



International  
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MYANMAR

# Agricultural Sub-Sector Child Labour Surveys

Children working in the cultivation and processing of Inland Fishing Stocks, Sugarcane, and Beans and Pulses in Myanmar





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International Labour Organization

Fundamentals Principles and Rights at Work (FUNDAMENTALS)

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## Acronyms

<b>COR</b>	Committee on the Rights of the Child
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agricultural Organization
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign Direct Investment
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GORUM</b>	Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>MIMU</b>	Myanmar Information Management Unit
<b>MMK</b>	Myanmar Kyat, local currency
<b>MyPEC</b>	Myanmar Program on the Elimination of Child Labor
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar

# Executive summary

This research study is intended to stimulate a broader discussion on the cause and consequences of child labour in agricultural sub-sectors in Myanmar. As one of the few systematic investigations into children working in agricultural sub-sectors, evidence will inform policy and programmatic strategy.

On the whole this research report:

- Collates and analyses new qualitative and quantitative data on children working in Myanmar's agricultural sector, specifically through the documentation of three sub-sectors – Inland Fisheries, Beans and Pulses and Sugarcane:
- Documents common working arrangements and types activities carried out by child workers in the three sub-sectors;
- Defines and categorizes various types of child labour and identifies common forms of “hazardous” child labour in the three agricultural sub-sectors:
- Investigates the relationship between various social phenomena and the likelihood of a child to be involved in child labour, specifically household debt and access or propensity for schooling;
- Recommends programming and legislative activities aimed at reducing the harmful affects of child labour in agriculture.

## Methodology

The methodology used for this study is qualitative following the Rapid Assessment methodology and aiming at providing insights on the work by children in specific sub-sectors/ areas (including townships) for which statistical data is not available. The estimates in this study should not be read as a probabilistic representative sample of the sub-sectors/ areas (including townships).

Based on interview with individuals knowledgeable in the related agricultural sub-sectors, researchers selected the following townships sites of concentration for related sub-sector products.

1. Inland Fisheries – Labutta Township, Ayeyarwady Region
2. Sugarcane – Aung Lan Township, Magway Region
3. Beans and pulses – Pakokku Township, Magway Region.

Researchers collected qualitative data along the inland fisheries market chain in addition to household level surveys to representative sample of household adult and child respondents. The quantitative survey includes 667 children under the age of eighteen from 423 households.

## Findings

Findings are described sub-sector by sub-sectors followed by a critical comparative analysis across the three sub-sectors, including cumulative insights into children working in agriculture across Myanmar as a whole.

### **Inland fisheries sub-sector**

Research conducted interviews with workers in the fishery sectors along the value chain and surveyed adults and children in villages known as reliant on fisheries. Value chain analysis proved that children work along the entire value chain, from catching and collection products at the village to the brokerages in the towns and trading hubs, up to the city-based markets where wholesale products are sold domestically and internationally. At the crab and prawn brokers in the town and trading centers, children workers are likely to reside in the production facility where they often work long hours, often at a piece rate. Children in such facilities are at-risk of gross exploitation due the working arrangements.

Sixty-three percent of children residing in villages where inland fisheries is a main source of income participate in economic activities related to fisheries. In the study area, Labutta Township, Ayeyarwady Region, children started working in fisheries as early as age five and up through teenage years and into adulthood. Child workers carry out a variety of activities, many causing direct risk of harm including drowning and exposure to disease-carrying mosquitoes. Activities done by boys and girls show tendency towards division of labour, but not exclusively. Sixteen percent of the child respondents at the village-level had not attended school in the year leading up to survey conduction. For those who had left school early, the transition between primary school and secondary school was the most likely time to discontinue schooling. Hazards are present in fisheries. Regular exposure to inclement weather and rough currents is coupled with the dangers of using sharp equipment like hooks and traps and the likelihood of puncture wounds from tying crabs claws. Most children work for parents or relatives and do for regularly for more than three hours per day.

### **Sugarcane sub-sector**

Sixty-three percent of children residing in the villages reliant on sugarcane cultivation engage in economic activities directly related to sugarcane cultivation and processing. In the study area, Aung Lan, children entered the workforce most commonly around age ten, later than in inland fisheries. In sugarcane communities peak entry into the workforce aligns with departure from schooling, reaching a high-point after grade 5, roughly eleven to twelve years old. However, it is not universal. Children continue their schooling while working. In Aung Lan, 47% of children did not attend school in the reference year. The age of the children in Aung Lan was skewed older than in the other study areas which may account for some of the difference in schooling rates. Children in sugarcane prepare land, care for and sow seedlings, maintain the crops and harvest. They use knives and machetes which add to the general hazards involved with working

in the dusty, sunny, dense sugar fields with snakes. Unlike in other study areas, children often worked for adults that are not relatives. Half of the child workers make half-day and daily rate money in fields owned by non-family members.

## Beans and pulses sub-sector

Sixty-three percent of children residing in villages reliant on beans and pulses cultivation engage in economic activities directly related to the sub-sector. In the study area, children commonly entered the workforce between age ten and age thirteen, though there was no noticeable peak age of entry. In Pakokku, 14% of the children surveyed had not been to school in the reference period. As was the case in other study areas, the peak period for children to be pushed out of the school system is at the transition between primary and secondary school, after grade five. Although for children in the area, despite the transition year being a pinnacle of push out, there is a steady year-to-year decrease in school adherence. Children in beans and pulses prepare the land, maintain crops, sow the seed and harvest. Girls and boys do many of the same activities though there is evidence of division of labour by sex. Hazards faced by children labouring in bean cultivation including climatic exposure – high and low temperatures, as well as dust. Children tend to use very basic steel tools, but not machinery. Most of the children in Pakokku work for their parents. The growing season in Pakokku is relatively short and, at least, some children engage in other economic activities outside of bean season.

## Findings from comparative and comprehensive analysis

All of the children surveyed and found working in the sub-sectors can be classed as “child labour” given the total number of working hours, the exposure to workplace hazards, work’s interference on one school, or a combination of the three.

The percentage of children working in each sub-sector was consistent – 63% across the three sectors. This was unplanned and signal the possibility that this represents agricultural work beyond these three sub-sectors.

Seventy-four percent of the children surveyed attended school in the reference year, though 24% did not. Most commonly, the highest level grade completion is grade five, the transition between primary and secondary schools. This is not surprising given the geographic distribution of secondary schools compelling rural children to commute long distance or stay in dormitories, leading to additional costs. That said, however, entry into the workforce and departure from school did not work in mutual statistical agreement. Children entered the workforce prior to leaving school and many children continue to study while engaging in economic activities in their local sub-sector. Children’s reasons for leaving school and for entering the workforce, though, broadly reflect their desire to help out family members and generate income, do not singularly reflect this motivation. Rather, additional factors such as disinterest in school and even to pay off debt, may be more useful in targeting programs that reduce hazardous child labour. Such issues may be

easier to address and measure than generalize conditions related to the broad contextual matters of the country.

## Recommendations

Be persistent in highlighting the relationship between household debt and children's entry into the workforce, which is largely comprised of hazardous work, across public and private sector conversation about livelihoods, debt management and poverty alleviation.

Conduct community-wide education in occupational safety and hazard mitigation.

Occupational health and safety programs need to provide concrete advice on activities to avoid and ways to protect.

Work towards the expansion and enhancements of peri-school options including vocational training programs or agricultural extension training for children living in villages.

Maintain long-term, sustained messaging to the public.

Establish or identify a mechanism for receiving reports and ensure that entity has the technical capacity to work with and in the best interests of the child. Entity must be independently monitored vis-à-vis the CRC.

# Introduction

As Myanmar transitions from fifty years of military rule to a fledgling civilian-led national government, the country's economy is expanding rapidly. Though this transition remains unpredictable the forecast GDP growth for 2016 is 8.3%. Myanmar has shed its reputation as a “pariah” state. International trade sanctions have been suspended or completely dropped. The country is coming out into the world scene as a place with great investment opportunities and human potential. This is despite being categorized by the Verisk Maplecroft, a global corporate risk-assessment firm, in its “Child Labour Index – 2014” categorized Myanmar as at “Extreme Risk” of finding children in the supply chain. Based on occurrence, severity and government response the Index named Myanmar as “one of the six countries globally where child labour continues to thrive.”<sup>1</sup> Child labour is common and visible in Myanmar though limited systematic data is available. In light of the current rate of economic growth and liberalization there is a need for deeper inquiry into the extent of child labour in the country and consequences. The government, civic organizations and investors can build evidence-based policy and programming recommendations to ensure a reduction of child labour and related hazards in the interim to its elimination.

This study explores the prevalence and conditions of child working in three economically important agricultural sub-sectors – inland fisheries, sugarcane, and beans and pulses. By looking at three sub-sectors individually and then through comparative analysis the study illuminate the dynamics of all three sectors. Mixed-methods explore three sub-sectors that share some commonalities, but function quite differently. The purpose is to provide evidence and understanding to support reforms that advance child rights and support human development.

The study found that 63% of children in villages producing one of the three products regularly engage in economic activities related to that product. Twenty-six percent of the 667 children interviewed had not attended school in the academic year prior to data collection. And, of these children, 45% are twelve years old or younger at the time, meaning that have not reached the age at which school push-out is most common. The gender dynamics of child labour varies across the three study areas, though, similarly, both boys and girls are labourers, engaging in a number of economic activities. There is division of labour by sex, though no single sub-sector-related activity was exclusively carried out by a single sex. Children work both for family enterprise as well as for farms or processing entities owned and managed by non-family members. Debt and land-ownership insecurities plague rural households. The study demonstrates a high-correlation between debt and child labour, it is not the exclusive driver of household decision-making. To say that “poverty” forces children to work has limited use in real-life. Household poverty includes a bundle of factors and it is clear from this study that even if household debt is a key element of poverty, all those in debt do not have working children at the same rate. The relationship is not deterministic. Children reported having left school and having gone to work for a variety of reasons, including boredom and

1 Available at: <http://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis/2013/10/15/child-labour-risks-increase-china-and-russia-most-progress-shown-south-america-maplecroft-index>.

disinterest in education. Commonly held attitudes that support children's entry and continuation in the workforce despite the fact all children in the three sub-sectors are exposed to hazardous working conditions, keep the phenomenon afloat. Low quality education that cannot prove a return on household investment and does not stimulate a child's interest is another critical factor.

Across the globe most children that work, some 60% of 215 million children, do so in the agriculture sector.<sup>2</sup> And while the total number of children engaged in child labour across all sectors has declined since 2000, more than half of those remaining in the labour force do so under dangerous conditions.<sup>3</sup> Children workers are exposed to hazards, receive little income and are deprived of education and the chance at healthy development. Simplified cause-and-effect analysis between household poverty and child labour rates provides limited insight for the elimination of child labour. In a 2012 study of children working in the cultivation of coffee in northern Rwanda, researchers found that child agricultural workers tend to be members of households with higher socioeconomic status than non-working children.<sup>4</sup> Despite overriding evidence that over the long-term higher household income is associated with lower rates of child labour, in some cases localized economic upturns can draw more children into agricultural work because of the increased opportunity costs. Kruger (et al.) demonstrates that when the prices of coffee increase in Brazil, the occurrence of children working in the coffee industry increases and regular school participation decreases.<sup>5</sup> When coffee prices rise, children's wages tend to increase and there is a type of "substitution." Parents will opt out of the workforce substituting their previous income for a child's recently improved income.

Given the increased interest in investing in Myanmar, specifically its agriculture sector, and the seemingly ripening conditions, how will local realities and structural forces impact the lives of children? Growing development challenges will impact many children's economic lives in the coming years. Such challenges include: domestic migration as workers move from the countryside to expanding towns, city and special economic zones; increased precariousness of rural livelihoods as mechanization and land-grabbing for agribusiness intensifies; the expansion of large-scale infrastructure projects including mining; the lasting effects of the weak education system that has left the 26.9 million young people under thirty years old unprepared; and, the lengthy peace process aiming to bring all areas of the country into sovereignty. Given this landscape, without directed intervention, labour conditions for children will not improve and could worsen.

2 ILO, "Accelerating Action Against Child Labour." 2010.

3 From ILO "Global Facts and Figures" available in April 26, 2016 at <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/child-labour/lang-en/index.htm>.

4 ICF International, "Child Labor in Agriculture in the Northern Province of Rwanda: Task Order I and Task Order III: Quantitative Research and Data Collection." August 2012.

5 Diana Kruger, Rodrigo R. Soares, Matias Berthelon, "Household Choices of Child Labor and Schooling: A Simple Model with Application to Brazil." Discussion Paper Series; Institute for the Study of Labour, Bonn, Germany May 2007.

Despite the fever of interest in investing in Myanmar the agriculture sector's legacy appears to be stymieing any real capital in the sector. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (GORUM) has been working to enact legislature conducive to foreign direct investment (FDI) in agriculture, namely large-scale industrial agriculture.<sup>6</sup> Despite legislative action and a few standout examples of large investments,<sup>7</sup> FDI in agriculture over the past five years remains relatively insignificant compared to investments in power, oil and gas, transportation, mining and communications.<sup>8</sup> In 2014-15 fiscal year, the agricultural sector ranked just 9<sup>th</sup> out of 11 sectors of FDI.<sup>9</sup> On top of weak investment institutions and legal frameworks much of the country's agricultural holdings remain in the hands of military-backed or even military and government owned companies. Attracting investors with a high-standard of social responsibility will rely, in large part, on disentangling agriculture ventures from the country's military. This makes for complex set of push and pull factors for child workers. Will growth, say, in manufacturing outpace that in agriculture further attracting workers from the countryside to towns and the benefits of monthly wages? Will bigger investments in agriculture displace more rural households leading children to work on plantations? These scenarios highlight the realities of this moment in Myanmar's history and without including a thorough investigation of each trajectory's potential impact on children, the country will not grow in a sustainable manner that protects the needs and rights of its children.

## Agricultural and rural livelihoods in Myanmar

About 70% of Myanmar's households are rural and rely on agriculture.<sup>10</sup> Data on agricultural workforce, production, income and export remain spotty. Past governments kept a stranglehold on production and export leading to poor data collection. Farmers and civil servants were known to pad figures to satisfy superiors. Officials forced farmers to grow certain crops and fixed prices, leading to an active black market. Though some reports show a recent decline in agriculture's share of the GDP in recent years, this may be a reflection of increased transparency in the country's income from oil and gas, which dwarfs the figures for agriculture production, as opposed to any functional shift in production or incomes related to agriculture.

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- 6 Government reforms under the UNDP included a Ministry of Agriculture Master Plan for 200 to 2030 that aimed to convert 10 million acres of "wasteland" to privatized industrial cultivation of "rubber, palm, paddy, pulses and sugarcane" for export, effectively undermining the development of sustainable small-scale agriculture particularly in light of the land tenure and access issues potent in the designation of "wasteland" – can all customary or decidedly "unofficial" ownership. Ministry official laid out the plan at the "Myanmar Agribusiness Investment Summit 2014," January 2014.
  - 7 Standout examples include commitments made by *Charoen Pokphand* Group of Thailand in sub-sectors of maize and livestock though actual investment amounts are unclear – see <http://www.pigprogress.net/Home/General/2012/7/Charoen-Pokphand-to-invest-US550-million-in-Myanmar-PP009104W/>.
  - 8 Woods, Kevin, "Commercial Agriculture Expansion in Myanmar: Links to Deforestation, Conversion Timber, and Land Conflicts." "Forest Trends Report Series: Forest Trade and Finance. Forest Trends, March 2015.
  - 9 Xinhua News Agency, "Myanmar Works for formulating policy framework for foreign investment in agriculture," May 31, 2015. Available at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-05/31/c\\_134284673.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-05/31/c_134284673.htm).
  - 10 Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Sanyu Consultants Inc, "Data Collection Survey on Agriculture Sector in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar," December 2013.

