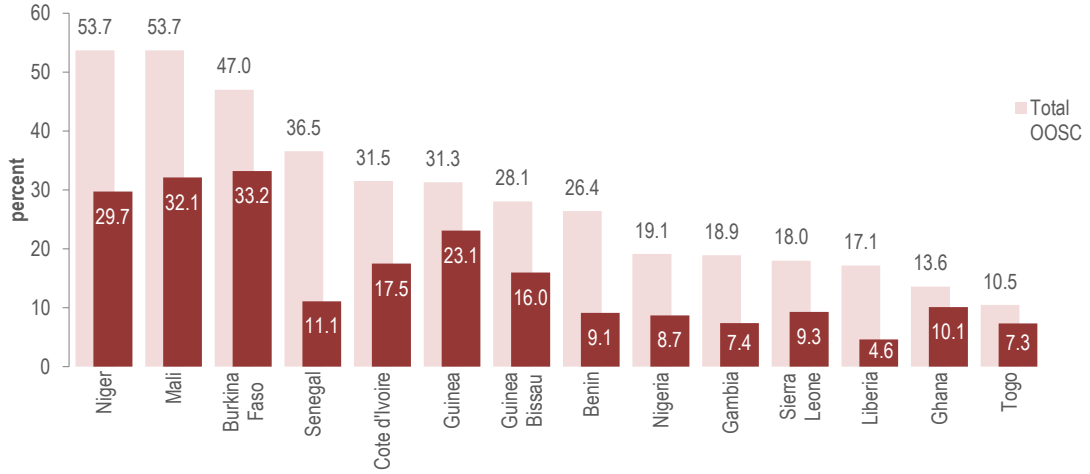


Figure 22. **Many, but by no means all, out-of-school children are in employment**

Percentage of out of school children (OOSC), 10-14 years age group, by work status and country



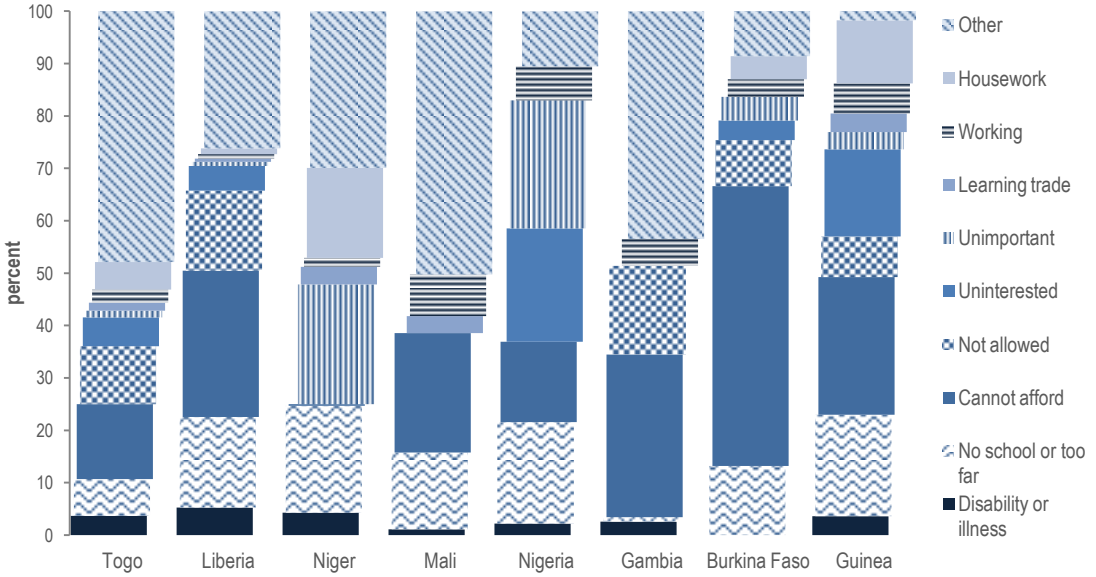
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

49. **The demands of work are not the only reason for children's absence from school.** It is interesting to note that large shares of out-of-school children are not in employment in most ECOWAS countries (Figure 22). This result suggests that while work is undoubtedly an important barrier to children's schooling it is by no means the only barrier keeping children out of the classroom. What are

some of the other barriers? Figure 23, which reports reasons cited for never entering school, suggests that school-related factors, and specifically school access and school costs, are especially important. Large shares of respondents across all countries (e.g., 45% in Liberia) cite lack of nearby school facilities and/or high school costs as reasons for being out of school. Attitudes towards school are another important factor. A significant proportion of respondents (e.g., 28% in Guinea) indicate not being in school because they saw it as unimportant or uninteresting, or were not allowed by their parents. The demands of housework or employment, on the other hand, together were cited by only a minority of respondents in most countries.

Figure 23. **School-related factors appear to play an especially important role in explaining why children are out of school**

Reasons for never entering school (% distribution), children aged 9-14 years, by country



Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

50. **Birth registration is also relevant as a barrier to schooling in some contexts.** In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, other reports indicate that many children displaced by violence were never registered at birth, meaning that they have no proof of nationality and are unable to enrol in preschool.[19] In all, UNICEF estimates that more than half (53%) of children below the age of five are not registered in West and Central Africa. This figure rises to 96% in Liberia and to 76% in Guinea Bissau.[20] In addition to being a barrier to schooling, low birth registration rates also hamper efforts to protect children from child labour.

51. **The share of out of school children is especially high in rural areas.** As reported in Figure 24, there is a much larger percentage of children out of school in rural compared to urban areas in all ECOWAS countries. The percentage of out-of-school rural children in the 10-14 years age range is almost five times that of urban children in Nigeria, is three times that of urban children in Guinea and Guinea Bissau and is more than twice that of urban children in Niger, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana and Togo. Clearly, the effort to increase school enrolment must therefore place particular emphasis on extending schooling in the underserved rural regions of the

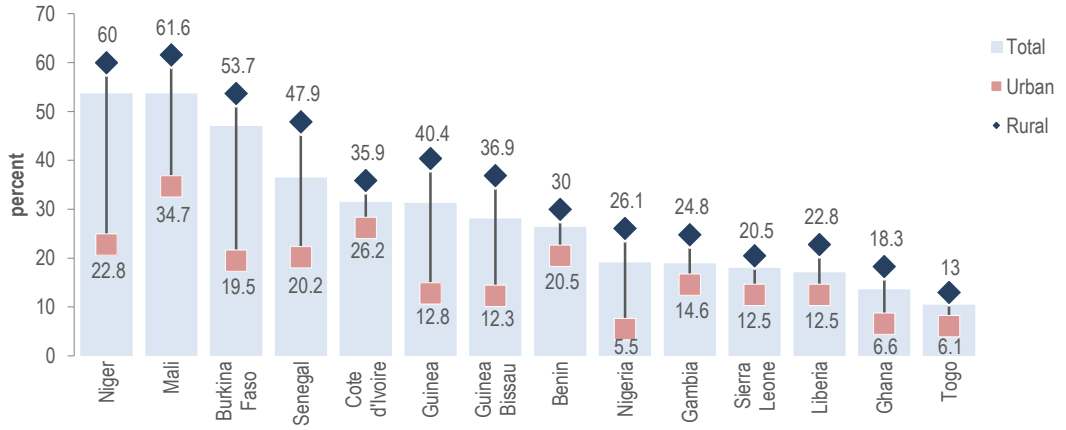
[19] UNHCR, *Birth certificate opens the door to school in Côte d'Ivoire*. Press report, 26 September 2013. Available at: www.unhcr.org/5244292e9.html.

[20] United Nations Children's Fund, *Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration*. UNICEF, New York, 2013. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/media/files/Embargoed_11_Dec_Birth_Registration_report_low_res.pdf

ECOWAS region. Extending education in unserved areas is not only an important goal in itself, but is also important to providing children with an alternative to work.

Figure 24. **The share of out of school children is especially high in rural areas**

Percentage of children who are out of school, 10-14 years age range, by residence and country

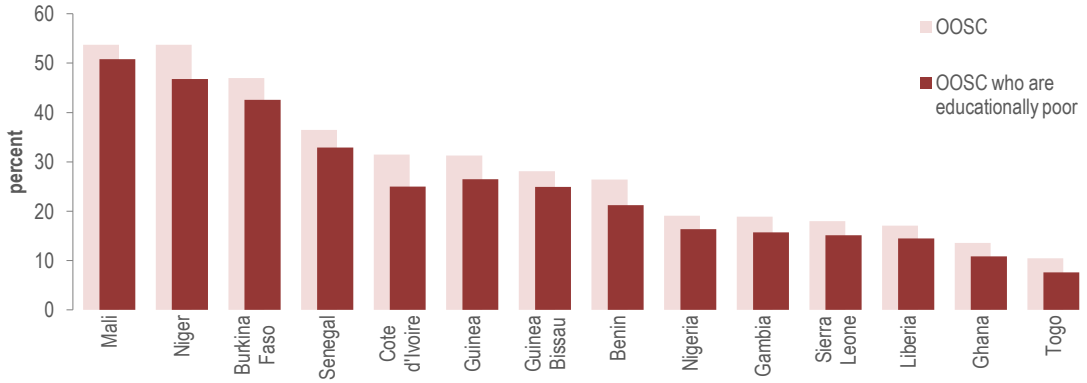


Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

52. **Many of those who are out of school have very limited education and therefore are in need of "second chance" learning opportunities.** As reported in Figure 25, a very high share of out-of-school children suffer what UNESCO terms "education poverty", i.e., possess less than four years of education, the minimum amount of school time considered by UNESCO as necessary for acquiring basic literacy skills. It is likely that the education poverty indicator actually underestimates the second chance learning needs of out-of-school children, as basic literacy skills alone are less and less an adequate skills floor for successful entry into the labour market. Rather, higher-order technical, vocational and reasoning skills, requiring education well beyond the primary level, are increasingly needed. Reaching the group of out-of-school children with second chance educational opportunities is important to ensuring that these children do not enter adulthood lacking the basic skills needed for work and life.

Figure 25. **Many of those who are out of school have very limited education and therefore are "educationally poor"**

Percentage of children who are out of school children (OOSC) and who are both out of school and educationally poor (i.e., with less than two years of education), 10-14 years age group, by country



Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

9. RESPONDING TO CHILD LABOUR

53. There are no simple answers to the alarming numbers of West African children who remain trapped in child labour. As underscored in the *Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016* adopted at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference of 2010,[21] child labour – in the ECOWAS countries and elsewhere – is a complex phenomenon requiring a response that is comprehensive in nature and that involves simultaneous action across a range of policy sectors. In keeping with a comprehensive approach, the document calls for the "mainstreaming" child labour elimination in broader policy frameworks at national and sub-national levels and for mechanisms to coordinate policy efforts against child labour.

54. As part of the searching for comprehensive solutions, ECOWAS members states adopted the *Decent Work Agenda in Africa 2007-2015* (DWAA) at the 11th African Regional Meeting of the ILO (Addis Ababa, 24-27 April 2007). The DWAA calls on all countries in the region to implement National Action Plans (NAPs) to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2015.[22] NAPs are practical, comprehensive and time-bound programmes for dealing with child labour by addressing its causes and direct consequences. In response to the DWAA, the number of countries designing such NAPs has been increasing steadily. The ECOWAS Child Policy and its Strategic Plan of Action[23](now the Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Framework[24]), the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on Child Labour and the Regional Policy and Plan of Action for Child Protection and Child Trafficking also provide important frameworks for policy measures against child labour in the ECOWAS countries.

55. These global and ECOWAS-specific policy frameworks as well as the evidence cited in the previous sections of this Report, point to the following policy pillars as being of particular relevance to the fight against child labour in the ECOWAS region: (a) *Improving education access and quality*; (b) *Expanding second chance learning opportunities*; (c) *Expanding social protection*; (d) *Awareness raising and social mobilisation*; (e) *Expanding direct actions aimed at removal and recovery*; (f) *Strengthening the policy and legislative frameworks*; (g) *Building institutional capacity*; and (h) *Improving the evidence base*. These key policy pillars for responding to child labour in the ECOWAS region are discussed further below.

Improving education access and quality, in order that families have the opportunity to invest in their children's education as an alternative to child labour, and that the returns to schooling make it worthwhile for them to do so.

56. There is broad consensus that the single most effective way to prevent child labour is to extend and improve schooling as its logical alternative. Despite progress, ensuring that children have access to quality education remains a

[21] *Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016.* Outcome document from The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010. Available at: www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=13453.

[22] *The Decent Work Agenda in Africa 2007-2015.* Conclusions of the 11th African Regional Meeting, Addis Ababa 24 – 27 April 2007, paragraph 25. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/rgmeet/11afrm/conclusions.pdf

[23] *ECOWAS Child Policy.* Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), ECOWAS Commission. Abuja, Nigeria, 2009.

[24] The Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Framework was validated in Oct. 2012.

major challenge in the ECOWAS countries.[25] We saw earlier that the share of children in the 7-14 years age range who are out of school is still alarmingly high in the ECOWAS countries, underscoring the distance the region must still travel to reach universal primary enrolment. An important share of out-of-school children are not in child labour but are at heightened risk of *future* child labour involvement. These children also constitute an important policy concern. Feedback on reasons for being outside of school highlights the importance of factors relating to the school system itself (e.g., school distance and out-of-pocket costs) and of perceptions concerning its importance and relevance. These results underscore the need to address the school access and quality issues influencing parents' decisions to enrol and keep their children in school.

57. Many families in the ECOWAS region, and particularly those who are poor or who live in outlying rural areas, indicate not sending their children to school because there is no school available or it is too far away. This underscores the importance of continued efforts towards school expansion using needs-based criteria to ensure that the most disadvantaged and under-served groups are reached. Community schools that are integrated with the formal school system offer one model for reaching outlying rural communities with schooling in a cost-effective manner. Feedback from families also points to the importance of out-of-pocket costs as an access barrier, pointing to the need for measures such as the provision of educational materials (e.g., exercise books, pencils and uniforms) for free or at subsidized rates and for those who cannot afford them and the elimination of all formal and unofficial school fees.

58. A growing body of evidence[26] also indicates that incentive schemes that provide cash or in-kind subsidies to poor families conditional on school attendance offer another promising route to extending participation in school, although such programmes remain in their infancy in the ECOWAS region. These schemes can increase schooling directly by providing poor families with additional resources as well as indirectly by compensating parents for the foregone economic product from their children's labour and thus reducing child work. The benefits of providing free school meals each day are also well-documented.[27] They function both as an incentive to keeping children in school and as a means of ensuring that children have the necessary nutritional basis for effective learning. Various school meal programmes already exist in ECOWAS countries, but these efforts need to be expanded to progressively reach all children. Finally, measures are needed to address the special access barriers faced by female students; ensuring that curricula are gender sensitive, ensuring appropriate hygiene facilities and raising awareness of the importance of female education are all relevant in this context.