Myanmar's agriculture sector has a serious potential for growth, which could help to reduce poverty and improve living conditions.<sup>11</sup> The country has diverse climates making diversification of crops possible. There are good water resources and a large amount of still uncultivated land compared to regional neighbors. Currently 20% of the land is being used for agriculture.<sup>12</sup> Given the political and social complexities it is not advisable to push for intensification, particularly in the face of climate change. Improved access to safe and more efficient techniques could make better use of the country's available resources.

Rice is the major crop. Arguably more valuable, beans and pulses is recognized as the second largest sub-sector and a key export in the region. Most farmers in Myanmar are small to medium land holders. Agricultural techniques continue to be fairly rudimentary, non-mechanized and highly labour intensive. Compared to neighboring Thailand, which has become known globally for high-quality agricultural products including rice and fruits as well as its packaged fish products, Myanmar has systematically done little in the past five decades to improve yields and quality or to develop value-added production. The government maintains a high-level of involvement in the sector including setting policy, fixing prices and showcasing new techniques through extension, farmers are largely left to manage the fluctuations in market and environment on their own.

Farmers suffer from ongoing debt cycles and insolvency. Many hold a debt burden larger than their expected annual incomes. This has been particularly true since economic reforms contributed to overvaluation of the Myanmar Kyat in 2010/11.<sup>13</sup> Agricultural inputs are expensive, transportation prices are high compared to neighboring countries, land use rights are inconsistent and the government occasionally forces cultivation of certain products or sets prices, leaving farmers particularly vulnerable to financial shock. Common shocks can be a medical crisis in the family or a sudden shift in market conditions. In the Qualitative Social and Economic Monitoring Report, researchers found that farmers continued to be subject to "shocks" and that may be worsening due to increasing access to credit. Shock can send a household into debt, potentially deepened debt forcing households to sell off assets.<sup>14</sup>

11 ADB, "Myanmar: Unlocking Potential, Country Diagnostic Study," August 2014.

12 Michigan State University and the Myanmar Development Resource Institute's Centre for Economic and Social Development, "A Strategic Agricultural Sector and Food Security Diagnostic for Myanmar," July 2013.

13 "Myanmar Agriculture in 2011: Old Problems and New Challenges," Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation. Harvard Kennedy School, November 2011.

14 Enlightened Myanmar Research and World Bank, "Qualitative Social and Economic Monitoring: Round Four Report," Commissioned by Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund, December 2013.

Financial shocks exacerbate the growing problem of dispossession and landlessness. In the 2013 Framework for Social and Economic Reform (FESR), GORUM acknowledged landlessness as a contributor to poverty nationally, with a specific reference to high levels in Yangon, Ayeyarwady Region and Bago Region. FESR cites 25% landlessness for the country with a high of 44% in Bago Region.<sup>15</sup> In recent years, increasing conversion of forest land for large-scale industrial agriculture has furthered land insecurity for small farmers and those reliant on non-timber forest products.<sup>16</sup> In the past two to three years there have been a number of protests against land confiscation and the denial of customary tenure.

Increasingly landlessness may be pushing workers further away from their villages during certain parts of the year. In the 2014 Qualitative Social and Economic Monitoring report landholders, not the most vulnerable group, struggle to find enough day-labourers for the planting and harvest periods.<sup>17</sup> Small farmers or those with precarious tenure, who may have historically worked as wage labour or shared the workload with neighbors, may not have adequate incentive given the aforementioned conditions to stay in the area, possibly increasing local reliance on child workers, particularly where wages are low. At non-peak times lack of agricultural opportunities contributed to the uptake of “non-farm opportunities,” including migration particularly among landless and small landowner households in the central area of the country commonly referred to as the Dry Zone. The same report found that for small fisher folks economic prospects continue to be on the decline with urbanization, changes in permitting structures and environmental impacts on fisheries.

Whether on a small family-held plot or in the fields or facilities of a newer large-scale venture, agricultural production in Myanmar is largely exempt from health and safety laws or standards. To be clear, that is not in contrast with urban industries in the country, which tend to also be poorly regulated and lack health and safety oversight. Chemical usage, extreme temperatures, dangerous animals, harmful equipment, working hours and other potential hazards are not monitored or managed by the state or local agencies. And, in the event of an urgent health issue, sub-rural health centers, which may be located nearby are often not staffed or equipped with the needed supplies to deal with many types of emergency treatments. For children, in the event of a serious injury, urgent, qualified assistance may not be available.

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15 “Framework for Economic and Social Reform – Towards the long term goals of the national comprehensive development plan for 2012-2015,” submitted to the First Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum, January 2013.

16 Woods, Kevin, “Commercial Agriculture Expansion in Myanmar: Links to Deforestation, Conversion Timber, and Land Conflicts,” “Forest Trends Report Series: Forest Trade and Finance. Forest Trends, March 2015.

17 Enlightened Myanmar Research and World Bank, “Qualitative Social and Economic Monitoring: Round Four Report,” Commissioned by Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund, December 2014.

## Child rights in Myanmar

Nearly 56% of the “poor” in Myanmar are children.<sup>18</sup> Day-to-day trials of poverty are compounded by the lack of access to child rights. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, tasked with assessing GORUM’s adherence to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2012 commended GORUM for certain enhancements from the previous national reports and identified issues that continue to seriously limit a child ability to enjoy rights.<sup>19</sup> Children have limited to no access to legal representation and the law. Exploited children have few, if any, functional system through which to seek redress. Realistically, children that are in harm’s way, particularly if out of school, living in an alternative care facility or within the constraints of housed working conditions, have few channels to seek relief and no feasible way to access legal protection, physical and mental health care and compensation for exploitation or abuse. The lack of access to the legal systems is compounded by limits to children’s participation in decision-making that affects their well-being. Even under the current Child Law children are subject to “admonition by a parent, teacher, or other person having the right to control the child”. And any act done “in good faith for the benefit of a person under the age of 12” is fully condoned under the law.<sup>20</sup> Though a review of the 1993 Child Law has been underway for several years, concrete improvements in child protection had not been adjudicated at the time of writing.

With a few exceptions little systematically collected data and analysis exists on the observable phenomenon of child labour across Myanmar. The 2014 General Census, arguably the only reliable census in the past five decades, found that 23.7% of children aged 10 to 17 participate in the workforce.<sup>21</sup> A 2015 ILO study, found that interrelated factors including household economics, social acceptance, limited access to quality education and inadequate legal protection contribute to widespread child labour practices.<sup>22</sup> The study confirmed that children often feel obliged to help their families and that parents or guardians knowledge of long working hours and dangerous conditions does not deter them from sending children to work. Researchers found that active educators, medical professionals and social leaders have limited awareness of the extent of possible harm to working children and the potential long-term impacts. Such lack of awareness and broad social acceptance has hindered any groundswell of

18 Analysis based on data from the 2014 Myanmar General Census and the 2009/10 Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment (IHLCA) as presented in Dr. A. Bonnerjee, “The Census and Gender Issues: A Call to Action,” Presentation, UNICEF, August 15, 2015. Poverty is defined by income in the lowest 40%, which is 1200 Myanmar Kyats per day, roughly 1USD. See also Dr. A Bonnerjee, “Social Protection in Myanmar: The impact of Innovative policies on poverty,” June 2015, UNICEF.

19 14 March 2012, Concluding Observations on the third/forth report; CRC/C/MMR/CO/3-4, p. 1-2.

20 Myanmar’s 1993 Child Law, Note: 1993 Child Law which is currently under revision but not concrete advances have been put into law. See “Corporal Punishment of Children in Myanmar, Global Initiative to End all Corporal Punishment of children, updated December 2015. Downloaded January 2, 2016 at <http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/assets/pdfs/states-reports/Myanmar.pdf>.

21 Though the Population Census has been widely accepted, political tensions and civil conflict meant that several geographic areas of the country were not included in the data collection. It is unclear what percentage of the overall nationwide population this may represent though the total overlooked population may be small, it is not insignificant and with regards to the issue of child labour, children in conflict-affected areas may participate in the workforce at higher rates given economic realities and the lack of educational opportunities in such areas.

22 ILO “Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) Study in Child Labour in Yangon, Ayeyarwady Region and Mon State,” 2015.

activism or technical intervention for the reduction of the incidence of child labour or to reduce the potential negative effects of current child labour practices.

Incidences of labour violations and attitudes towards children in the workforce vary across the country. Myanmar's central government is not completely sovereign. Multiple non-state groups control significant amounts of territory within which they provide social services, including education and health services, determine permits for land use issues and even manage taxation. Duly the scope and realities for child workers in various parts of the country are context-specific, making generalizations somewhat unconvincing. In the case of eastern Mon State, as documented in "Children for Hire," by The Women and Child Rights Project of Myanmar's child enter the workforce and child labour endures because of high-rates of adult migration to neighbouring Thailand.<sup>23</sup> The history of armed conflict in the area led locals to turn east for job opportunities, building out networks with Thai rubber growers and traders as opposed to building networks throughout other parts of Myanmar (Union of Burma). And this is just one example of the variable conditions of such a highly fractured country.

This study will shed some light into differences in conditions and realities for boys and girls in agricultural production in some geographic areas and sub-sectors. In urban settings, there is an ostensible difference in the types of work carried out by boys and girls, namely, the commonness of young and teenage boys working in Myanmar's ubiquitous tea shops. However, little research has been done more broadly on the types of work and working conditions as they differ by sex. In a Statement on Girls' Rights<sup>24</sup> launched at a national conference held in 2013 adolescent girls requested "equal pay" to their male counterparts. In a subsequent report, Girl Determined found on construction sites and in cottage industries, the tasks given to girl workers were those, which came with a lower wage than those tasks generally given to boy workers. One girl offered the example of mixing cement and said that boys are assumed to be able to complete this task more proficiently than girls and that they receive a higher wage for it compared to girls on the same worksite, who more often carry bricks or stones, transport wet cement in baskets or keep the area clutter-free.<sup>25</sup> Though both boys and girls work, for many girls it may be more likely to be in someone's home, factory or shop away from the public eye, where exploitation and abuse can be severe.

23 The Women and Child Rights Project, "Children for Hire." Accessed January 2015 at <http://www.rehmonnya.org/reports/childrenforhire.pdf>.

24 Girl Determined/Colorful Girls, "Statement on Girls' Rights," October 2013. See also <http://www.irrawaddy.com/feature/girl-power-rises-burma.html>.

25 Girl Determined/Colorful Girls, Internal report on Adolescent Girl Workers in Myanmar, 2013-14.

## Myanmar's education system

The functional definitions of “child labour” and the “worst forms of child labour” hinge on the deprivation of childhood and the deprivation of opportunity to attend or fully participate in school.<sup>26</sup> In order to assess the extent of the impact of a child's economic activity on his or her education, more broadly his or her “childhood,” we need to consider the reality of schooling in the country.

Despite recent increases in education spending, GORUM spends just 1.5% of GDP on education against a global benchmark of 3-5% – the lowest in the region.<sup>27</sup> The system is plagued by problems related both to access and quality. Though schooling is legally free through the end of primary years, the costs of secondary school increase significantly by grade level, particularly where students must travel to a distant village, sometimes having to board, in order to progress to the matriculation exam. Across the formal education system rote-memorization dominates, short-changing students who do not get opportunities to develop complex problem-solving skills and coping strategies.

The Ministry of Education remains highly centralized, meaning that education programs are generally inflexible, not able to meet the needs of local children.<sup>28</sup>

The Myanmar school system is comprised of eleven grade levels. They are organized as follows – Primary School is Grade One to Grade Five, starts at age 5 or 6; Lower Secondary – Grade Six to Grade 9; Upper Secondary – Grade Ten and Grade Eleven.<sup>29</sup> There are significantly fewer secondary schools than primary schools meaning that once of secondary school age, many rural children will have to travel in order to enroll in school. This has added costs in transportation, school fees, accommodation, personal risk to the student and lost labour in the household. This is evident in the countrywide statistics on grade level completion.

At the time of the 2014 Census Data Collection, 35.72% of children aged 5-17 do not attend school. That's about 4.5 million children.<sup>30</sup> By law primary education is both free and compulsory. There is considerable variation in enrollment and attendance across regions and within regions. School enrolment is the lowest in Shan and highest in Chin, Kachin and Kayah states, all areas considered “ethnicity states.” None of these are a part of this study. The statistical burden of children who have never attended school falls on the populations Shan State and Ayeyarwady Region. School enrollment rates, including late starters, do not exceed 84% in any grade-level or geography. Nationally, it drops sharply from age 10. In some areas boys are leaving school earlier than girls, more often in the primary levels. In other areas, we find girls leaving school more regularly than boys, more so in the secondary levels.

26 ILO Convention 138 and ILO Convention 182.

27 Ministry of Finance and Revenue as cited in “Snapshot of Social Sector Public Budget Allocations and Spending in Myanmar,” UNICEF 2013.

28 Zobrist, Brooke and Patrick McCormick, “A Preliminary Assessment of Decentralization in Education: Experiences from Mon and Shan States,” The Asia Foundation, Subnational Governance in Myanmar Discussion Series, Paper No. 1. December 2013.

29 The translation of Myanmar's official education terminology is “primary” “middle” and “high” schools with reference to the organization of grade levels in the current system.

30 Dr. A. Bonnerjee, “The Census and Gender Issues: A Call to Action,” Presentation, UNICEF, August 15, 2015.

A low return on education is a fundamental problem and needs closer scrutiny. As opposed to looking at children as the “drop-outs,” the factors that lead to leaving school, generally not largely in their own control including family finances, localized attitudes towards education, limited application of schooling in job prospects, and self-reflections of low-worth, we can view these young people as “push-outs.” “Push-outs” also include the 16 and 17 year olds who have completed secondary school, but will not likely attend university. If a child completes each school year consecutively, he or she will finish secondary school at the age of sixteen, whereby being pushed-out of the system while still a child.<sup>31</sup> Social and economic problems for adolescents (boys and girls) could pose a huge problem for Myanmar society in the near future.

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31 Currently reform measures are underway to add a further two years to the government school system making the complete number of years 13 as opposed to eleven years.





## Child labour – Legal framework<sup>32</sup> and definitions

Myanmar has adopted the key international treaties on the rights of the child, namely UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which the government signed in 1991. In November 2011, Myanmar accepted recommendations by multiple countries regarding child rights, as submitted for the Universal Periodic Review. “Ensur[ing] the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,”<sup>33</sup> reinforcing their commitment to action.

Myanmar’s 1993 Child Law is the primary instrument that guides legal decisions. The state enacted the Child Law in 1993 in an effort to meet its obligations to the CRC. Even with modifications the law falls short of compliance. The law defines a “child” as one with us 16 years of age or younger. The CRC has not been integrated in the constitution and local legal frameworks override the CRC. The 2008 constitution enshrines some regulations that do not comply with the CRC. Article 345 allows citizenship only to children whose parents are both Myanmar citizens and those who are already Myanmar citizens when the constitution comes into force.<sup>34</sup> Without documented citizenship or birth registration, child workers are particularly vulnerable to abuse with no clear agency given jurisdiction over undocumented children.

### Children and work

The 1993 Child Law does not provide specific provisions about children’s economic activities. There is no specific child labour law. The 1951 Shops and Establishments Act, as amended in January 2016, prohibits children under 14 from working in any

<sup>32</sup> Refer to Annex 4: My-PEC Project Child Labour Definitions.