59. Access to schooling matters but in many ECOWAS countries it is only a part of the answer. There is also general need to improve school quality in order that schooling is seen by parents as a worthwhile alternative to child labour. Again feedback from those out of school points to widespread perceptions of school

[25] For a detailed general discussion of policy options relating to addressing child labour and educational marginalisation see: *Child Labour & Educational Disadvantage – Breaking the Link, Building Opportunity. A Review by Gordon Brown*. Office of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education, 2012 Available at: http://educationenvoy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/child_labour_and_education_UK.pdf

[26] See, for example, de Hoop, Jacobus and Rosati, Furio, *The complex effects of public policy on child labour.* UCW Working Paper, Rome 2013. Available at: http://www.ucw-project.org/attachment/Effects_public_policy_child_labour20130501_112337.pdf

[27] See, for example, Edström et al. (2008), Ahmed (2002), Lazamaniah et al. (1999), Simeon et al. (1989), Jacoby et al. (1996), as cited in World Food Programme (2009). *WFP School Feeding Policy. Policy Issues*. Executive Board, Second Regular Session, Rome, 9–13 November 2009 (doc. WFP/EB.2/2009/4-A). .

being either unimportant or uninteresting, both suggestive of underlying quality concerns. At present, schooling standards vary considerably across and within the ECOWAS countries and quality is undermined by factors such as incomplete school buildings, teacher shortages, inconsistent teaching standards and poor curriculum relevance. There is an overarching need for inclusive education strategies, including girl- and child-friendly schools, which are adaptive to and supportive of the differing learning needs of children. There is also a need to continue and intensify on-going curriculum reform efforts aimed at ensuring that schooling is relevant and provides an appropriate foundation for higher level learning and skills acquisition. Introducing into curricula issues of relevance to children's lives, such as child labour, HIV/AIDS and other social concerns in an age-appropriate manner is especially important in this context. The promotion of good quality education also means the absence of bullying and corporal punishment, and the introduction of methods of learning that encourage questioning and children's participation rather than learning by rote.

Providing second chance learning opportunities, in order to compensate for the adverse educational consequences of child labour.

60. "Second chance" policies are needed to reach former working children and other out-of-school children with educational opportunities as part of broader efforts towards their social reintegration. They are critical to avoiding large numbers of children entering adulthood in a disadvantaged position, permanently harmed by early work experiences. Children with little or no schooling will be in a weak position in the labour market, at much greater risk of joining the ranks of the unemployed and the poor. If left alone, these children and youth are likely to be in need of other (more costly) remediation policies at a later stage of their life cycle. Second chance programmes are based on the premise that working children are often difficult to insert directly (back) into the formal education system because of their age, different life experiences and lack of familiarity with the school environment. Second chance education programmes offer out-of-school children a "bridge" to successful integration or (re-integration) in the formal school classroom.

61. Empirical evidence presented above on educational attainment indicates that such policies are particularly relevant in the West African context: many students leave the system prior to the end of the compulsory education cycle and many of those out of school lack the minimum amount of school time considered by UNESCO as necessary for acquiring basic literacy skills. Programming experience elsewhere points to two main options for reaching disadvantaged, out-of-school children with opportunities to ease their transition back to the formal school system: *mainstreaming*, providing returning children with special remedial support within the regular classroom context; and "bridging" education, involving separate intensive courses, delivered within or outside the formal school system, designed to raise academic proficiency prior to returning to the regular classroom. There are examples of both options already in place in the ECOWAS region, but these are mainly pilot scale efforts that need to be evaluated and, on this basis, progressively expanded to ultimately include all children in need.

Expanding social protection to help prevent child labour from being used as a household survival strategy in the face of economic and social vulnerability.

62. The importance of social protection to the fight against child labour has been well established. Social protection makes it less likely that families have to pull their children out of school and send them to work as a coping strategy when faced with economic vulnerability or shocks. At present, only an estimated one-fifth of all Africans benefit from some type of publicly provided social protection[28] and coverage is especially low in the West Africa region.[29] Those covered are limited to a small share of number of workers in the formal sector; the large number of people working in agriculture and in other informal sectors of the economy are largely excluded. At the same time, social and economic risks in region are growing, owing to demographic trends, climate change, political instability, governance challenges, globalisation and a range of other factors, while traditional support systems to deal with these risks are breaking down.[30]

63. In this context, establishing adequate social protection floors (SPFs) constitutes a critical priority, both for child labour elimination efforts and for broader poverty reduction and social development goals. The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No. 202) of 2012 provides a key framework for efforts in this regard. The Recommendation sets out that SPFs should contain basic social security guarantees that ensure that all in need can afford and have access to essential health care and have income security at least at a nationally defined minimum level over the life cycle.[31]

64. A wide range of policy measures are relevant in this context, including conditional and unconditional cash transfers, public employment schemes, family allowances, school feeding schemes, social health insurance, unemployment protection and old age pensions.[32] The Cabo Verde Minimum Social Pension (*Pensão Social Mínima*) and Social Solidarity Pensions programmes, the Ghana Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) Programme,[33] the Sierra Leone National Safety Net programme and Nigeria's In Care of the Poor (COPE) programme are examples of cash transfer programmes being undertaken in ECOWAS region that offer a starting point for establishing basic SPFs. These efforts need to be systematically evaluated and their potential for broad-scale replication assessed.

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[28] World Bank, Social Protection Atlas, http://datatopics.worldbank.org/aspire/

[29] For detailed discussion of social protection coverage, see UNICEF, *Strengthening Social Protection for Children in West and Central Africa. Report Thematic Report I*. UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa, February 2009. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/english/wcaro_UNICEF_ODI_1_Strengthening_Social_Protection.pdf

[30] World Bank, *Managing risk, promoting growth. Developing Systems for Social Protection in Africa*. The World Bank's Africa Social Protection Strategy 2012-2022. Available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRICA/Resources/social-protection-full-report-EN-2012.pdf

[31] ILO, 2011. *Resolution and conclusions concerning the recurrent discussion on social protection (social security)*, International Labour Conference, 100th Session, Geneva, 2011, in Record of Proceedings (Geneva, 2011), No. 24: Report of the Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection.2011b, paras. 4 and 5. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_152819.pdf

[32] For a detailed discussion of this point, see *World report on child labour: Economic vulnerability, social protection and the fight against child labour* / International Labour Office. - Geneva: ILO, 2013. ISBN 978-92-2-126234-3 (print); 978-92-2-126235-0 (web pdf). Available at: http://www.unesco.org/library/PDF/2013_Worl_Report_on_CL_and_Social_Protection_EN[1].pdf

[33] The Ghana Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) Program is a social cash transfer program which provides cash and health insurance to extremely poor households across Ghana to alleviate short-term poverty and encourage long term human capital development.

65. Developing and strengthening community-based social safety mechanisms will also be important. Micro health insurance plans, community savings groups, and micro-credit initiatives, should be promoted and expanded in this context, again building on existing pilot initiatives, and targeting especially poorest households, agricultural households and other unserved groups. Small-scale mutual health organisations (MHOs) and community health organisation (CHOs) have been gaining momentum in this context in countries such as Benin, Ghana, Mali and Senegal as a means for communities to provide their own health insurance, although the coverage of these efforts remains low, especially among the poor who need them most.[34]

66. Ensuring the social protection floors reach the specific groups of children most at risk of child labour generally, and of worst forms of child labour in particular, should be a particular priority. Especially vulnerable groups include children orphaned or affected by HIV/AIDS, other children without parental care, children from marginalised ethnic minorities and indigenous groups, children affected by migration and other socially- or economically-excluded persons. The special circumstances that make these groups more vulnerable to child labour need to be given particular attention in the design, implementation and monitoring of social protection schemes.

Awareness raising and social mobilisation, to build a broad-based consensus for change to engage civil society and social partners in achieving change.

67. Awareness raising is needed as part of efforts to build a broad consensus for change. Child labour is a clear example in which both social norms and economic considerations are important, and strategic communication efforts need to be designed with this in mind. At present, public awareness of child labour issues in West Africa is low, particularly outside of urban areas. Households require information concerning the costs or dangers of child labour and benefits of schooling in order to make informed decisions on their children's time allocation. Cultural attitudes and perceptions can also direct household decisions concerning children's schooling and child labour, and therefore should also be targeted in strategic communication efforts. We saw earlier that perceptions of schooling as uninteresting or unimportant are common in many ECOWAS countries, and that some children in these countries are out of school because they are not permitted to attend, pointing to the need to address school quality concerns (see above) *and* public attitudes towards education.

68. Communication efforts are needed at both national and local levels. A mix of conventional (e.g., radio, television and print media) as well as of non-conventional communication channels (e.g., religious leaders, school teachers, health care workers, chiefs and other opinion-formers) is important in order to achieve maximum outreach. Additional baseline information on local knowledge and cultural attitudes towards child labour is needed to tailor communication messages, and to evaluate changes in awareness and attitudes following communication activities. The urgent need to address worst forms of child labour, including child trafficking and child commercial sexual exploitation, should be a particular focus of communication efforts. The importance of birth

[34] UNICEF, Strengthening Social Protection for Children in West and Central Africa. Report Thematic Report I. UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa, February 2009. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/english/wcaro_UNICEF_ODI_1_Strengthening_Social_Protection.pdf

registration is another important communication message. Providing information on national child labour legislation, presented in terms that are understandable to the populations and communities concerned, is a third communication priority.

69. Achieving sustainable reductions in child labour requires social consensus well beyond the level of the household. Policy responses to child labour are also unlikely to be effective in the absence of the active participation of civil society and of social partners in implementing them. Similarly, laws to protect children from child labour are unlikely to be effective if they are not backed by broad social consensus. Building on efforts being undertaken with support from ILO-IPEC, UNICEF and other groups, religious organizations, educational institutions, teachers' organisations, NGOs, the mass media, community-based organizations, trade unions, employers' organizations and numerous other groups need to be actively engaged in the societal effort against child labour. Care providers in direct contact with children, including teachers and health workers, are in an especially good position to identify and refer child labourers, and therefore constitute particularly important allies in protecting children from child labour. Initiatives such as community-based child protection networks provide useful vehicles for bringing together a wide variety of stakeholders to combat child labour.

Expanding direct actions, to remove children from child labour, and in particular from extreme forms of child labour, and support their recovery and reintegration.

70. Direct action is needed to remove children from child labour and provide them with the support and follow-up needed for their recovery and reintegration. Such action is relevant to child labourers generally, but is especially relevant in cases of trafficked children, children subjected to commercial sexual exploitation, and children facing hazard or exploitation in the workplace. While information on these worst forms is beyond the scope of the surveys used for this report, information from ILO SIMPOC studies and other sources suggest that they remain urgent policy concerns in the ECOWAS region.[35] Further targeted research utilising specialised survey instruments is needed in order to generate more complete information on especially vulnerable groups of child labourers and to inform interventions aimed at addressing them.

71. The effective identification and follow-up of worst forms of child labour depends, first and foremost, on mobilising and capacitating the local State and non-governmental actors and structures that operate closest to where these frequently-hidden forms of child labour occur. Examples in this context include teachers, local police officers, community-level child protection committees and community-based child labour monitoring systems for ensuring that individual cases are followed up with adequate social support. Follow-up actions ensuring

[35] See, for example: (a) *Enquête de base sur le travail des enfants au Togo 2010, Rapport final.* Programme international pour l'abolition du travail des enfants (IPEC) / Bureau international du Travail (BIT) et Direction Générale de la Statistique et de la comptabilité nationale (DGSCN) de la République Togolaise; (b) *Enquête nationale sur le travail des enfants au Benin 2008, Rapport final*. Programme international pour l'abolition du travail des enfants (IPEC) / Bureau international du Travail (BIT) et Institut national de la statistique et de l'analyse économique (INSAE); (c) *Rapport de l'Enquête nationale sur le travail et la traite des enfants en Guinée de 2010.* Programme international pour l'abolition du travail des enfants (IPEC) / Bureau international du Travail (BIT) et Institut National de la Statistique de Guinée. – Conakry: OIT, 2011 - 1 v. ; and (d) *Rapport national sur le travail des enfants Cote d'Ivoire 2005*. Programme international pour l'abolition du travail des enfants (IPEC) / Bureau international du Travail (BIT) et Institut National de la Statistique.

that removed children are provided a full range of needed social services (e.g., emergency shelter, needs assessment and referral, medical care, psycho-social counselling, legal support, family tracing and assessment, post reintegration follow-up, etc.) are also critical. Regulatory frameworks need to define minimum standards of care for former child labourers and other vulnerable children, and to specify the respective roles of the various State and private actors in meeting these care needs.

Strengthening legislative and policy frameworks, as a foundation and guide for action against child labour.

72. Achieving sustainable reductions in child labour requires a supportive policy and legislative environment which is in line with international standards and effectively mainstreamed into national development plans and programmes. This has the important effect of signalling national intent to eliminate child labour and providing a framework in which this can be achieved. All 15 ECOWAS countries have ratified ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms) and all but Liberia have ratified Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age) (Table 15). All but Liberia[36] have also ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

Table 15. **Status of Ratification of ILO Conventions and National Plans of Action, ECOWAS countries**

Country	Ratification status		National Plan of Action status		
	Convention No. 138 (Minimum age)	Convention No. 182 (Worst forms)	Process of drafting	Validated	Adopted by Ministerial Council
1 Benin	11 Jun. 2001	06 Nov. 2001			X
2 Burkina Faso	11Feb. 1999	25 Jul. 2001			X
3 Cabo Verde	07 Feb. 2011	23 Oct. 2001		X	
4 Cote d'Ivoire	07 Feb. 2003	07 Feb. 2003			X
5 Gambia	04 Sep. 2000	03 Jul. 2001			
6 Ghana	06 Jun. 2011	03 Jul. 2001			X
7 Guinea	06 Jun. 2003	06 Jun. 2011			
8 Guinea-Bissau	05 Mar. 2009	26 Aug. 2008	X		
9 Liberia		02 Jun. 2003			
10 Mali	11 Mar. 2002	14 Jul. 2000			X
11 Niger	04 De. 1978	23 Oct. 2000		X	
12 Nigeria[(a)]	02 Oc.t 2002	02 Oct. 2002			X
13 Senegal	15 Dec. 1999	01 Jun. 2000			X
14 Sierre Leone	10 Jun. 2011	10 Jun. 2011			
15 Togo	16 Mar. 1984	19 Sep. 2000		X	

Notes: (a) Adopted in 2013 after publication of the Regional Action Plan.
Source: ECOWAS Regional Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labour Especially the Worst Forms. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and ILO, undated.

73. As highlighted in the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on Child Labour (RAP),[37] the critical next step on the legislative front is to ensure that these Conventions are effectively domesticated into national legislation. Domestication should include the elaboration of national lists of hazardous work that is prohibited for all persons below the age of 18 years.

74. An adequate policy framework is necessary to guide the effective operationalisation of national legislation and broader efforts towards child labour elimination goals. The RAP in this context calls for the ECOWAS countries

[36] Liberia has signed but not yet ratified the Optional Protocol.

[37] ECOWAS Regional Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labour Especially the Worst Forms. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and ILO, undated.

to develop National Action Plans for the elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour that fix "priorities for action, involving all government departments, social partners and stakeholders, and establish systems to implement it with sufficient budgetary provisions." While the number of countries with National Action Plans is increasing, Table 15 shows that the ECOWAS region is still lagging in this regard; only seven of the 15 countries have national action plans adopted by ministerial councils.

75. The effectiveness of legislation in protecting children from child labour also depends on the establishment of mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing laws, including provisions for inspections and for the removal child labourers to safe places (see also previous discussion on direct actions). Effective community based child labour monitoring systems (CLMS) are especially needed as a mechanism for identifying children who are involved or at risk of engaging in child labour, referring them to labour inspectorates and appropriate social services, and tracking them to ensure a positive outcome.

76. Such monitoring systems are particularly beneficial in the agricultural and informal sectors – where the vast majority of child labour in West Africa is concentrated – in supporting State institutions in monitoring and follow up. School inspectors, school teachers and agriculture extension workers are among the groups that have important potential roles to play in addressing child labour in rural contexts within a broader community-based child labour monitoring system. A number of CLMS initiatives have been implemented on a limited scale with support from ILO-IPEC and other groups, offering a foundation of experience for expanded efforts in this area.

Building institutional capacity, to ensure that policy and legislative frameworks are effectively operationalised.

77. Strengthening institutional capacity at all levels of government is another important priority in the ECOWAS countries for continued progress towards child labour elimination goals. Institutions require strengthening in a number of areas, including using data for strategic planning, policy and programme design, programme monitoring and evaluation, and the mainstreaming of child labour in broader development plans, budgets and programmes.