<sup>33</sup> UPR-info.org, “Responses to Recommendations: Myanmar.” Review of the Working Group: 27 January 2011. Review of the Plenary: 8 June 2011.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p 149.

establishment.<sup>35</sup> Children between the ages of 14 and 16 can secure a “fit for work” certificate from a medical professional which legally allows entry into the workforce. In practice, such “fit for work” certifications are used only in urban, more formalized industrial settings and not informal or cottage type industries including agriculture. Though some processing of products could be considered formal work, most work in agriculture would fall under a broad definition of informal work. Myanmar currently does not have a functioning legal definition of “informal” work and therefore no legal or regulatory stipulations on conditions.

Because of limitations in current legislation the ILO engaged in a collaborative process with local stakeholder organizations to develop working definitions for project implementation and research purposes. Primarily, these guidelines and considerations were developed at the second Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan workshop in September 2014 and the finalized in a subsequent meeting in May 2016. These guidelines, though approved by the United States Department of Labor in May 2016 were not in place at the time of methodology development and data collection. The guidelines as defined in **Figure 1** are not to be regarded as the threshold between legal and illegal nor necessarily in compliance with ILO Conventions. Rather, they are meant to help classify working children, child labour and hazardous child labour. Of course, the influence ILO Convention 138, the Minimum Age Convention, and ILO Convention 182 – Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, are starkly visible in these guidelines.

ILO Recommendation 190 identifies specific hazardous activities known to be carried out by child workers in Myanmar. In functions accordance with Article 3 (d) of ILO C182 which defines hazardous activities as “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,” the following activities from the 2014 Stakeholders meeting apply to agricultural cultivation and processing.<sup>36</sup>

It is important to make a note here on the conceptualization of household work or domestic chores in this study. Chores in the individual’s household or work performed at home, also called “unpaid household services” may be considered economic activity when it supports the economic activities of the household. Domestic type work (cleaning, laundry, childcare) undertaken outside of an individual child own household, whether paid or unpaid is considered an economic activity. This issue of paid and unpaid domestic work is tricky in areas where many children undertake economic activities in agriculture because the child and other members of his or her household may not view such activities as “work.” Girls in particular often care for other’s children or their own siblings and clean or cook either for their own families or for others in order to care for a household while families harvest or plant for daily wage work in the fields or processing sites. In order for an adequate gender analysis of prevalence of child labour, we will need to consider these dynamics.

36 This list of activities was pulled together by a group of stakeholder in an ILO-led workshop. It is not official and exhaustive, but gives a sense of some of the work that children are doing at different levels of the agricultural supply chain. As the research data is collected, additional activities will certainly arise and can be added to the working list, which can inform legal definitions. The following conditions were contributed by key informants in the initial round of this study throughout 2015. Children as brokers for jobs; Working in high temperatures (mid afternoon during hot season); Factory and cottage industry fish processing – tools and machinery use; Counting and sorting for long hours with low lighting; Use of violence, intimidation or otherwise coercive or forced work; Trafficking, debt bondage and serfdom –there are serfs and children living in such a way, often abandoned by parents or displaced in war or natural disaster (some children in unregulated institutions are forced to labour in fields, deprived of education, for weeks on end to “pay for their living”).

35 Legal information can be found at: [http://www.luther-services.com/fileadmin/user\\_upload/PDF/Newsletter/Myanmar/NL\\_Myanmar\\_3-2016\\_Legal\\_Update.pdf](http://www.luther-services.com/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Newsletter/Myanmar/NL_Myanmar_3-2016_Legal_Update.pdf)

**Figure 1: Guidelines on child labour categories, ILO-led stakeholder workshop 2016<sup>37</sup>**

<b>Child</b>	A person under the age of eighteen <sup>38</sup>
<b>Child labour</b>	mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous to children interferes with schooling – attendance or oblige them to leave school early Work is defined as an economic activity, whether inside or outside the household, paid or unpaid. This includes domestic work, work in family-owned farms or stores, looking after siblings and/or other chores while the parents are working (to gain economic value)
<b>Age structure</b>	<i>5-11 years old</i> – more than 1 hour per week <i>12-13 years old</i> – household work with economic value more than a) four hours per day/ 24 hours per week or b) between 6pm and 6 am or c) even for 1 hour in any “hazardous activity” (or non-light work) <i>14-15 years old</i> – more than a) four hours per day/ 24 hours per week or b) between 6pm and 6 am or c) even for 1 hour in any “hazardous activity”
<b>Light work</b>	<i>16 or 17 years old</i> – (considered “adults” under current labor law) a) more than 44 hours per week or, b) between 6pm and 6am or c) even for 1 hour in any “hazardous activity” Although no official definition of light work is available from among the Myanmar legislations, the MyPEC defines light work as: Work performed by 12-13 years old children that: is done for one’s own household, whether inside or outside the household, paid or unpaid (work in family-owned farm or business); and is not a reason for missing or dropping out of school <sup>39</sup> is not hazardous in nature, and is performed for not more than 14 hours per week nor between 6pm-6am

**Figure 2: ILO Conventions on hazardous child labour**

<b>Hazardous</b>	exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse underground, underwater, at dangerous heights, confined spaces dangerous machinery, equipment or tools, transport of heavy loads unhealthy environment – hazardous substances, extreme temperatures, noise levels or vibrations damaging to their health difficult conditions – long hours; overnight; confined to the premises by the employer
<b>Worst forms</b>	All forms of slavery – sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour prostitution, for the production of pornography, or for pornographic performance illicit activities – the production and trafficking of drugs likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of the child (“hazardous work”)

37 Myanmar’s guidelines on child labour as outlined here were approved by the US Department of Labor in May 2016. As such, this study used working definitions that did not align with the definition noted above. Working definitions were less specific. As such you will not see these specific definition reflected in the methodology of this study. Moreover, the draft hazardous work list has been further built upon and can be found as ILO Recommendation 190 available in Annex B. Initial findings from this study were presented to stakeholders, informing the work on the Hazardous Activities Classification.

38 Although it does not follow Myanmar’s current Child Law (1993) that defines a child as a person under the age of 16, such law is undergoing revision and therefore the definition of a child is developed based on the international standards. The above reported definition is supported by ILO Recommendation 190 which includes a list of hazardous activities in Myanmar. This list is included in Annex B.

39 Captured in the study questionnaire as “to help in family farm/ business”.





# Methodology of the study: Nature, causes and consequences of child labour

The methodology used for this study is qualitative following the Rapid Assessment methodology and aiming at providing insights on the work by children in specific sub-sectors/ areas (including townships) for which statistical data is not available. This involves a number of approaches to identify areas of interest through interviews with key informants, literature review, triangulation of information. The sample size was calculated based on township level population and household data reported in the Population and Housing Census of Myanmar, 2014 Provisional Results, Census Report Volume 1, Department of Population Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population. The estimates in this study should not be read as a probabilistic representative sample of the sub-sectors/areas (including townships).

The study was designed to take into account the differing dynamics of the three sub-sectors as well as provide some basis for geographical comparison and sub-sector comparisons.

Objectives of the study:

- Determine the cause and consequences of children working in three agricultural sub-sectors – inland fisheries; sugarcane; and beans and pulses.

- Estimate prevalence of child workers in the given sub-sectors in the study areas.
  - Describe the relationship between a child’s school-based education and his or her working life.
  - Identify hazardous conditions faced by child workers in the three-sub-sectors.
  - Recommend appropriate interventions to reduce prevalence and hazards in children’s work in agriculture in Myanmar.
1. Do not represent ethnic minority areas of the country.
  2. May not be able to capture the families and children that are on the move seeking seasonal or other forms of precarious employment.

## Interviews with topical experts and informants

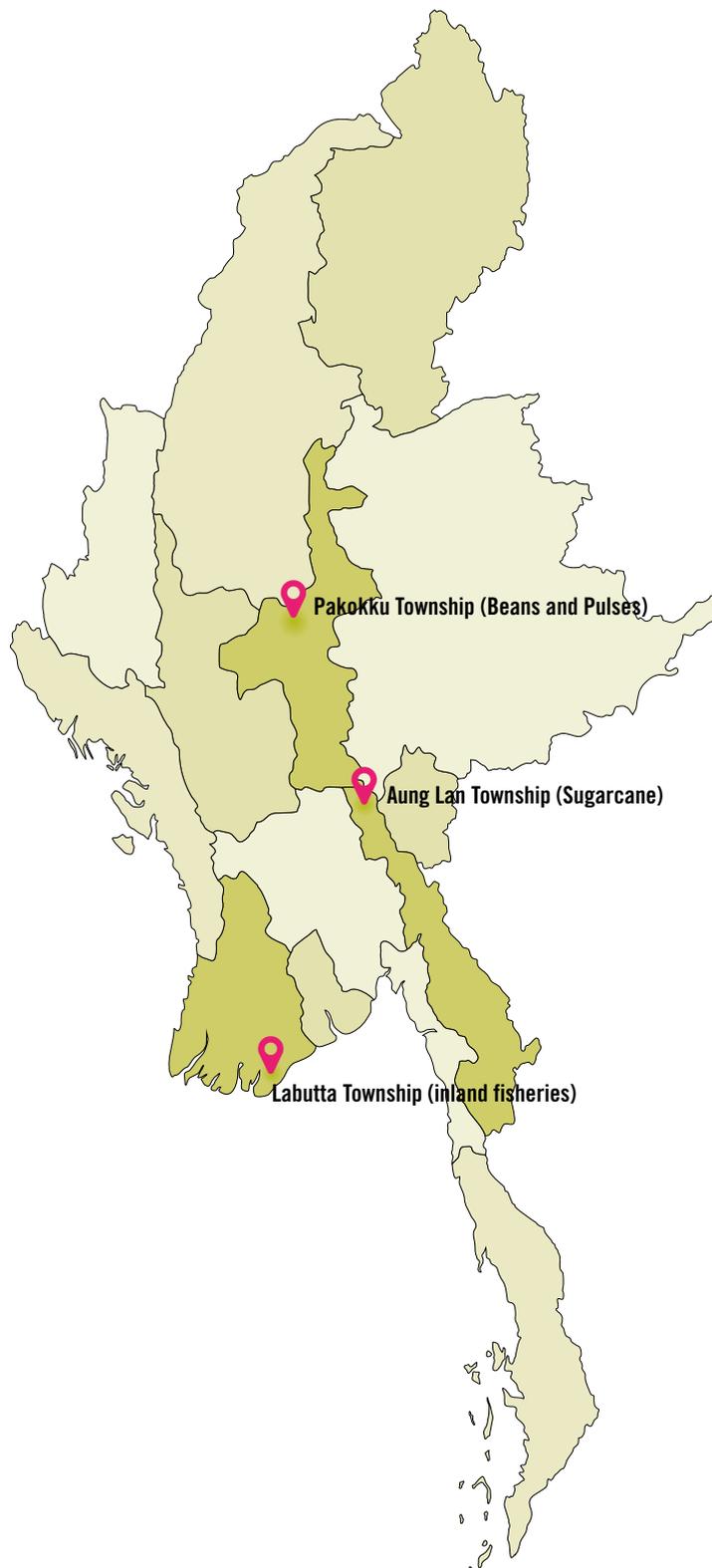
Study team identified and interviewed twelve informants from sector associations, community-based organizations, International Non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies and government agencies. Based on desk review and these twelve conversations with informants, research team selected three townships, one each per sub-sector with a predominance of production. Selected townships were accessible at the time of data collection and able to be covered in the necessary timeframe.

The study areas are as follows:

1. Inland Fisheries – Labutta Township, Ayeyarwady Region.<sup>40</sup>
2. Sugarcane – Aung Lan Township Magway Region.<sup>41</sup>
3. Beans and Pulses – Pakokku Township, Magway Region.<sup>42</sup>

Limitations of geographic areas selected:

40 Township 12 on MIMU.  
 41 Township 96 on MIMU.  
 42 Township 108 on MIMU.



## Data collection: Mixed methods

In addition to interviews with knowledgeable persons, as mentioned above, both household surveys and qualitative data collection along the value chain were used to meet the study objectives. Study objectives focus on understanding the dynamics of each sub-sector as it affects children in the related communities. The study, given the division over three sub-sectors and a limited geography, is not designed to rigorously compute prevalence of child labour in a given sub-sector's workforce.

### Household surveys

Focus of the survey was to differentiate between light duties that do not harm child, child labour and the worst forms of child labour. Based on conversation with merchants and brokers in nearby towns, seven to ten villages were selected for each township. Villages were selected as a cluster or grouped along a route of accessibility. Though a total sample of "target" and "control" households was predetermined, because of the uncertainty around the actual village size and the proportion of household there reliant of the sub-sector production, some flexibility was in order. As such, no more than 25% of the households in a given village could be surveyed. Households were selected randomly after trisecting village with support of village leadership.

The enumerators executed three independent surveys for each household randomly identified in the study area.

#### A) Annex D: Filter questionnaire

Firstly, enumerators executed a rapid filter survey in order to determine the household's applicability to the study. The filter gathered the household's reliance on the sub-sector in

question – is it "a main source of income" – and then the presence of children under the age of 18 in the household.

#### B) Annex E: Household questionnaire

Administered to knowledgeable adult, preferably one of the parents.

1. Household composition
2. Household assets and debt

**C) Annex F: Child questionnaire** – all children in household aged between 7 and 17 who are the usual residents of the household.

1. Demographic data
2. Interference with compulsory and non-compulsory schooling
3. Hours and type of work
4. Housekeeping activities
5. Payment schemes and wages
6. Activities completed
7. Perceptions and exposure to hazards
8. Working arrangements including pay scales and supervision

In addition to "target" households, enumerators collected data from "control" households. "Control" households are households not directly engaged in the sub-sector in question but with members of the household present under the age of eighteen. The inclusion of the "control" group allows for a better understanding of the dynamics of child agricultural work in a village as a whole. If the village population largely engages in the cultivation of beans and pulses, do the children of a shopkeeper, for example, also participate in such work although it is not their

family business? If so, to what extent and is the parents main income a determining factor in the child's induction into the labour force and the field of work?

## Value chain analysis

After meeting with initial informants, it was clear that inland fisheries is more complex than the other two sub-sectors in the study. The types of products, the sources, the working arrangements are all varied and often completed far from the source village. Researchers designed a value chain investigation which include village-level, town-level and city-level interviews with children and adults working in the sub-sector.

## Field supervision and research teams

Quantitative survey teams were made up of seven members including six enumerators and one field supervisor. All enumerators participated in a five-day training on data collection techniques, with a particular emphasis in interviewing children, survey methodology and use of questionnaire.

Qualitative data collection on children working along the inland fisheries value chain was conducted by a team of two comprised of one person knowledgeable in individual interview techniques and one person from the local area who assisted in data documentation and access to knowledgeable fish brokers and fisherpersons.

The lead researcher designed the methodology and questionnaires with support from ILO staffs and extensive input from informants from the target communities and those with expertise in both the situation of working children and the various agricultural sub-sectors under investigation. Both Lead Researcher and Team Leader conducted all training and oversaw

both the pilot as well as the first three days of data collection in each of the geographic areas. During three days of data collection oversight, Lead Researcher and Team Leaders engaged in conversations with household members with a specific eye to building out understanding of the activities in the sub-sector and the village context.

## Validation of findings

In February 2016, researchers presented initial findings and data tables to representatives of thirty-two stakeholders, excluding children, in a series of three workshops. Overall, participants agreed with findings and validated data collection methods. Notably, several participants wanted to be clear that data collection on the status of child workers in sugarcane areas, for example, did not mean that the situation was the same for children workers in sugarcane in different parts of the country. Participants described the local conditions of the various geographies and asserted that such conditions meant that localized findings could not easily be generalized to the entire sub-sector because local conditions were overriding. As such finding from each sub-sectors can be considered in-depth case evaluations of a given sub-sector and township.