78. As child labour is a cross-sectoral issue, requiring close collaboration across a range of government bodies, the clear delineation of roles and the strengthening of coordination and information-sharing will be critical to the effective functioning of government institutions and their social partners in efforts combating child labour. Currently, assistance in the child labour field is often highly fragmented, with a large number of actors operating with little or no coordination or linkages. This leads to overlaps in assistance in some areas and to gaps in assistance in other priority areas.

79. There is need for an integrated framework for intervention for a real impact. The National Action Plans (NAPs) called for in the *Decent Work Agenda in Africa 2007-2015* can play a particularly important role in this regard. The NAPs are comprehensive, tripartite, multi-sectoral, time-bound programmes for scaling up and accelerating action against child labour, with priority emphasis on its worst forms. NAPs are country-owned and country-led strategic frameworks addressing the root causes of child labour, based on broad mobilization of government departments, the social partners, civil society and local communities. They are designed to ensure that all major interventions essential

for addressing child labour are in place, but without unnecessary duplication. NAPs seek to capitalize on synergies between sectors and programme partners, strengthening existing interventions, if necessary, with new interventions developed essentially to fill identified policy and programme gaps or to add value to them.

80. The National Action Plans are conceived as integral parts of broader national development programmes. It is particularly important that the NAPs are effectively linked to the development of broader national child protection systems, and that actions in the two areas are mutually reinforcing. Again, regional-level frameworks, including the Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and the Regional Policy and Plan of Action for Child Protection and Child Trafficking, offer useful guidance in this regard.

81. The NAPs require a coordination mechanism to ensure that identified actions are effectively implemented. The ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on Child Labour (RAP),[38] in this context calls for the establishment of child labour units within an appropriate department of the national government, which would be a nodal point for all activities related to child labour in the concerned country. It also calls for the establishment of national steering committees to oversee broader monitoring and policy making on child labour issues in each ECOWAS country.

Improving the evidence base, to inform policy design and to ensure the effective targeting of interventions.

82. Effective and well-targeted responses to child labour demand a strong body of knowledge on the issue, including an understanding of how many child labourers there are, which sectors and geographical areas they work in, the demographic characteristics of the children involved, and the type of work that they carry out. Despite recent national household surveys in most of the ECOWAS countries, important information gaps remain in the area of child labour, affecting understanding of the phenomenon and the ability of policy-makers to address it. There is a general need in this context for regular systems for the collection, analysis and dissemination of child labour statistics, as well as more targeted research aimed at filling specific knowledge gaps.

83. Research priorities include child labour in agriculture, in order to determine the specific agricultural sectors in which children work and the types of tasks which they carry out. While most children in employment are found in the agricultural sector, less is known about the characteristics of children's agricultural work, its degree of hazardousness, or the extent to which it interferes with schooling. Worst forms of child labour constitutes another critical research priority. The worst forms of child labour are targeted for urgent elimination but the evidence base that is needed to achieve this goal is very weak across virtually all of the ECOWAS countries. Further, targeted research utilising specialised survey instruments is needed in order to generate more complete information on this highest-priority group of child labourers. Information on policy impact is a third area where more information is needed. While there has been a wide range of policy experimentation relating to child labour in the ECOWAS region, there remains very little robust evidence concerning the impact of these policy initiatives and their potential for replication on a broader scale.

[38] ECOWAS Regional Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labour Especially the Worst Forms. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and ILO, undated.

84. The Regional Action Plan envisages the creation of a resource centre within the ECOWAS Commission in support of efforts to improve the evidence base on child labour. The resource centre would act as repository of data, bringing together all information on the child labour situation in the ECOWAS countries in one place. The centre would also coordinate with countries in identifying sectors or subjects where studies should be conducted, commissioning studies, identifying countries where national child labour surveys need to be conducted and in disseminating research findings.

ADDITIONAL STATISTICS

Table A1. **Children's involvement in employment and schooling, 7-14 years age group, by residence and country**

Country		Mutually exclusive activity categories				(a)&(c) Total in employment	(b)&(c) Total in school	(a)&(d) Total out of school
		(a) Only employment	(b) Only schooling	(c) Employment and schooling	(d) Neither activity			
Benin	U	9.5	61.4	9.7	19.4	19.2	71.1	28.9
	R	19.2	33.3	20.1	27.4	39.3	53.4	46.6
Burkina Faso	U	9.2	55.6	11.2	24.0	20.4	66.8	33.2
	R	29.3	20.9	11.2	38.6	40.5	32.1	67.9
Cote d'Ivoire	U	9.8	51.3	12.9	26.0	22.7	64.2	35.8
	R	26.8	23.2	23.8	26.2	50.6	47.0	53.0
Gambia	U	4.8	66.1	18.2	10.9	22.9	83.1	16.9
	R	14.8	33.4	37.9	13.9	52.6	70.1	29.9
Ghana	U	2.6	66.2	25.9	5.2	28.6	92.2	7.8
	R	12.1	37.3	40.4	10.3	52.4	77.7	22.3
Guinea	U	6.6	66.3	15.8	11.3	22.4	82.1	17.9
	R	23.0	28.4	22.5	26.1	45.6	51.0	49.0
Guinea Bissau	U	7.4	54.6	21.9	16.1	29.3	76.5	23.5
	R	26.9	17.7	29.4	26.0	56.3	47.1	52.9
Liberia	U	1.5	77.5	5.0	15.9	6.5	82.5	17.4
	R	6.7	49.2	20.0	24.1	26.7	69.2	30.8
Mali	U	5.0	74.4	3.1	17.4	8.1	77.5	22.4
	R	21.4	42.0	8.9	27.7	30.3	50.9	49.1
Niger	U	8.8	57.0	13.7	20.5	22.4	70.6	29.4
	R	31.3	21.1	24.5	23.0	55.9	45.7	54.3
Nigeria	U	0.9	88.7	4.8	5.7	5.7	93.5	6.5
	R	9.5	56.8	15.1	18.5	24.8	71.6	28.4
Senegal	U	3.8	65.5	5.3	25.4	9.1	70.8	29.2
	R	10.8	35.1	7.7	46.3	18.6	42.8	57.2
Sierra Leone	U	4.8	60.2	20.6	14.4	25.4	80.8	19.2
	R	9.8	42.2	28.4	19.6	38.2	70.6	29.4
Togo	U	2.0	71.4	23.3	3.3	25.3	94.7	5.3
	R	7.6	37.2	47.7	7.5	55.3	84.9	15.1

Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

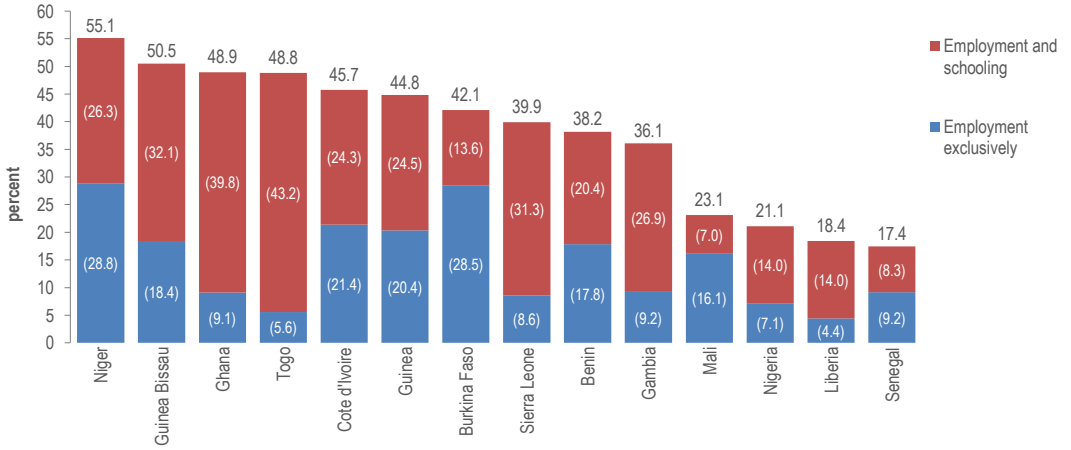
Table A2. **Children's involvement in employment and schooling, 7-14 years age group, by sex and country**

Country		Mutually exclusive activity categories				(a)&(c) Total in employment	(b)&(c) Total in school	(a)&(d) Total out of school
		(a) Only employment	(b) Only schooling	(c) Employment and schooling	(d) Neither activity			
Benin	M	17.1	41.4	22.4	19.1	39.5	63.8	36.2
	F	14.6	44.7	10.1	30.6	24.7	54.8	45.2
Burkina Faso	M	30.8	26.7	13.4	29.1	44.2	40.1	59.9
	F	22.2	24.2	8.8	44.8	31.0	33.0	67.0
Cote d'Ivoire	M	18.4	35.3	23.1	23.1	41.5	58.4	41.5
	F	22.2	32.6	15.8	29.3	38.0	48.4	51.5
Gambia	M	9.9	51.0	27.8	11.3	37.6	77.4	22.6
	F	8.6	52.3	26.0	13.1	34.3	77.3	22.7
Ghana	M	8.3	47.4	35.7	8.6	44.0	83.0	17.0
	F	8.7	49.0	34.2	8.1	42.9	83.2	16.8
Guinea	M	17.0	41.7	21.8	19.6	38.9	63.5	36.5
	F	19.5	37.2	19.2	24.1	38.7	56.4	43.6
Guinea Bissau	M	21.4	29.0	27.9	21.7	49.3	56.9	43.1
	F	19.4	31.1	25.8	23.7	45.2	56.9	43.1
Liberia	M	4.4	60.8	14.6	20.1	19.0	75.4	24.5
	F	3.8	66.2	10.3	19.8	14.1	76.5	23.6
Mali	M	15.1	55.0	9.1	20.8	24.2	64.1	35.9
	F	17.3	49.2	4.4	29.0	21.7	53.6	46.3
Niger	M	22.3	32.5	22.9	22.4	45.1	55.3	44.7
	F	29.5	27.1	20.9	22.4	50.5	48.0	52.0
Nigeria	M	6.9	66.6	13.4	13.1	20.4	79.9	20.1
	F	6.8	66.7	10.2	16.3	17.1	76.6	23.4
Senegal	M	10.3	44.5	7.6	37.7	17.9	52.1	47.9
	F	6.0	49.0	6.0	38.9	12.1	55.0	45.0
Sierra Leone	M	8.6	46.6	26.2	18.6	34.8	72.8	27.2
	F	8.1	48.3	26.0	17.6	34.1	74.3	25.7
Togo	M	4.8	49.1	40.4	5.7	45.2	89.5	10.5
	F	6.3	50.9	36.5	6.3	42.8	87.4	12.6

Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

Figure A1. **Working children are divided between those that work exclusively and those that combine school and work**

Percentage of children in employment by school status, 7-14 years age range, by country[(a)]



Notes: (a) Mali for 10-14 year-olds
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

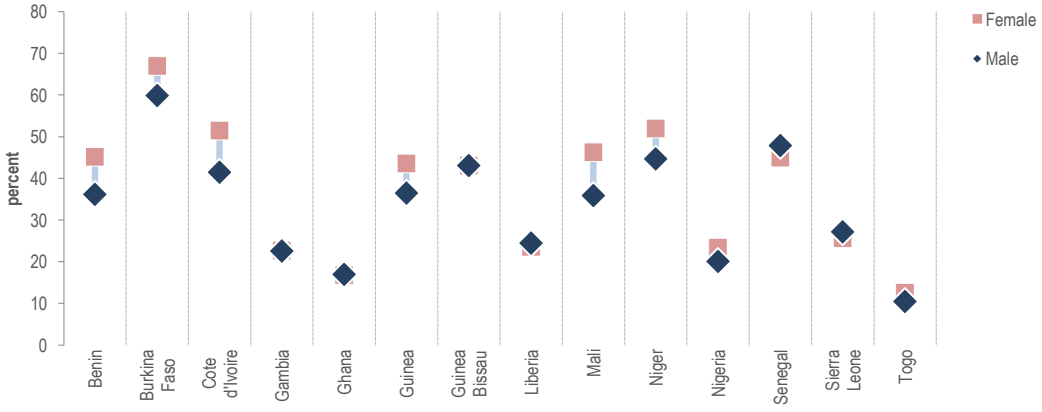
Table A3. **Children's involvement in employment, 5-14 years age group, by orphan status and country**

	Orphan[(a)]	Non-orphan
Benin	36.3	31.9
Cote d'Ivoire	46.3	39.2
Ghana	45.5	43.3
Guinea	40.9	38.6
Guinea Bissau	46.8	47.2
Nigeria	20.3	18.9
Senegal	21.0	14.4
Sierra Leone	38.7	33.7

Notes: (a) At least one parent deceased.
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

Figure A2. **The share of out of school children varies somewhat by sex**

Percentage of children who are out of school, 7-14 years age range, by sex and country[(a)]



Notes: (a) Gambia for 7-14 year-olds; (b) Mali for 10-14 year-olds
Source: UCW calculations based on national household surveys (see Table 2).

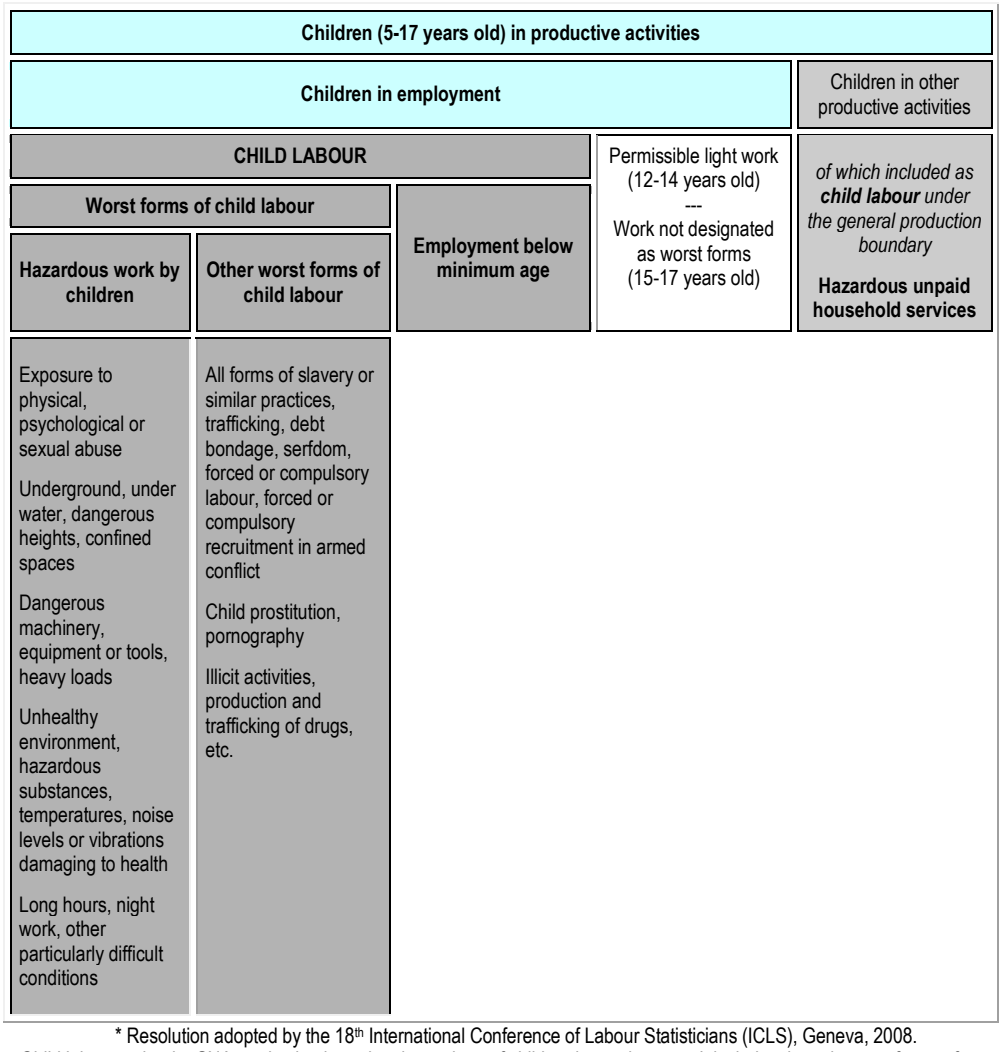
ANNEX 1. NEW GLOBAL ESTIMATES ON CHILD LABOUR FOR ECOWAS: TECHNICAL NOTE

A 1. Measurement framework: Concepts and definitions

The international standards define the target population for measuring child labour as "all persons in the age group from 5 to 17 years, where age is measured as the number of completed years at the child's last birthday."(para 9 of the *Resolution concerning Statistics of Child Labour*).