## Child safeguarding

Enumerators secured both consent from each child respondent as well as parental/ guardian assent for each child. Enumerators, though with mixed results, with parents and child's permission brought a child to a safe and quiet place for the interview. Two enumerators conducted all interviews with children to ensure greater child safety. In the village setting it was common for other people from their area to approach the enumeration team out of curiosity. In this case, one member

would politely manage the onlooker or family members as deemed appropriate in order to maintain a safe space for the child to verbally answer all interview questions. In at least five cases across the study area, an enumerator deemed the situation “unsafe” for the child to answer openly. In such an instance, enumerator backed out of the questionnaire and we removed that household from the sample.

## Weaknesses of the survey

Data collection in all areas was complicated by both weather conditions and transportation. Throughout the field work in Labutta and in Aung Lan, the heat was excessive meaning the enumerators went house-to-house in the early mornings and in the evenings to prevent dehydration and sunstroke. In Pakokku, enumerators were challenged by recent flooding events in the area. As such, some parts of the village were not accessible and on occasion affected-people from flooded areas were taking refuge in the target villages, sometimes making it difficult to sort between children who more permanently reside in a household and there temporarily.

All child members of the households were not able to be interviewed. In all cases, enumerators worked to do “call backs.” That meant when the child member of the household was not around at the time, they would set an appointment with parent or other member of the household to meet that child at a later hour. Often this worked well, but the short duration of the stay in each village meant limited flexibility in securing call-back appointments. Though the randomization of household selection was assured by not planning ahead with households, this meant some children were not included in the study despite meeting the criteria.





## Findings: Inland fisheries

Myanmar has extensive and productive inland fisheries across the country's largely wild river networks and, in particular, the expanse of the Ayeyarwady river delta. Fisheries provide an important source of nutritional content and economic activities. Myanmar has four main rivers, three of which start inside the country's borders, giving Myanmar full control of their management. There are three significant river deltas with complex ecosystems, including the Ayeyarwady.

There is a range of local practices and fish, prawns, crabs and mollusk products. Myanmar's Department of Fisheries estimates freshwater fishery production to be over 1300 metric tons in 2014 with over 1.5 million people work directly in the industry to varying degrees.<sup>43</sup> The Myanmar Department of Fisheries classifies inland fisheries as "freshwater fisheries," which are then categorized as fish culture, open, or leasable depending on the permitting status. Fisheries management is governed by the 1991 "Freshwater Fisheries Law," which has not recently been amended. Though the national-level Department of Fisheries is responsible for overall management, many of the functions were handed to state and regional level governments in 2011. This includes the sale and distribution of permits. This impacts the potential profit on any given inland fishery subsequently the dynamics of the sector in a given locality.

Though permitting is necessary for certain types of fishing, much remains open to "free

<sup>43</sup> The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, Department of Fisheries, "Fishery Statistics 2014." This data excludes aquaculture, which is not a part of the definitions of "Inland Fisheries" by the ILO or the USDOL.

fishing,” which is allowed for use with limited types of fishing gear. Products vary and value added processing includes making fish paste, fish sauce, dried fish and prawns and salted fish. Though there are seasonal ebbs and flows in the catch and the value of various fresh products, families generally work throughout the year. Monsoon season brings certain hazards because currents are strong and heavy rain can cause rapid swelling in the narrow channels of the delta.

Most of the products will end up passing through Yangon’s Sanpya Fish Market (*Sanpya Ngar Zei*) where global market prices flash on LED screens while brokers and buyers haggle over price, quality and who handles the transportation. Most of the export products head to Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and China.<sup>44</sup> One of the ten largest fisheries exports is dried prawn, which accounts for

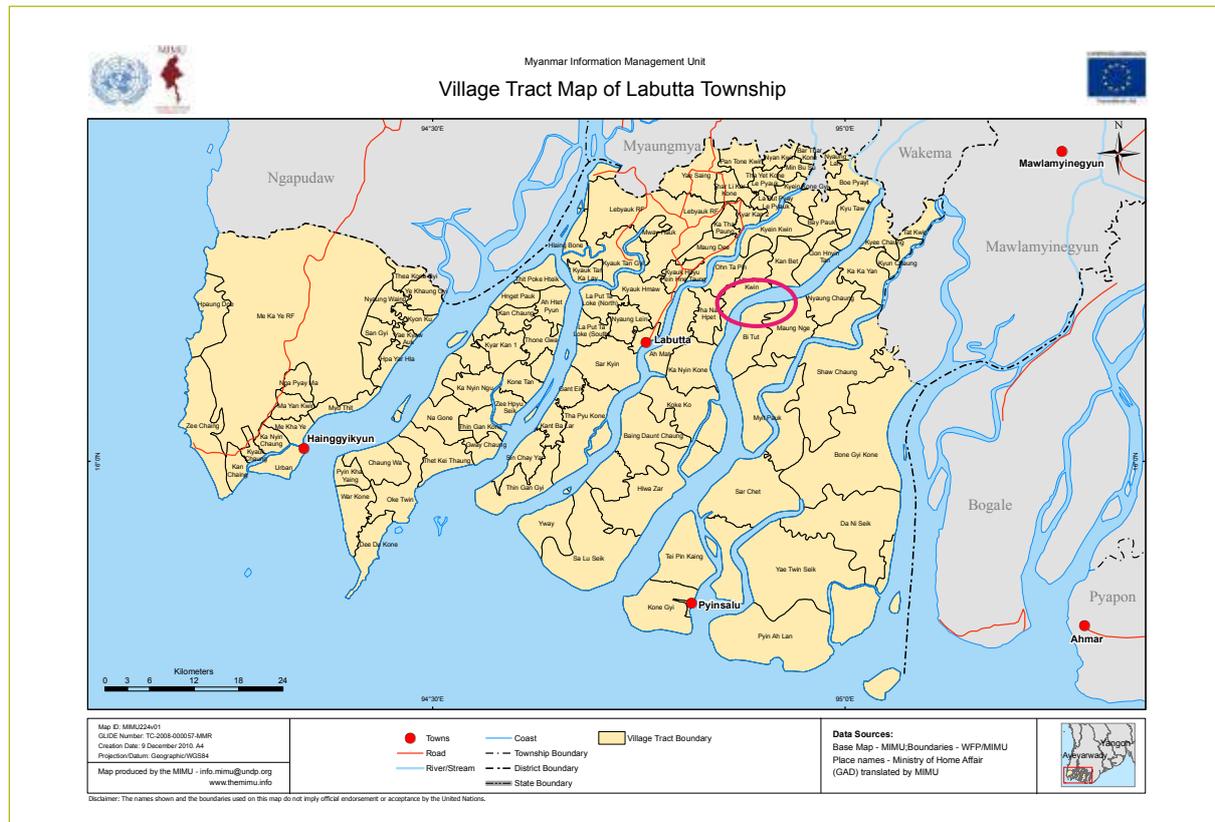
US\$13.5 million in exports in 2013-14. Much of the work is done by small scale fishing families.

## Data collection: Value chain interviews and household survey

In order to gather complex information about children working in inland fisheries as well as provide some key points for cross-sector comparison, researchers gathered interviews from key informants as well as household and child survey data in villages that rely largely on products from inland fisheries in the Ayeyarwady delta.

**Study Area:** Labutta Township, Ayeyarwady Region

**Population:** 229,728 Male – 114,740 and Female – 114,988



44 Information available of exports, value and catch area available on industry site <http://www.seafoodsource.com/all-commentary/27852-bringing-myanmar-s-fishing-aquaculture-into-the-21st-century>.

Freshwater fishing is done year round across Labutta in addition paddy rice cultivation. In May of 2008 Cyclone Nargis hit Labutta with significant loss of life and displacement. Paddy farms were flooded with saltwater, homes washed and blown away, tractors, boats and fishing gear lost, schools demolished, along with possibly one hundred thousand lives. An estimate 1.4 million people in the region were affected. They were seriously impacted by natural disaster, and as a result, became a focal point for a number of humanitarian assistance programs in health, education and livelihoods development. While moving from village to village, concrete white structures were visible in clearing that are designed as cyclone shelters. Some of the shelters are currently being used as schools.

The villages in the survey area were relatively small, with just twenty to forty households each. Between houses were mounds and rows of drying fish out on tarpaulin or small bamboo frames designed for that purpose. Almost all families live in bamboo homes, generally with no electricity apart from a small battery inverter for running small appliances. Potable water is a challenge for most in the survey.

Crabs are a key product in the area around Labutta town and BiTut trading center. Mangrove crabs, softshell crabs and mud crabs as well as other varieties are caught along the river banks and in ponds. As with many other fishing products, there is a growing number of cultivation ponds or developed aquaculture sites. In such facilities, children

may be residing away from home and at greater risk of exploitation.

## Children in the value chain

To gather information along the value chain, researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with child workers, sales and buying agents, merchants and local officials. They found there to be 125 “crab agents” and 18 “fish and shrimp agents” in Labutta Township. These agents tend to buy from the village-level, where households collect product and sell and transport either to Sanpya Fish Market in Yangon or to another broker who will do so. While in the agent’s possession, crabs, prawns or fish may be sorted, cleaned, dried, iced, bundled or packed.

The legal size of the crabs caught from the wild seems to be fairly-well regulated. Brokers worry about gathering crabs that are below the allowable size according to regional fishing stock regulations. In response, at least in one of the village, two crab farms had been established sometime after Nargis. Both had about twenty employees, many of them employ children. Children keep the area clean, feed the fledgling crabs and manage other children. Those from other villages sleep at the facility.

The following chart represents the activities that children are doing with relation to inland fisheries at various levels, as observed by researchers and reported by key informants, namely brokers and children.

Village	Town or trading hub	City level – Yangon fish market
Catch fish, crabs and prawn onshore and from small boat	Classification of size, species and quality	Loading and loading from boats and trucks
Taking care of the boat and nets	Cleaning	Changing ice and repacking
Salt and dry the fish in the sun	Packing with ice	Checking and tracking stock
Pound for fish paste and sauce	Tying crab claws	Running for support items
Bone and/or clean the fish	Loading and loading from boats and trucks	Sorting, boning and cleaning
Tying crab claws	Acting as brokers for other children	Overnight and daytime security

One continuing outcome of the storm is ongoing child homelessness. Whether through direct loss of a family or ongoing affects of trauma on household members, many children can be seen roaming in Labutta town, organized in small groups, often known to engage in petty theft, including stealing products from the compounds of local fish and crab agents. Local people view these children as a nuisance, making daily food and shelter difficult to secure and further isolating them from social institutions and bonds.

Several of the children working in crab and fish agencies had been doing so for a number of years. There appears to be a paternalistic working relationship between employers and the child workers, with employers viewing themselves as having “helped out” a family in need and children feeling indebted to employers for their job. One boy interviewed had dropped out of school at fourteen to help his family after losing his father. After three years he is still working for the same employer. The consequences of his father’s death were heightened by related medical debt, which the family pays off at the rate of 1000 MMK per day (0.80 USD). The boy can make upwards of 4000 to 5000 MMK (3-4 USD) per day in the rainy season, when there is a good catch, for tying crab claws. When the catch is down, so are his earnings. When busy, he reports his working hours, and those of other child workers to be 9am to 9pm. A girl working at the same agency has recently dropped out of school to tie crab claws in order to help family with an urgent debt of 50,000 MMK (42 USD), which has to be repaid within two months. Like the boy mentioned here, this girl’s work life may be prolonged, as debt is unable to be cleared and extra income is still needed. Working children described that upon entry into the workforce they expected to work in the agency temporarily, but for many, it had clearly extended into years.

Though both girls and boys engage in sorting, claw tying, weighing and feeding the fledgling

crabs, generally boys do the heavy lifting and girls manage cleaning and other tasks more akin to “household” work. Some girl labourers are responsible for cooking for the owner’s family and for all the workers. Girls also tend to be tasked with salting fish and putting it out to dry in the sun.

At the city level goods are again sorted, weighed, loaded, unloaded and packed. Children at Sanpya Market or Bayintaung Wholesale market carry out all of those tasks alongside adult workers. Children from distant villages are known to sleep out behind the market and, in many cases in the shop front to provide nighttime security. Gathering information from children at the city markets was difficult because of the fast pace of work and noisy environment.

Some children in the agencies, town and city markets and in particular in the fish cultivation ponds reported having been recruited by “brokers” for longer contracts from their home villages in far-flung areas including Karen State and Magway Region. Several of those children had been working from a very young age – 9 to 12 years old entry into job – and were working without any national identification card or birth registration. For most, their salaries reportedly go directly to a family member back home.

Though the qualitative survey did not delve into hazards faced by workers along the supply chain, those jobs which parallel those at the village level, for example, tying crab claws, have a similar risk, in this case, serious puncture wounds. More distressingly, working arrangements for children at the town and trading hub level, along with those in cultivation ponds, have the potential to be highly exploitative, possibly meeting the conditions of forced labour. Without proper documentation, often reliant on the care of employers for basic needs, sleeping inside the work facility and not directly receiving earnings are all signs of extreme vulnerability.

## Households in fishing villages

**Figure 3: Household sample, inland fisheries, Labutta Township**

Households	Inland fisheries
Target	110
Control	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>

Households in the sample had an average of 5.5 members, and, a higher percentage of male members to female members with 52% being male. Households tend to be larger than in other areas with 29% of the sample having eight or more members. When looking at the workforce in Labutta, 50.4% of household members are under 18 years of age and just 3.7% are over 55 years old, of those, just 1.3% are over 65 years old. The “dependent” population then is roughly half, with almost all being children under 18 years old.

Given that the survey did not employ a probabilistic representative sample of the sub-sectors/areas (including townships), it is important to note that statements about Labutta township refer only to the areas of the township where the survey was conducted.

### Migration

In 34% of the households, there was at least one member who was away for work either domestically or abroad. In Labutta a total of 69 household members are reportedly away for work and of those, 16 are children under the age of 18. Most migrants are male, though at 62% male, it's not an overwhelming majority. The rates of migration may signal the precarious economic position of households in the area. After Nargis many families were unable to return to their land because of the lack of clear legal documentation, leaving many

families without the means to cultivate paddy during the monsoon, in turn increasing reliance on products from rivers, ponds and estuaries.

**Figure 4: Household migration data, inland fisheries, Labutta Township**

Age of migrant worker	Labutta	% of total migrants
Under 18	16	23%
18-30 years	43	62%
Over 30 years	10	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Economic status – Debt

Gathering data on household income is a complex affair and outside the scope of the study. Instead, the survey collects household debt and land tenure status as measures of economic stability. Sixty-one percent of the households in Labutta reported to be in debt. Most people have debt of under 400 USD. Respondents consider a debt of just 8 USD significant enough to report. Though the actual USD amount of debt can appear relatively small for many, this can dramatically change a household's ability to meet daily needs and to plan for the future. When asked the key reasons for debt respondents primarily identified business-related expenditures. However, respondents often cited more than one reason for debt.

**Figure 5: Household debt, inland fisheries, Labutta Township**

	Mean	Median	Minimum
<b>Myanmar Kyats</b>	559240 MMK	200000 MMK	10000 MMK
<b>US Dollar (1200 MMK/USD)</b>	\$466	\$167	\$8

Reason for household debt	% of HH's, multiple possible
To expand or maintain a family business	43%
To purchase equipment for business	48%
To pay off another debt	13%
No clear reason	11%
Other – wedding, funeral, health issue	19%

## Children working in fishing villages

The child survey was administered to households whose main source of income revolves around inland fishing activities and to “control” households who live in fishing communities, but do not consider inland fisheries to be a main source of income. On many of the work-related indicators, children from “control” household and those from “target” household did not display a significant difference in fishery-related work practices. As such all households from the township are combined unless otherwise noted.