The measurement of child labour is schematically presented in the diagram below. It starts with the concept of children in productive activities: children, 5 to 17 years old engaged in any activity falling with the general production boundary as defined by the System of National Accounts (SNA).[39] Children in productive activities are then divided into those in employment and those in other productive activities.

Panel A1. **International standards on child labour statistics**



* Resolution adopted by the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), Geneva, 2008.

Child labour under the SNA production boundary is a subset of children in employment. It includes those in worst forms of child labour and children in employment below the minimum age. In fact, the ILO global estimation methodology was used to produce the new estimates on child labour for ECOWAS as follows.

[39] United Nations, *System of National Accounts 1993,* http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/

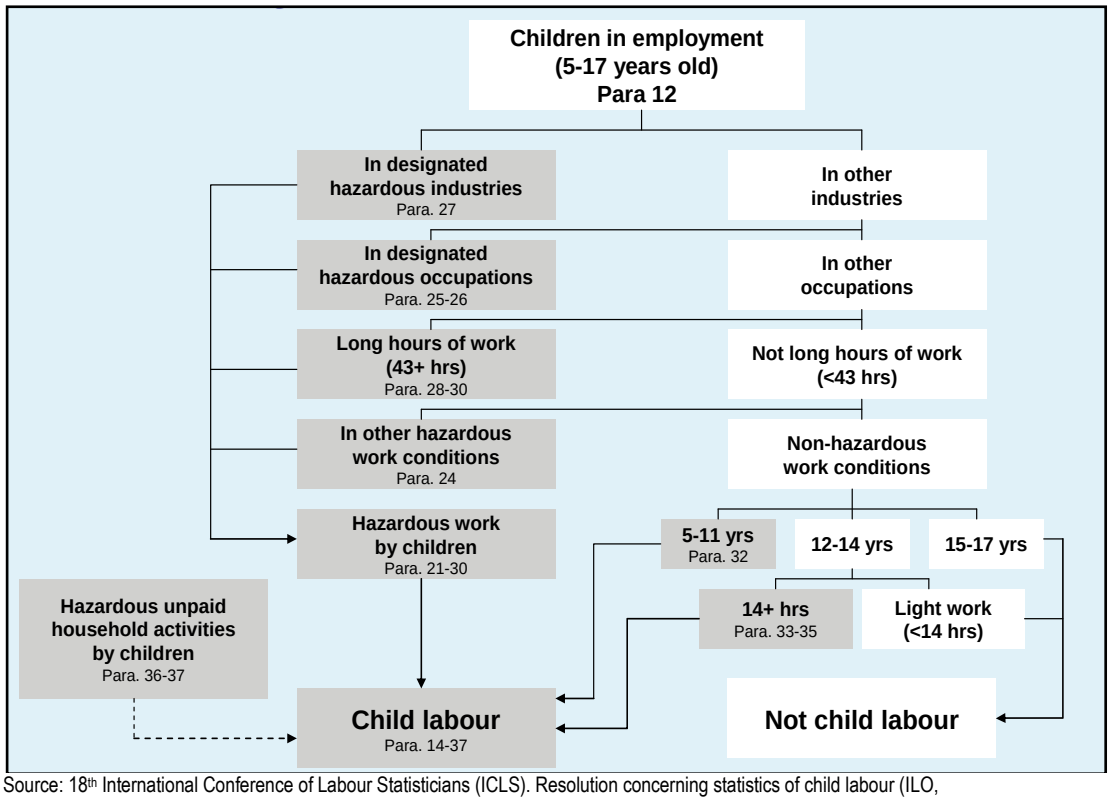
A 2.ILO Global estimation

For the purpose of global estimation, a specific sequential procedure for measuring child labour has been adopted within the framework of the international standards as schematically represented in the diagram below.

To maintain comparability with the earlier ILO global estimates, it was decided to continue to measure child labour on the basis of the SNA production boundary, and not on the general production boundary.

The starting point of the measurement of child labour for the purpose of global estimation is therefore the population of children in employment. These are children (5 to 17 years old) who were engaged in any economic activity during the reference period of the survey, where economic activity includes essentially all production of goods whether intended for sale on the market or not, and all paid services.

Figure A3. **Conceptual framework of the ILO global estimation of child labour**



Source: 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). Resolution concerning statistics of child labour (ILO, Geneva, 2008).

Not all children in employment are considered as child labour. Among children in employment, all engaged in designated hazardous industries are first sorted out. Designated hazardous industries, referred to in paragraph 27 of the international standards, are for the purpose of ILO global estimation the following two branches of economic activity:[40]

- Mining and quarrying (ISIC Rev 3 codes 10-14)
- Construction (ISIC Rev 3 code 45)

[40] United Nations, *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities, ISIC-88, Rev. 3*, http://unstats.un.org/unsd.

Among the children engaged in other branches of economic activity, those employed in designated hazardous occupations are then identified. Designated hazardous occupations (paragraphs 25-26 of the international standards) are defined for the purpose of global estimation by the following ISCO-88 codes:[41]

Table A4. **Designated hazardous occupations used in the ILO global estimation of child labour**

ISCO-88 313	313 Optical and electronic equipment operators
ISCO-88 322-323	322 Modern health associate professionals (except nursing) 323 Nursing and midwifery associate professionals
ISCO-88 516	516 Protective service workers
ISCO-88 614-615	614 Forestry and related workers 615 Fishery workers, hunters and trappers
ISCO-88 711-713	711 Miners, shot-firers, stone cutters and carvers 712 Building frame and related trades workers 713 Building finishers and related trades workers
ISCO-88 721-724	721 Metal moulders, welders, sheet-metal workers, structural-metal preparers, and related trades workers 722 Blacksmiths, tool-makers and related trades workers 723 Machinery mechanics and fitters 724 Electrical and electronic equipment mechanics and fitters
ISCO-88 731-732	731 Precision workers in metal and related materials 732 Potters, glass-makers and related trades workers
ISCO-88 811-816	811 Mining and mineral processing plant operators 812 Metal processing plant operators 813 Glass, ceramics and related plant operators 814 Wood processing & papermaking plant operators 815 Chemical processing plant operators 816 Power-production and related plant operators
ISCO-88 821-823	821 Metal-and mineral-products machine operators 822 Chemical-products machine operators 823 Rubber- and plastic-products machine operators
ISCO-88 825-829	825 Wood products machine operators 826 Textile-, fur- and leather-products machine operators 827 Food and related products machine operators 828 Assemblers 829 Other machine operators
ISCO-88 832-834	832 Motor-vehicle drivers 833 Agricultural and other mobile-plant operators 834 Ships' deck crews and related workers
ISCO-88 911-912	911 Street vendors and related workers 912 Shoe cleaning and other street services elementary occupations
ISCO-88 915-931	915 Messengers, porters, doorkeepers and related workers 916 Garbage collectors and related labourers 921 Agricultural, fishery and related labourers 931 Mining and construction labourers
ISCO-88 933	933 Transport labourers and freight handlers

Next, among the children not engaged in either hazardous industries or hazardous occupations, those who worked long hours during the reference week are then sorted out. Long hours (paragraphs 28-29 of the international standards) are defined for the present purpose as 43 or more hours of work during the reference week. The 43-hour threshold was also used in earlier ILO

[41] ILO, *International Standard Classification of Occupations, ISCO-88*, http://laborsta.ilo.org. The occupational codes listed here correspond to the hazardous occupations and processes found in national legislations reported in previous *ILO Global child labour trends*. The correspondence table between ISCO-88 and the new occupational classification (ISCO-08) can be found at the ILO website cited above. The present study uses the earlier version of the classification because essentially most of country data available for the study were based on this earlier classification (ISCO-88).

global estimations. It corresponds to about the mid-point of normal hours of work stipulated in national legislations, mostly in the range of 40 to 44.

The next step involves separating among the children not engaged in hazardous industries or occupations, nor in long hours of work, those who were exposed nevertheless to some hazardous work conditions not captured by the designated hazardous industries or occupations, or by long hours of work.

In general, hazardous work conditions 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; and 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 (paragraph 20 of the international standard).[42]

As indicated in the diagram, the total of children in designated hazardous industries, children in designated hazardous occupations, children with long hours of work and children working in other hazardous work conditions make up in aggregate the total number of children in hazardous work. For the purposes of calculating the global and regional estimates, hazardous unpaid household activities by children are excluded from the methodology.

The final estimate of child labour is then obtained by adding to the total number of children in hazardous work, the number of other children aged 5 to 11 years who were engaged in any economic activity during the reference period (employment below minimum age), and the number of other children 12 to 14 years old who were engaged in an economic activity that could not be considered as permissible light work during the reference period.

Permissible light work is defined in the present context as any non-hazardous work by children (12 to 14 years) of less than 14 hours during the reference week. The 14-hour threshold was also used in earlier ILO global estimations. The choice was based on provisions in the ILO Convention, the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932 (No. 33), which sets two hours per day, on either school days or holidays, as the maximum for light work from the age of 12 years.[43]

A 3. National datasets

The ILO regional estimation of child labour for ECOWAS is based on the SIMPOC assisted surveys on child labour and other data sources, such as the UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), certain national labour force surveys and other relevant household surveys.

[42] The measurement of children in these hazardous work conditions depends on the extent to which the appropriate elements are covered by the national survey. Full comparability of national datasets has therefore not always been possible in this respect.

[43] Article 3 (para. 1) of the Convention states that "Children over twelve years of age may, outside the hours fixed for school attendance, be employed on light work (a) which is not harmful to their health or normal development; (b) which is not such as to prejudice their attendance at school or their capacity to benefit from the instruction there given; and (c) the duration of which *does not exceed two hours per day on either school days or holidays*, the total number of hours spent at school and on light work in no case to exceed seven per day" (emphasis added).

Coverage

In all, some 9 national datasets out of 15 countries have been compiled for the ILO regional estimation of child labour for ECOWAS. The full list of the datasets is given in Table A6 with information on the type of survey and its reference year.

Full-sample

The datasets of the 9 countries with available data are compiled as a group and form the 'full-sample'. The data are used to derive a direct estimate of child labour for 2012 using the methodology described below. The available datasets cover 72 million children 5-17 years old, corresponding to about 70% of the regional population of children in that age group. The coverage rate is significantly higher than the rate in the global estimation (53%).

A 4. Harmonization of national datasets

The available national datasets for the regional estimation differ from each other with respect to a number of critical elements. These are differences in types of questions and response categories used in the survey questionnaire, and the extent to which missing values are present in the raw data. For these reasons, the national datasets need to be harmonized with respect to the key elements before being processed further for regional estimation.

The first step in the harmonization process is the construction of a single variable called Child Labour Status (CLS). The variable is composed of five mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories into which each child must be categorized. The structure of the child labour status variable is shown in Table A5 below.

In practice because of missing values in the national datasets, the construction of harmonized child labour status variables require imputation for missing values.

Table A5. **Child labour status: Structure of the harmonization variable CLS**

1	Child labour, hazardous work	CLS = 1
2	Other child labour	CLS = 2
3	Permissible light work	CLS = 3
4	Other employment, not child labour	CLS = 4
5	Not in employment	CLS = 5
	Total number of children (5-17 years old)	CLS = 1-5
	Children in employment	CLS = 1-4
	Child labour	CLS = 1-2

The harmonization process consisted of imputing missing variables if the national datasets did not include the relevant variable for assigning the children in any of the CLS categories; and correcting for any missing values that may have

existed for some of the underlying variables used to classify children in one or other CLS categories. The harmonization steps are in turn described below.

A 5.Regional estimation of child labour for ECOWAS

The regional estimates of child labour are derived by extrapolations of national data using a full sample estimation method. It consists of extrapolating the full sample of harmonized national datasets to regional values by weighting each country according to its relative share of children among the total in the region. The weighting factors are calculated for each sex and each age group separately, and are calibrated to conform to the 2012 UN population estimates and projections which form the benchmark for all estimation procedures in this report.

Specifically, the weight for a given country i, and specific sex and age categories, j and k, with survey date t, is calculated as the product of three terms as follows.

$w = w1 * w2 * w3$

where

$w1 = (\sum_i xijk2012)/ n*xijk2012$

$w2 = xijk2012 / xijkt$

$w3 = xijkt / x'ijkt$

where n is the number of countries covered by the full-sample for the region, $\sum_i$ refers to the sum over all countries in the region, and xijkt denotes the number of children in country i for sex and age categories j and k at time t according to the UN population benchmark data, and x'ijkt the corresponding national survey estimate.

In this system, w1 is the initial extrapolation factor, corresponding to the inverse of the assumed probability of selection of the country, w2 is an adjustment for the year of the national dataset in case it is different than 2012, and w3 is a further adjustment for any difference between the estimate of the child population for the given sex and age category against the UN benchmark estimate and projection.

The adjustment factors w2 and w3 should generally be close to one. Any great deviation from one would be an indication of a possible bias in the coverage or the execution of the national survey, or an error in the UN benchmark data.

ANNEX 2. GLOBAL ESTIMATES ON CHILD LABOUR FOR ECOWAS

Table A6. **National datasets for ECOWAS child labour estimation, 2012**

Datasets	Year	Survey
Benin	2011	Enquête Modulaire Intégrée sur les Conditions de Vie au Bénin (EMICoV)
Gambia	2012	Labour Force Survey
Guinea	2010	SIMPOC
Liberia	2010	LFS
Niger	2009	SIMPOC
Nigeria	2011	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 3)
Senegal	2011	Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)
Sierra Leone	2010	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 4)
Togo	2010	SIMPOC

Table A7. **Selected key indicators on child labour, 2012**

Sex and age	Total children	Children in employment		Child labour	
		Nr.	%	Nr.	%
ECOWAS	**103,789,441**	**34,147,519**	**32.9**	**22,822,740**	**22.0**
Boys	52,794,645	17,802,006	**33.7**	12,538,629	**23.7**
Girls	50,994,796	16,345,513	**32.1**	10,284,110	**20.2**
5-11 years	**60,993,164**	**15,620,897**	**25.6**	**15,620,897**	**25.6**
Boys	31,060,953	8,134,518	26.2	8,134,518	26.2
Girls	29,932,211	7,486,379	25.0	7,486,379	25.0
12-14 years	**22,353,472**	**8,995,645**	**40.2**	**4,959,599**	**22.2**
Boys	11,362,798	4,751,684	41.8	2,664,383	23.4
Girls	10,990,674	4,243,961	38.6	2,295,216	20.9
5-14 years	83,346,636	24,616,542	**29.5**	20,580,496	**24.7**
Boys	42,423,751	12,886,202	30.4	10,798,901	25.5
Girls	40,922,885	11,730,340	28.7	9,781,595	23.9
15-17 years	**20,442,805**	**9,530,977**	**46.6**	**2,242,244**	**11.0**
Boys	10,370,894	4,915,804	47.4	1,739,728	16.8
Girls	10,071,911	4,615,173	45.8	502,515	5.0