**Figure 6: Children in fishing community, sample size and structure, Labutta Township**

Age	# of children in sample
7-12 years	134
13-15 years	62
16-17 years	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>

There are 109 boys (48%) and 117 girls (52%) in the sample. Out of all the children, 143 regularly work with inland fisheries. Sixty-three percent of children in the villages of Labutta carry out economic activities in the inland fisheries sub-sector. Seventy-four percent of all boys report working along with 53% of girls.

**Figure 7: Reasons children gave for working in inland fisheries, Labutta Township**

Main reasons for working in fisheries	% of children, multiple possible
My parents or guardian said that I should	13%
To help my family	78%
I am strong	1%
I am not good in school	0%
To learn how to do this type of work	13%
To get my school fees	8%
To get school fees for a sibling	1%
To pay family debt	6%
To buy clothes and food for myself	33%
I like to work/I want to stand on my own feet	2%
Other reason	7%

Children reported the strong desire to help their families as a driver for entry in the workforce. This is a statement that falls “inbounds” culturally. And, through observation during data collection, the statement was often repeated by parents to the enumerators about children and told to enumerators as a manner of commending children’s work in fisheries. Incidentally, children also work for the purposes of buying goods for themselves. One sixteen year-old child told researchers that he longs to buy a mobile phone handset. When asked who he planned to call with that phone, the child explained that he intended to use it just for games. Some children use money made for personal items and also diversion, for some that includes alcohol or illicit substances.

**Figure 8:** Girls and their mother cut heads off of dried fish they caught earlier that day, Labutta Township



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## Interference with children's schooling

In Labutta, the school day entails 5 to 6 hours of class per day, longer for some, particularly for those engaged in after-school tutoring classes, which are common, and widely seen as necessary in order to pass grade-level final examinations and the end-of-secondary school university matriculation exam. Such after-school tutoring is referred to as “tuition” and presents additional educational expenses to the household. 26% of students in Labutta also attended “tuition.” Given the wide acceptance of “tuition” this is a low-rate of participation in these after-school courses.<sup>45</sup>

The majority (84%) of children in Labutta attend school. Though 16% of children had

left school early. This figure does not equate with “drop-out” rates. It demonstrates what percentage of children who had previously attended school did not enroll or complete the year prior to the student conduction. This shows the rate of students leaving school early, but does not project or inform the extent to which respondent students will continue in the future. This percentage, then would generally be assessed to be lower than a standard “drop-out rate” figure because young children, as we know in Myanmar, have a chance of making it through primary, but not all will make it far beyond. So, though 16% of the children in the survey have already dropped out of school, there are many children under 12 who will likely be pushed out of school in the future.

Most students (82%) reported missing school “sometimes” while just 12% “never” miss class and 5% “often” miss class. In terms of days missed, most students missed one to two days of school in a month, some as many as ten days a month. The vast majority reports most often missing school because of personal illness or injury, and not due to the economic

45 Across the entire sample, the control and target group were nominally different with regards to attendance of after-school tutoring. 53% of control group attend and just 45% of target group. This may indicate more disposal income for the households not involved in the sub-sector, though not assuredly.

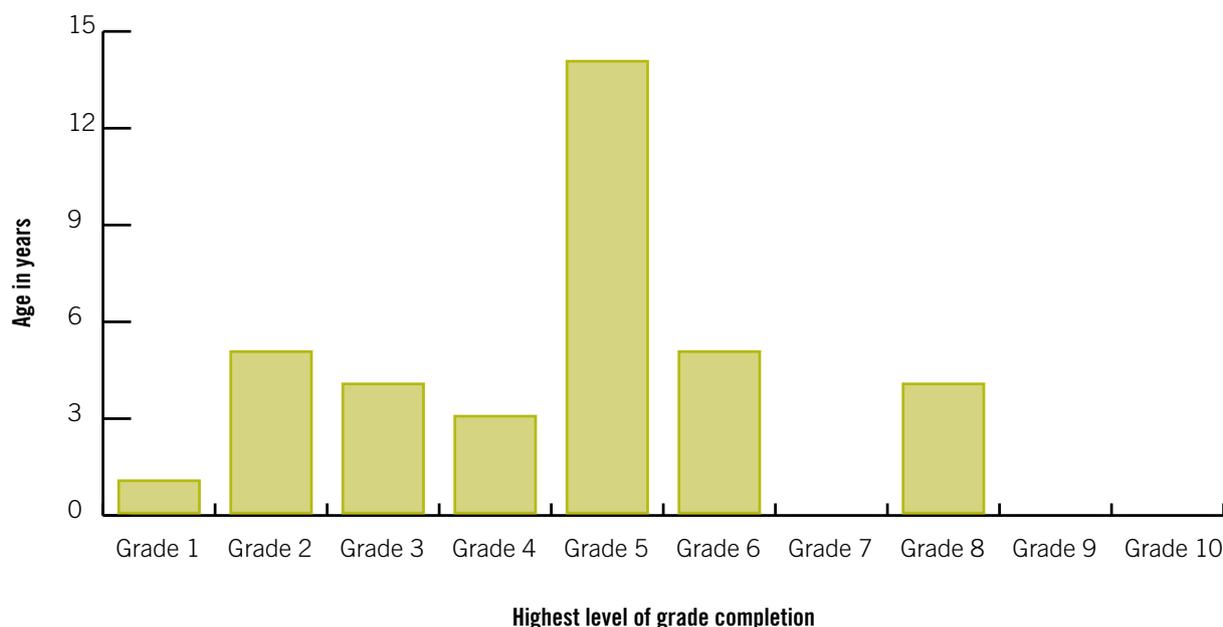
activities of the household. We did not survey the relationship between illness and work. Exposure to dengue fever, common to the area, may result in many lost days for a child infected. During field visits, researchers found that during the rainy season, flooding and heavy downpours made the trip to school more dangerous, causing parents or children to be concerned about the risk of drowning leading to more absence during rainy season.

**Figure 9: Child’s reasons for missing school days, inland fisheries, Labutta Township**

Reason for missing school	% of children, multiple possible
Household chores	7%
Not Interested or bored	4%
Working for money or in family business	2%
Illness/Health/Injury	91%
Family Emergency	7%
Maltreatment by teacher	1%
Other	4%
Don't know/Refused	1%

The risk of prematurely leaving school is more of a threat to children in the inland fisheries sector of Labutta Township than is school absence due. As mentioned above 16% of children left school early, most commonly at the transition between primary school and early secondary, though push outs occur across all grade levels. Of the children that did not attend school the previous year, there is a clear

**Figure 10: Grade level of highest completion, inland fisheries, Labutta Township**



proliferation at the point of transition between primary school and secondary, “Grade 5.” Secondary schools may be far from the village and boarding costs high.<sup>46</sup> Despite the high costs, many students’ understanding of their own reasons for not being in school diverged from this pragmatic, “rational” user type of analysis.

**Figure 11: Reasons for not attending school in the previous year, inland fisheries, Labutta Township**

Reasons for leaving school	% of children, multiple possible
Parents forbid	11%
High cost	24%
Distance	11%
Household workload	11%
Not interested or bored	35%
Perceived lack of intelligence	5%
Missed past grades	0%
Working for money or in family business	24%
Illness/Health	24%
Family Emergency	5%

Researchers asked child respondents to identify the main reasons for having left school. Children were able to report more than one response. Despite so often being cited as the single most critical issue of “access,” the distance to school and the cost of education were only part of the reason that children gave for no longer attending school. For most, 35%, boredom or lack of interest was a main reason for having left school. Myanmar’s teachers rely heavily on rote memorization and teacher-centered approaches to learning. The lack of interest and boredom that children report may

be a result of the use of such methodologies as well as a child’s perception that classroom lessons are not relevant to daily life or possible futures. Twenty-four percent of children surveyed understood his or her departure from formal schooling as hinging on a family’s push or individual sense of responsibility to participate in the household economic activities.

### Activities carried out by children in inland fishing villages

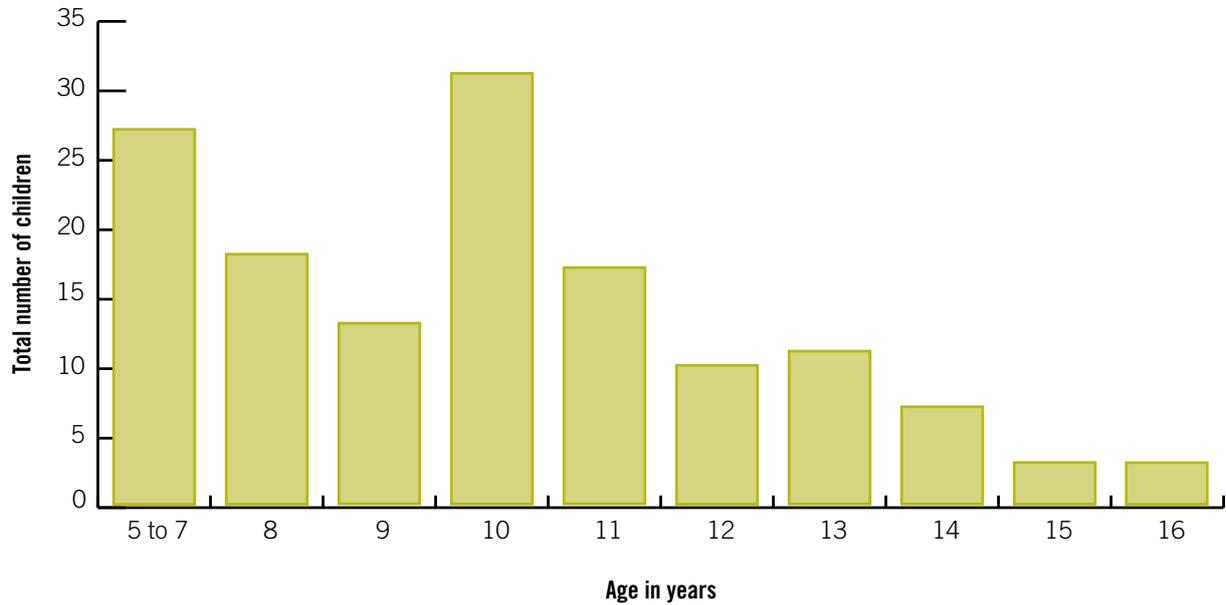
One hundred and forty-three out of 226 (63%) children aged 5 to 17 work “regularly” on economic activities related to inland fisheries. The children in Labutta start doing fisheries-related work from a young age. And, from at least the age of seven most did more than three hours of work on a “typical” day.

**Figure 12** shows the steady entry of children into fishing-related economic activities. Peak age of entry is age ten. This coincides with Grade 4 or Grade 5 in the Myanmar government education system, confirming a correlation between participation in the labour force and school system push-out. Because many children report both actively attending school and working in fisheries entry into the workforce is not the sole impetus for a child to leave his or her education early.

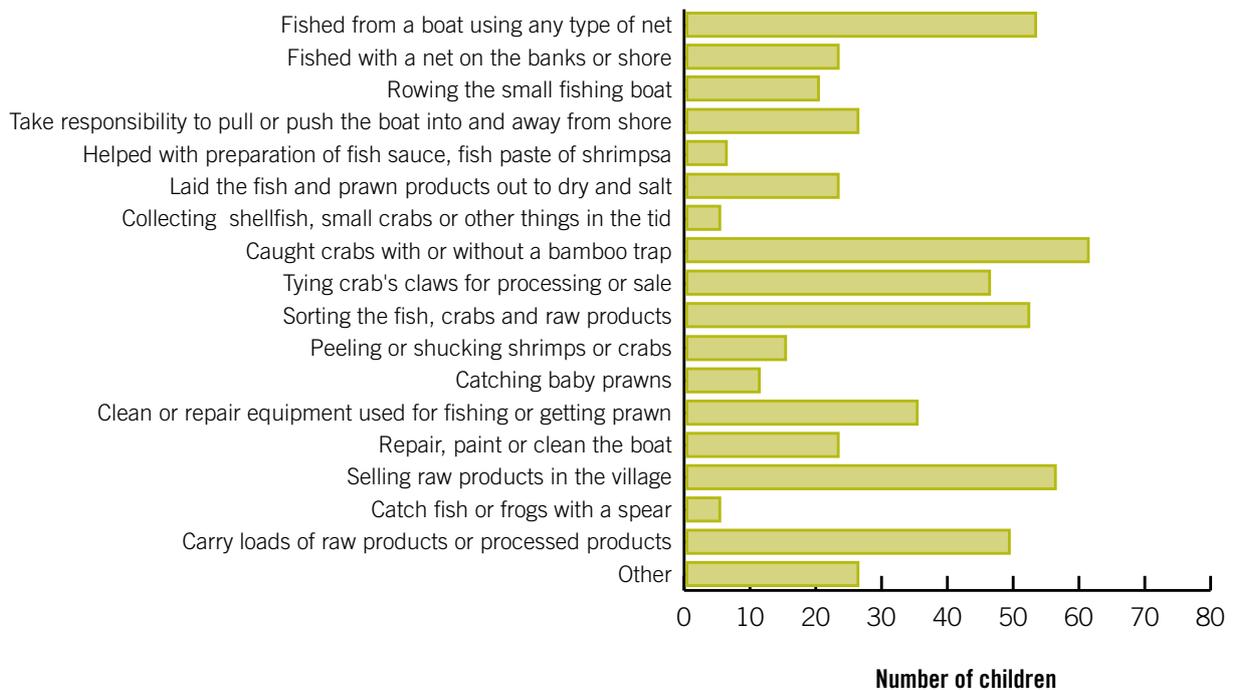
To be clear, children who work in the fisheries do not do so exclusively. There is rice paddy cultivation in the area a portion of which are cultivated year-round. Children in landless households will often work on other’s paddy farms, and the recent shortage of daily-wage labour in Ayeyarwady may result in an increasing number of children entering rice cultivation as benefits rise.

<sup>46</sup> According to Enlightened Myanmar’s Research commissioned by the Ministry of Education, the full costs of sending a child to lower secondary school in a distant towns ranged from 800,000 to 1,500,000 MMK (\$660 USD to \$1250) in 2013-14 academic year.

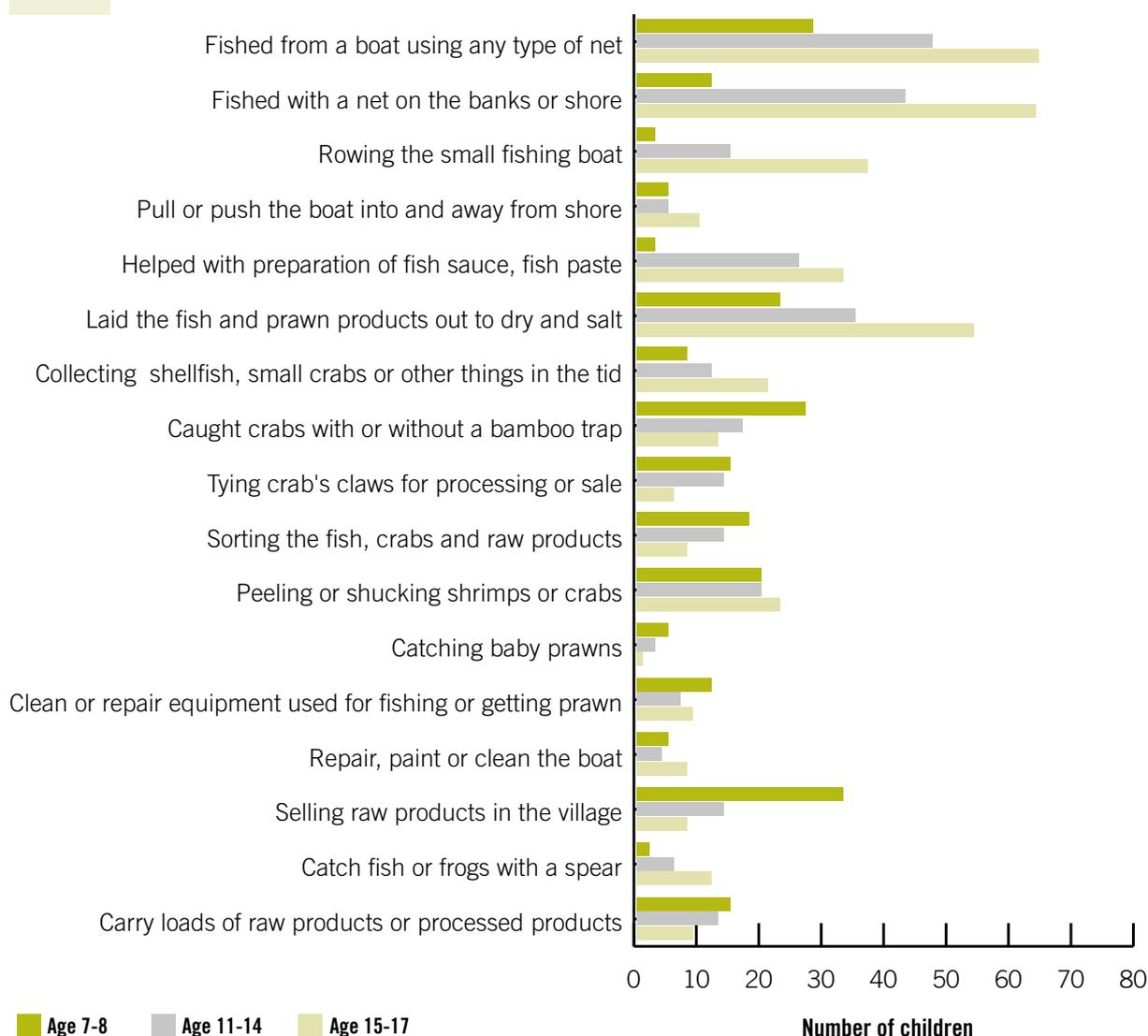
**Figure 12: Age of entry into inland fisheries workforce, Labutta Township**



**Figure 13: Activities carried out by children in inland fisheries in the past year; total number of children who reported having carried out the listed activity in the past year, Labutta Township**



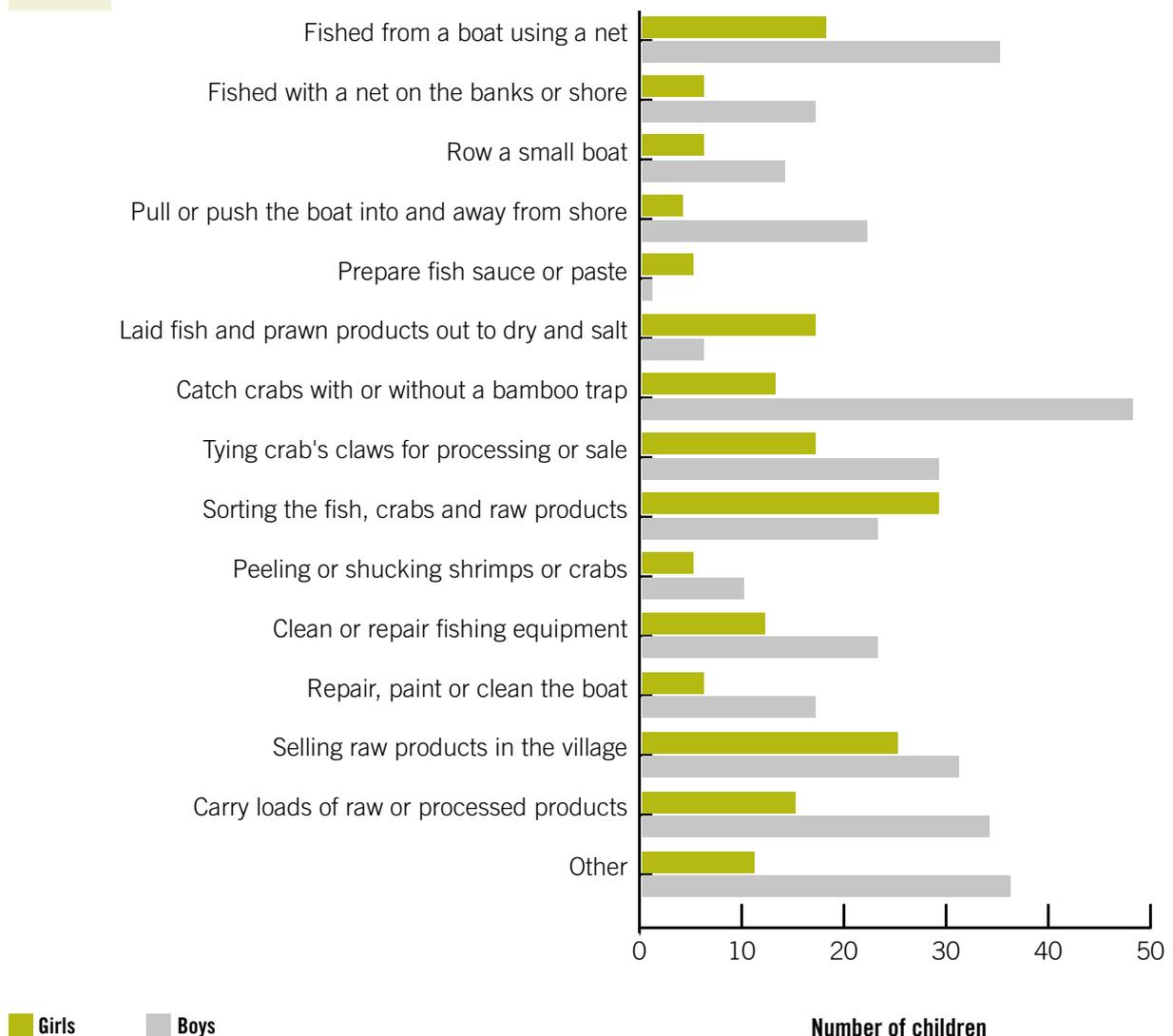
**Figure 14: Activities by percentage within age group, inland fisheries, Labutta Township**



Children in fisheries work have a diverse task list. **Figure 13** shows the fisheries related activities that children living in fishing villages had undertaken in the reference year. On average children engaged in three different tasks. Many of the tasks take place outside of the household compound or the landed village, creating the conditions meeting an emergency and being unable to get immediate adult help. It increases the potential for catastrophe.

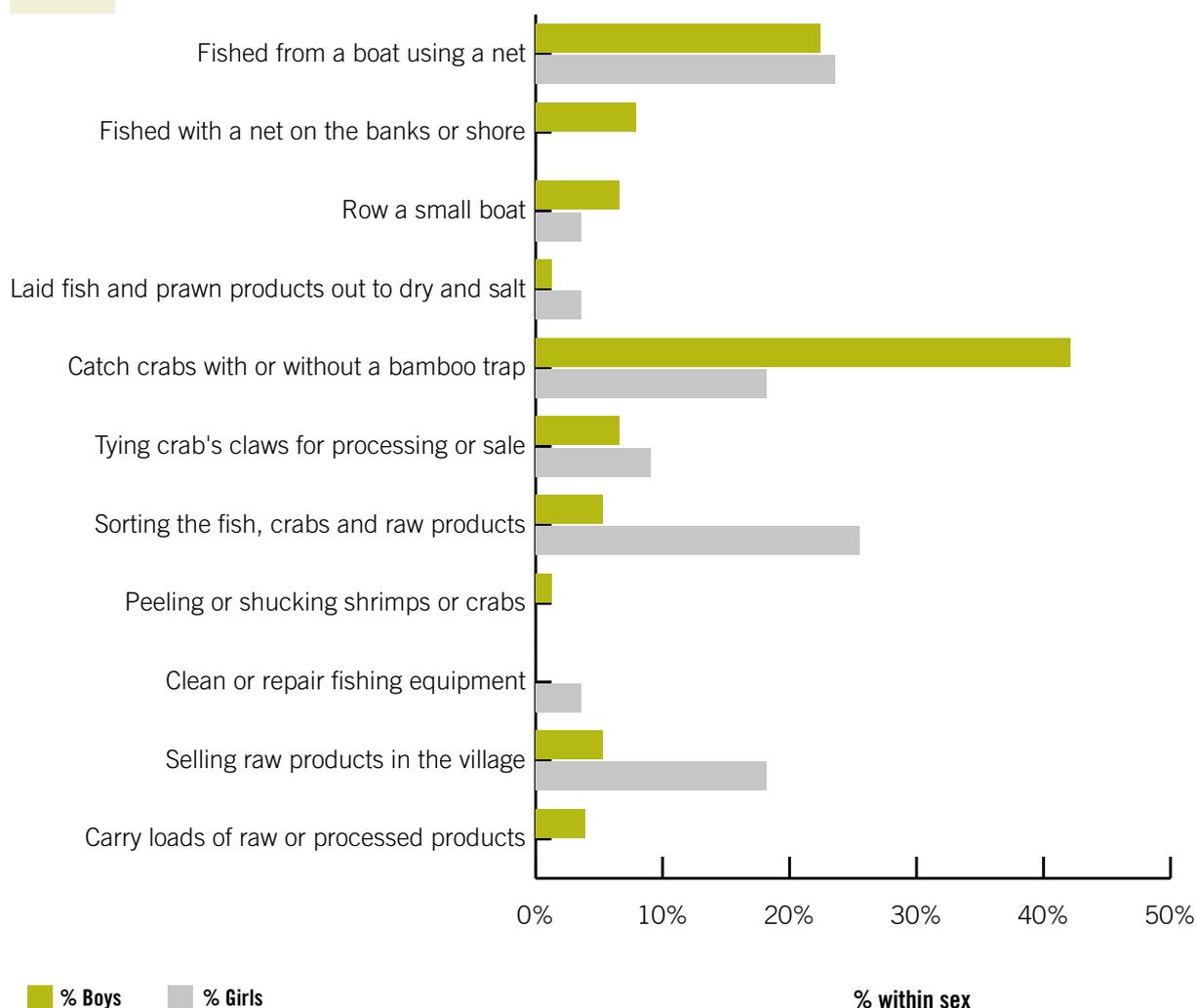
In **Figure 14**, the top bar signifies the percentage of children between fifteen and seventeen years old that engaged in the given activity at least once within reference year. Rowing boats and fishing on and offshore are done by more of the older children than selling products in the village and catching crabs with a trap. Fishing offshore can be particularly dangerous given climatic conditions – the chance for unexpected current or severe weather.

**Figure 15: Activities carried out by children in inland fisheries in the past year, by sex, Labutta Township**



**Figure 15** captures the listed activities carried out by fishing children in the past year disaggregated by sex. It shows that both boys and girls engage in a variety of fishery-related activities. There is not a single activity listed by respondents that was exclusively completed by a single sex. Though more boys than girls have carried heavy loads of products in the past year, a significant set of girls has carried heavy loads. And though only five girls made fish paste or sauce products in the reference, at least one boy did so as well. While certain activities are heavily skewed, none are exclusively for boys or exclusively for girls.

In addition to listing all the fisheries related activities from the past year, children identified the “main” activity they engaged in. “Main” activity is defined as the activity which you spend most time or focus with relation to fishing, crabbing, collecting prawns and mollusks. Breaking out the difference in activities a child sex highlights the gender role norms that determine common and acceptable work for boys and girls. **Figure 15** represents the dominant activity within the respondent group disaggregated by sex as a percentage. That is, for example, while 18% of the respondent girls’ key economic activity

**Figure 16: Main fisheries activity, percentage within sex, Labutta Township**

is selling raw products in the village, such is the case for only 5% of the boy respondents. There are three activities which signal a large difference in engagement based on sex – selling in the village; sorting products and catching crabs. Whereas the percentage of girls that frequently fish from a boat using a net is slightly higher, but not notably different from the percentage of boys that conduct the same activity.

**Figure 17: 25% of girls' main responsibility is sorting small fish, eels and crabs**

For rural households, especially those which rely on agricultural activities, the distinction between economic activities and household chores may be difficult to disentangle. Tasks completed in the house can have direct results or relationship with a family's economic activities. In fisheries as dried fish may be sorted, peeled or prepared in the house alongside other chores and products like fish sauce are processed on the home cooking stove. At times, fish or mollusks may be consumed by the household instead of sold or sold instead of consumed as prices become more attractive. Additionally, some household chores have negative impacts on a child's health or ability to take full advantage of educational opportunities. Though such work may be seen as un-related to economic activities of fisheries, without children at home to cook or care for siblings, the economy of the household would be different.

All children in Labutta had performed household chores in the week prior to the survey. Most reported having spent less than one hour a day on household chores, while a few spent over 3 hours a day on various household tasks. Some children had difficulties assessing the total time spent doing household chores. Collecting firewood, collecting or carrying water, sweeping or mopping, washing dishes and washing clothes are the commonly reported activities. Unsurprisingly, girls report doing a greater variety of tasks around the house, but the total time spent between boys is not significantly different. Boys spend most of the time on fetching firewood and water while girls cook, clean and wash clothes and dishes more often.

## Hazards encountered by children working in inland fisheries

Paraphrasing Convention 182, hazardous work is that which by nature or due to the

circumstances in which they are carried out are likely to cause harms to the health, safety or morals of a child in work which is considered hazardous.

As per ILO Recommendation 190, the hazards include:

- Exposure to psychological, sexual or physical harm.
- Work with dangerous machinery, equipment, tools or which involves manual handling of heavy loads.
- Work in unhealthy environments, which may expose children to hazardous substances, agents, processes, temperatures, noise levels or vibration damaging to health.
- Work under particularly difficult circumstances including night work, long hours or where children are confined to the premises by an employer.

Every child working in inland fisheries in Labutta is exposed to hazards, including direct sunlight, noxious fumes and the risks involved in lifting heavy loads. These hazards vary in severity and also in frequency. Seemingly less urgent hazards, like using fishing net with sinkers on the ends, may result in long-term damage, including loss of a finger or a limb. Consistent and constant exposure to mosquitos may lead to infection of malaria or dengue fever causing loss of income or education, long-term health impacts or death. More consideration is needed for the psychological impacts of fear from working in a natural disaster prone setting with the knowledge that such work is dangerous.

60% of children think their work is dangerous. Though they reported being afraid on multiple issues while laboring, **Figure 18** represents children's single most significant fear. 64% of all children are primarily afraid of snakes, animals and insects. 22% fear strong currents

**Figure 18:** Fishing children’s main fears while working, total number of working children reported fear, inland fisheries, Labutta Township



and unsafe tides the most. As we discovered many children in the area work independently and only two report being afraid of a workplace supervisor. This does not include those individuals in the supply-chain analysis that work in the agencies or aquaculture.

**Figure 19:** Children’s exposure to listed hazards in the workplace, inland fisheries, Labutta Township

Exposure to hazards	Inland fisheries
Insects	56%
Snakes	86%
Other animals	23%
Dirty water	42%
Really hot temperatures	71%
Really cold temperatures	57%
Strong winds or heavy rains	66%
Strong waves or current	72%
Long hours in the sun	48%
Burning – field fire or fire for other purpose	8%
Carrying heavy loads	52%
Slipping or falling down	60%
Lots of dust	15%
Spreading or spraying fertilizer	4%
Spreading or spraying pest killer	3%

Children know their work is hazardous. They are aware of the risk. This can have an impact on a child’s psychological well-being. Some children were afraid when they had to go to work during the heavy rain, overnight on the boat, or while sleeping on the shore where they expect to come into contact with snakes or insects.

In this area in particular, children reported being afraid of ghosts. In the pilot, enumerators found that children reported their fear of ghosts as a primary concern. Many children lost family members and neighbors, or have heard of the incredible loss of life and well-being in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis in 2008. Children are certain that ghosts from Nargis inhabit the surrounding areas and can do them harm. Fear of drowning, being spooked by a ghost or the deadly bite of a snake can dominate a child’s mind during their work activities, causes distress and anxiety.

All children in inland fisheries reported exposure to hazards. (See **Figure 19**) During oversight visits in the field, lead researchers carried out discussion with parents and children in the study villages. During this time, it was clear that inland fisheries, in addition to the other hazards present in various types of agricultural work in Myanmar, has a set of dangers that are life-threatening. Though we did not specifically ask each household, so this cannot be understood as a “rate” of danger, at least one child in a family with whom we spoke had lost a small child to drowning while the child was out fishing.

Some children are tasked with handling the fishing boat and required to pull the boat in and out as needed according to the tides. This often means working near the edge of the water on the sandy or muddy banks while it’s dark outside. In addition to the general dangers associated with working in the dark, tides can be unpredictable and range in severity. Children from fishing families report spending

the night on the banks during their work. Though tides is clearly a risk, many children come into contact with snakes. Myanmar has a variety of poisonous snakes and one of the highest snakebite mortality rates in the world.<sup>47</sup> Several poisonous varieties live at the water’s edge. For a child, the effects of a poisonous snake bite will set in more quickly than for an adult.

The child’s perception of hazards and the actual exposure reported by children do diverge. The tides and animals are clear, but children seem to be less aware of hazards of carrying heavy loads or working in the sun.

**Figure 20: Tools and equipment used by children in inland fisheries**

Tool or equipment	Number of working children	% of children in fisheries used within the past year
A hammer to other heavy tool to beat	11	8%
A sickle, knife or machete **	82	57%
A shovel and hoe	5	3%
A spear (catching fish or frogs) **	7	5%
Boat engine **	18	13%
Traps – bamboo, wood, steal	64	45%
Hooks for fishing **	23	16%
Fishing nets- all types	54	38%
other machine **	8	6%
other equipment	46	32%
None	17	12%

\*\* - denotes a tool which is considered dangerous.

47 Davies, William “Death in the Long grass: Myanmar’s Snakebiting Menace.” The National: June 11, 2014. See also <http://www.burmasnakeproject.org/pages/snakes.php> for more in venomous snakes in Myanmar.

As tabled in **Figure 20**, 12% of the children report not regularly using any specific tools or equipment, which may also mean fishing with a simple fishing line. In terms of traps and nets, there is tremendous variety in types and materials. Some traps are made in the locality while other are purchased at the town market. There are also many types of fishing nets, most made from basic fishing line and tied to weights or sinkers. Many of the children in the study area use bamboo traps fashioned to collect crabs at the edge of the river or in small ponds. All of the nets and traps have some level of risk. One child in the study lost a finger when she was using a fishing line that become stuck on debris and rapidly amputated her finger.

Children working in fisheries reported injuries and trauma. One child had experienced a near drowning when the boat he was working on sank in the river. Several of the children has serious puncture wounds from sharp crab

claws or fish bones. One child has recently been bitten by a mouse while working and after not having received appropriate treatment, or from having returned to work in the wet conditions, the wound had grown and the pain increased making it difficult for her to walk.

For medical emergencies, access to appropriate care may be difficult. For reasons of cost, but also proximity, children may not get medical attention when needed. While collecting data on injuries, many children appeared to have wounds, scrapes or even broken bones that they did not report to enumerators. When asked, children confirmed that some of these injuries occurred while engaging in the economic activities, however, the types of injury felt “common” to the child and the child had not sought any medical help from household members or medical staff, so, to the child the injury was not of enough concern to warrant report during the questionnaire conduction.

**Figure 21:** Various tools children use to clean and dry fish products, dig for mollusks and other fishery-related tasks, Labutta Township



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Researchers used a simple cartoon drawing to help children identify work-related injuries they had faced since beginning their work in the relevant sub-sector. (See Annex F: Child questionnaire.)

Children reported having succumbed to the following injuries:

**Figure 22: Type and placement of injuries reported by children in inland fisheries, Labutta Township**

Body part	No. of children	Types of injuries
Hand/wrist and arm	52	mostly bruise, scrape or cut and one loss of a finger
Torso	4	scrape, bump, bruise or cut
Leg, foot or ankle	62	generally bruise bump – one joint dislocation

**Figure 23: Cause of injury, inland fisheries, Labutta Township**

Activity during which injury occurred	% of occurrence
Fishing from a boat with a net	17%
Fishing on the banks	9%
Rowing a small boat	3%
Catching crabs with or without a trap	40%
Tying crab's claws	16%
Sorting fish, crabs or raw products	11%
Selling raw products in the village	5%

Younger children had most of the injuries that occurred while catching crabs, though older children also got injured while catching crabs. It appears that because their work diversifies

more with age, that encounter certain risks from crabbing less frequently.

## Hazard mitigation

Children generally did not wear any type of protective clothing or gear during work on inland fisheries-related tasks. Over half of the children regularly wore long-sleeved shirts instead of short-sleeved shirts to protect their skin from sun and insects. Most children wore either a sarong (*htamin* or *baso*) or long or short trousers. Girls more often wore sarongs as opposed to either short or long trousers. 46% of children regularly wore nothing on their feet with 43% wearing open-toed, slip-on sandals (*paneq*). Very few children, just 4% wore gloves during certain activities. The most commonly used protection is a hat for sun and wind, worn regularly by 77% of children while working in fishing or collecting prawns, crabs or mollusks.

## Work hours and working arrangements

In Myanmar's inland fisheries sub-sector, children are overwhelmingly managed or supervised by a member of their family, whether a sibling, another relative or a parent. Half of the time a child sees his or her parent as the direct person to whom they are accountable with regards to fisheries tasks, as a "supervisor." Of course, when a child is being directly managed by another child or possibly works independently, without supervision, as is the case for 18% of the children, the potential effects of a threat or an emergency may be compounded as no adult is present.

**Figure 24: Children's supervisor, inland fisheries**

Supervisor	% of children
Other child	4%
Sibling	25%
Parent	50%
Other adult	2%
Nobody	18%
Not sure	2%

Children's pay or income in the fisheries sector varies significantly. It can be based on piece-work or daily wages. The pay-scale was difficult to summarize because of the diversity in payment methods. For example, a child can sell a crab to a broker or directly to the town. On a given day the price may be 100 MMK (\$.08 USD) but on another day it may be double. And in certain season different products are abundant leading to increases in catch but decreases in market price. Interestingly, children who catch crabs that are not large enough to meet the minimum size standard by the regulatory agency for export, often sell these crabs to the aquaculture farms where they are raised.





## Findings: Sugarcane

Sugarcane is cultivated in many geographic zones of Myanmar. For several decades, and until 2004 sugarcane was considered by the various governments of Burma as a “national priority crop” which meant that it was subject to extensive regulation and often farmers were forced to sell their yields at below market rates. The state has largely controlled the processing and sales of sugarcane through a series of state-owned factories. In 2004 there was a shift in state policy, namely that the state would end its procurement of sugarcane, but not its control over its sales, making the cultivation of sugarcane potentially more lucrative as it could then be sold at market rates.<sup>48</sup> According to interviews with knowledgeable persons in the field, since then, local farmers are increasingly growing sugarcane. From 2004 to 2008/09 raw sugarcane was lucrative for small and medium-holder farmers, but peaked out in 2008. However, with recent leases of factories combined with increased agribusiness ventures sugar cultivation may become more profitable. Larger investors are either leasing former government sugar mills or constructing their own deepening their share of the market. Despite such restructuring, most of the sugar mills are held by military-owned entities including Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd (MEHL) and Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC) and other by the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Industry 1. Those that function “privately” do so with 30-year leases from the Ministry of Agriculture. Such heavy military involvement means that reliable sector data is difficult to come by.

<sup>48</sup> Vicary, Alison. “The State’s Incentive Structure in Burma’s Sugar Sector and Inflated Official Data: A Case Study of the Industry in Pegu Division”.

Traditionally sugarcane growing zones included Bago, Pyinmina and parts of the country's central dryzone generally nearby the state's seventeen sugar mills. Growing seasons vary across climatic zones, making the recent geographic spread of sugarcane cultivation possible. In Kachin State the Ministry of Agriculture leased a processing facility to the Kachin Independence Organization, the administrative wing of the non-state armed faction of the Kachin Independence Army. Further expansion is in northern areas of Mandalay Region and even into the hilly areas of Shan State near the border with China. This has altered the structure of production. In the past most cultivation has been carried out by small-holder farmers, maybe 10 to 20 acres at a time, but now, in addition to the small-holders, large plantation hire local workers in both the cultivation and refinement stages in factories built by foreign companies.<sup>49</sup> Sugar processing technology is out-of-date, though private entities are rapidly upgrading facilities, few mills have the capacity to produce anything but white sugar. In early 2016 Myanmar import sugar from both India and Thailand, while exporting to China.<sup>50</sup>

## Data collection: Household and child survey

### Aung Lan Township, Thayet District

**Population:** 234,947 Male – 111,864 and Female – 123,083

Aung Lan is at the southernmost edge of Myanmar's Magway Region alongside its border with Bago. The township runs along the Ayeyarwady river and is known, not only for sugarcane production but also paddy rice and several varieties of pulses. Aung Lan is

marked by ongoing land conflicts, which were exacerbated during the floods of 2015. Aung Lan has a government sugar mills, apparently owned by Myanmar Economic Enterprises. Such government involvement makes production data inaccessible. Because of the mill, however, Aung Lan is fairly well-connected to major transportation. Having had a government sugar mill there is a road network as well as rail connection. In the study, most villages got electricity from the government grid supply for just a few hours a day, at most. Most households had a well on the property or pulled water from a well.

In the study area, one crop of sugarcane is grown per yearly cycle. The peak work cycle is between January to March when the sugar is harvested and the fields prepared for next growing season. The harvest time fluctuates due to climatic conditions. Farmers will work to optimize the level of sucrose to bring in more profit. This means that workers need to be fairly flexible.

Work in the sugarcane field is arduous. The fields are very dense, hot and humid. The sweetness of the products attracts many insects. The cane is woody and difficult to cut. The leaves of the sugarcane plants can be like paper-thin razors, easily slicing the skin. Children in sugarcane worked both for their family crops and also as wage labourers to more wealthy land-owners from the same areas. Many of the working children care for the seedling nurseries to ensure healthy stocks for planting. As with other sub-sectors in agriculture, sugarcane growing and harvesting is generally rudimentary, not mechanized.

Locally, some processing is carried out, though most cane is sold to the government sugar mill. The value chain is incredibly limited. Because transportation is expensive, when farmers do not get a worthwhile price at the government local sugar mill, harvest product goes to waste. Of course, sellers in the market use large presses to sell juice in the villages and

49 Those foreign companies, often in partnership with Myanmar businesses, include Great Wall, Sutech and Wilmar.

50 <http://www.mmmtimes.com/index.php/business/18328-china-sucks-in-myanmar-sugar.html>.

towns, various types of candies and sweets are made. After cutting the cane, the confectioner squeezes out the juice which is boiled on the fire. Children are tasked with keeping the fire going and managing it to avoid boiling over. People from the local area informed us that children working in candy-making often live in the factories, so our research did not capture these children. Some children from surveyed households could not be reached for questioning as they were away at the worksite.

## Households in sugarcane villages

**Figure 25: Sample households, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Households	Sugarcane
Target	116
Control	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>

Households in the sample had a mean numbers of members, at 5.05 with a higher percentage of female members (53%) to male members of the households. Compared to the research sites for beans and that for inland fisheries, Aung Lan had relatively small households. There were few households in the survey with 8 members or more (13%). Most households had 4 or 5 members. Only 3.1% of the population in the sample households was over 55, of that only 1.2 over the age of 65 at the time of data collection. That is a small percentage of elderly members. 46.5% of the members in the sample households are under 18. Like other areas, the “dependent” population is roughly half, with almost all being children under 18 years of age.

Given that the survey did not employ a probabilistic representative sample of the sub-sectors/ areas (including townships), it is

important to note that statements about Aung Lan township refer only to the areas of the township where the survey was conducted.

## Migration

In only 14 households, or 9.5% of households included in the study, was there at least one member of the household who was away at the time, either domestically or internationally, to engage in economic activities. One household report two individuals that had migrated for work. Of a total of fifteen migrants, two were under the age of 18. And, relative to the other sub-sector study areas, few were women or girls. From Aung Lan, 73% of the migrants were boys or men and just four were girls or women.

**Figure 26: Household debt status, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
<b>Myanmar Kyats</b>	437059	300000	40000	2000000
<b>US Dollar (1200 MMK/USD)</b>	\$364	\$250	\$33	\$1666

## Economic status – Debt and land tenure

There is a significant debt burden amongst sugarcane farmers and workers in Aung Lan. 82% of households reported holding debt. The mean amount of debt was under \$400 USD. Though the overall total amount of debt per household was lower than in other areas, many of the households held debt. 33% of the households with debt held between \$180 and \$250 outstanding.

A high percentage of the respondents reported having acquired debt in order to pay off other

debt (54%) demonstrating the action of ongoing debt cycles. Compared to the work of inland fisheries, there is more credit available to farmers from various official banking institutions and informal lending, especially at the beginning of a given planting season. Ostensibly to purchase with necessary initial inputs. Clearly the debt for some lingers or grows over time.

**Figure 27: Reasons for household debt, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Reason for household debt	% of HHs, multiple possible
Buy or renovate a house	18%
To expand or maintain family business	31%
To purchase equipment for business	26%
To pay off another debt	54%
Other – wedding, funeral, health issue	11%

**Figure 28: Land tenure status, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Land tenure status	% of HH
Own	44%
Rent	26%
No clear owner – “the land that we work”	30%

Aung Lan has a high incidence of precarious land use for sugar cane growing. According to conversations with local growers and government officials those who work the land without a clear title or use rights have had use access taken from them by a number of different government or corporate agencies.

## Child working in sugarcane villages

**Figure 29: Children in the sample, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Age	# of children in sample
7-12 years	69
13-15 years	91
16-17 years	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>

The age of the children in the sample in Aung Lan is higher than in the other areas. Several parents preferred for younger children not to be interviewed. There were significantly more girls (56%) than boys (44%) in the sample. Sixty-three percent of children report carrying out activities related to sugarcane cultivation and processing. Of those, 54% are girls and 46% are boys.

**Figure 30: Reasons children gave for working in sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Reasons for working in sugarcane	% of working children
My parents or guardian said that I should	16%
To help my family	87%
I am strong	0%
I am not good in school	2%
To learn how to do this type of work	1%
To get my school fees	0%
To get school fees for a sibling	2%
To pay family debt	43%
To buy clothes and food for myself	7%
I like to work/I want to stand on my own feet	1%
Other reason	5%

In addition to providing general “help” to their families, children saw their economic activities as directly related to household debt. Children understood that they are working to pay off household debt. In Aung Lan no children reported that they work for the purposes of earning school fees for themselves or siblings. In national conversation, educators and school administrators report that child labour is needed so that children can earn money to support their own education. Evidence here disproves that notion. Though this data cannot speak to the extent to which child labour actually contributes to real settling of household debt, household debt is well known across the family and may weigh on a child mind.

### Interference with schooling

Students in Aung Lan reported that school lasts generally five to six hours per school day. Though 26% report that it regularly last more than six hours in a day. This may be a factor of the older age profile of children in the sample. Needless to say on school days, school sessions certainly dominate the day and would leave limited daylight time for additional activities.

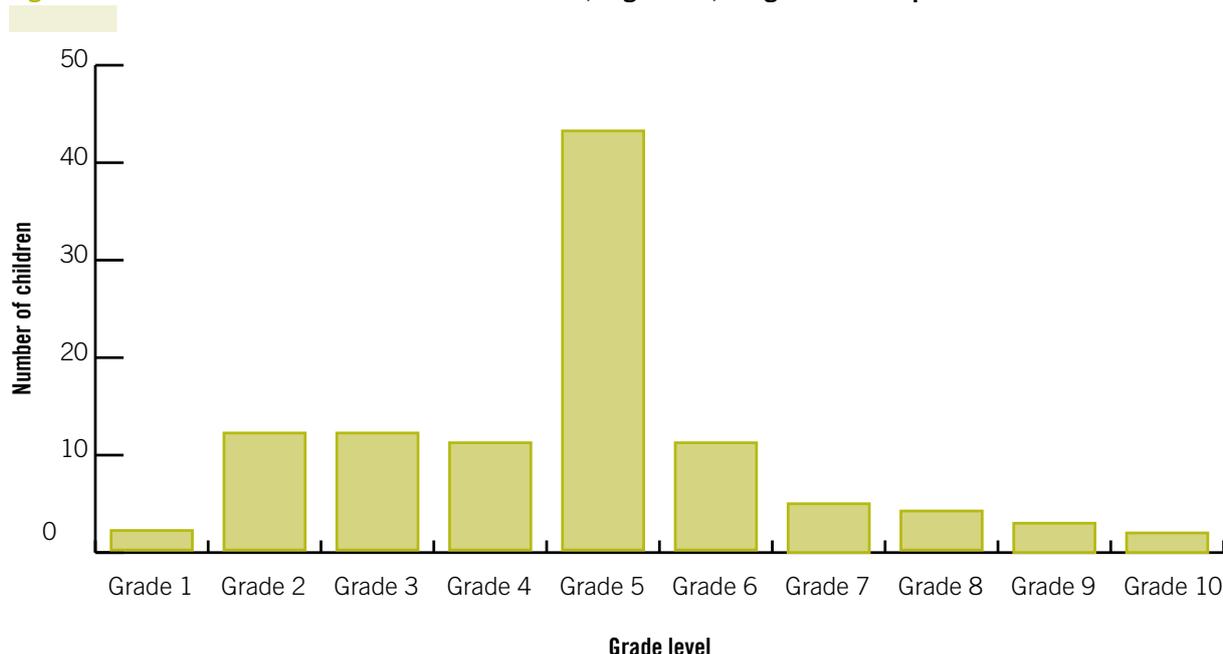
Aung Lan students reported missing school quite rarely, with 44% claiming to “never” miss school and 56% reporting it as “sometimes” missing school. Most students missed between one and two days of class per month in the previous school year. Overwhelmingly, students missed days of schooling when they were ill or injured. From this data we cannot deduce if such injuries are related to work in the sugarcane sub-sector.

**Figure 31: Reasons for missing days of school, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Reasons for school absence	% of children who study and work
Household chores	3%
Working for money or in family business	3%
Illness/Health/Injury	93%
Family emergency	8%
Other	4%
Dk/Refused	2%

Fifty-three percent of students attended schooling during the reference period. Forty-seven percent of children in Aung Lan left school early. As shown in **Figure 30**, 70% of those that left school did so either through the course of primary school or at the completion of Grade Five. This is not surprising, though it is stark. Grade Five marks the transition between primary school and the start of secondary school. A small percentage of students then completed primary and of course, far fewer went on to secondary. It is widely accepted that students need to attend after-school fee-driven additional tutoring in order to pass grade level and matriculation examinations. In Aung Lan, 48% of those attending school also attended after school tutoring, known as “tuition.” This adds to the cost burden of schooling. In Aung Lan, sixty-three percent of children work in the sugarcane, though fifty-three percent attended school in the reference period. Though there is a relationship between work and schooling, entry into the workforce does not directly determine one’s chances to complete secondary school.

**Figure 32: Grade level at which children left school, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**



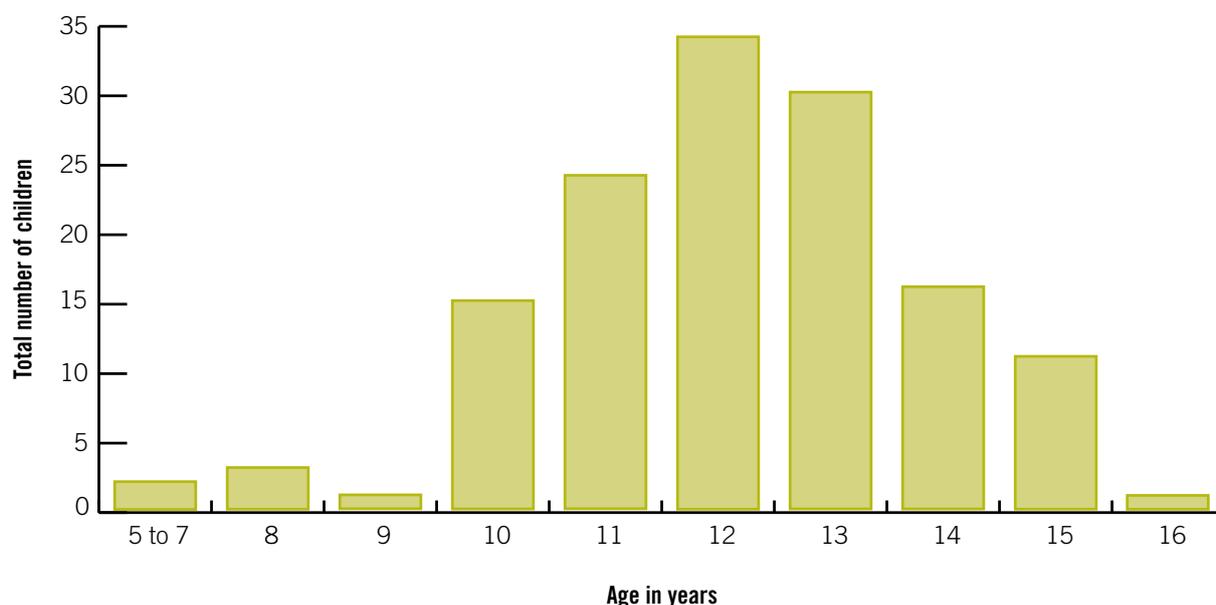
**Figure 33: Children’s reasons for not attending school the previous year, Aung Lan Township**

Reasons for leaving school	% of children
Parents forbid	21%
High cost	55%
Distance	6%
Household workload	17%
Not interested or bored	17%
Perceived lack of intelligence	12%
Missed past grades	1%
Working for money or in family business	37%
Illness/Health	2%
Family emergency	2%

Seventeen percent of students felt bored or otherwise uninterested, perhaps getting at the limited applicability of school lessons the lives of the children in the study area. Not surprisingly, working for the family’s business was a very important reason for many children. Sadly, 12% of children believed they lacked the intelligence to justify continued schooling.

For children who identified as working in sugarcane cultivation or processing, though few start such activities at a very young age, involvement really picks up around age 10, with peak entry at age 12. Generally, at around ten or eleven years old, children will progress from primary school to secondary school. As is expected, this transition marks a significant increase in school fees, often because secondary schools are not located in localities, meaning that children will have to commute or otherwise board, adding to costs of schooling. Additionally, some parents and children may carry the attitude that a basic education is adequate for their needs. When viewed in conjunction with **Figure 34** representing age of school-level completion, peak entry in sugarcane aligns with the highest

Though commonly understood as the critical reasons for leaving school, both cost to the students and distance of the school, though related, were not the only factors that pushed children out of the system as shown in **Figure 33**. For children, perceived pressure from parents and also their workload at home were strong reasons that they no longer go to school.

**Figure 34: Age of entry into sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

rates of leaving schooling. However, students start working before they leave school and others certainly continue to enroll in school after having begun to work in agriculture. Though salient, the transition between primary and secondary school is not the only important aspect of for a child and his or her continued enrolment in school.

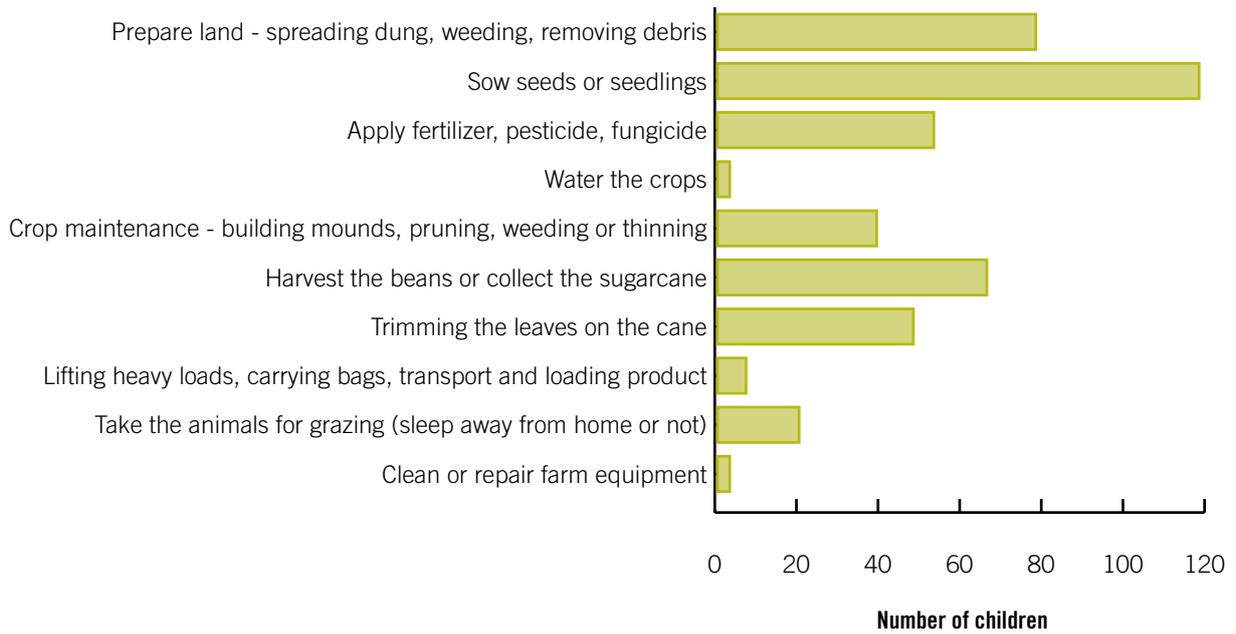
### Activities carried by children in sugarcane cultivation and processing

Compared to work in the inland fisheries, there are fewer types of activities carried out by children working in sugarcane cultivation and processing. **Figure 35** represents a list of activities carried out by the children the study over the past year, though a few activities carried out by only one or two individuals was left from the chart. Almost all of the children had some responsibility to care for and sow seedlings. Sugarcane is propagated by a cutting. Children often work with adults to prepare and care for cuttings. In interviews,

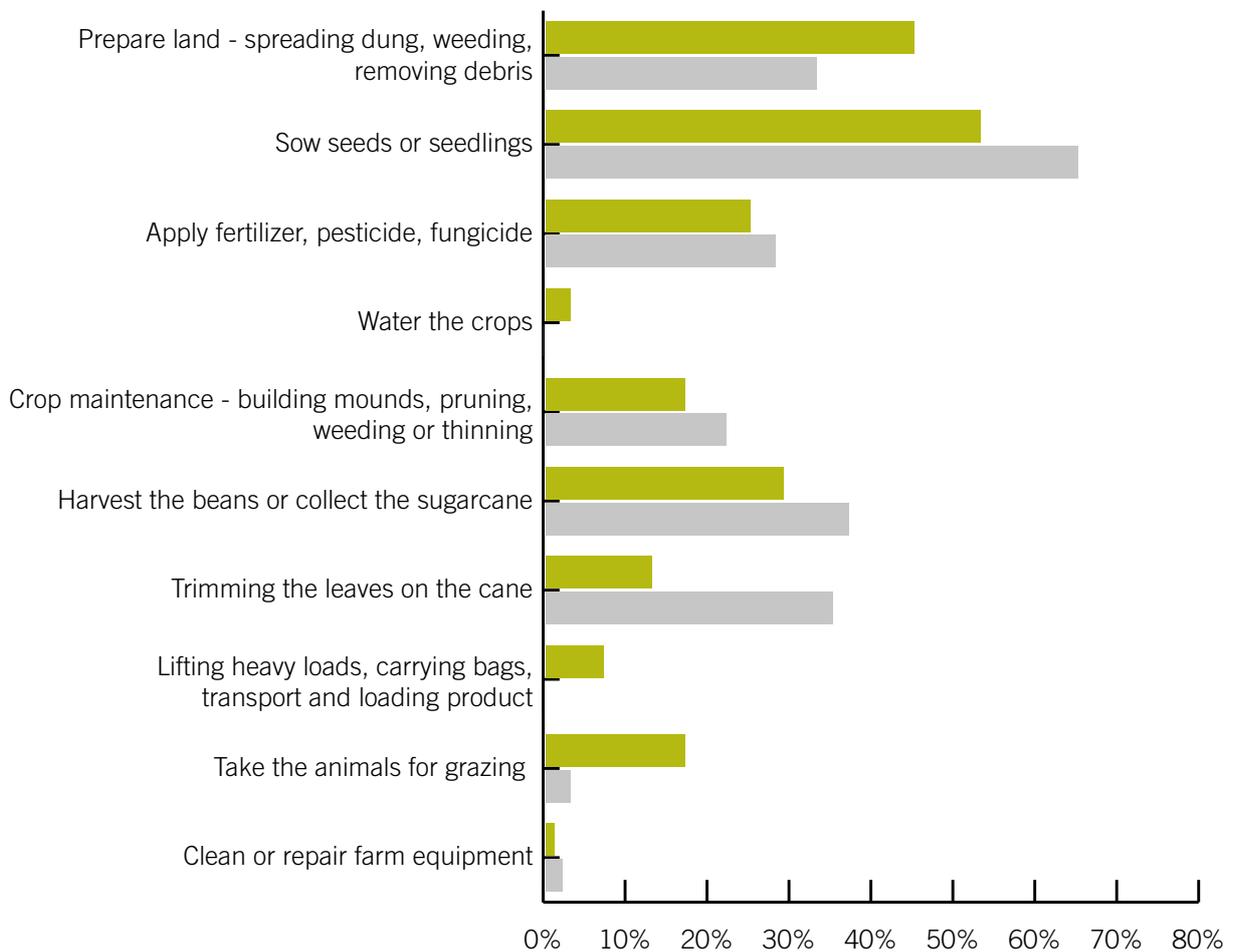
we found that often this is generally the full responsibility of child household members while outside children are paid as wage-labour. Children also take responsibility for grazing working animals, namely cows and buffalos. In Aung Lan, sometimes children take the animals out to the fields where they sleep the night.

Once planted, there is ongoing irrigation work, trimming, building and shaping soil mounds and applying fertilizers and pesticides. This is all work that is often handled by children. In Aung Lan, farmers with larger plots of land will also grow vegetables and paddy rice. Often the adults in the area handle such work while the children handle sugarcane. As sugarcane is sent for processing, adult growers are responsible for transporting the cane to the mill and awaiting payment. According to several community members in Aung Lan, farmers regularly have to wait several days before their goods are checked, counted and payment made at the sugar mill. This leaves children working alone in the fields and can add significant time expense to sugarcane farmers.

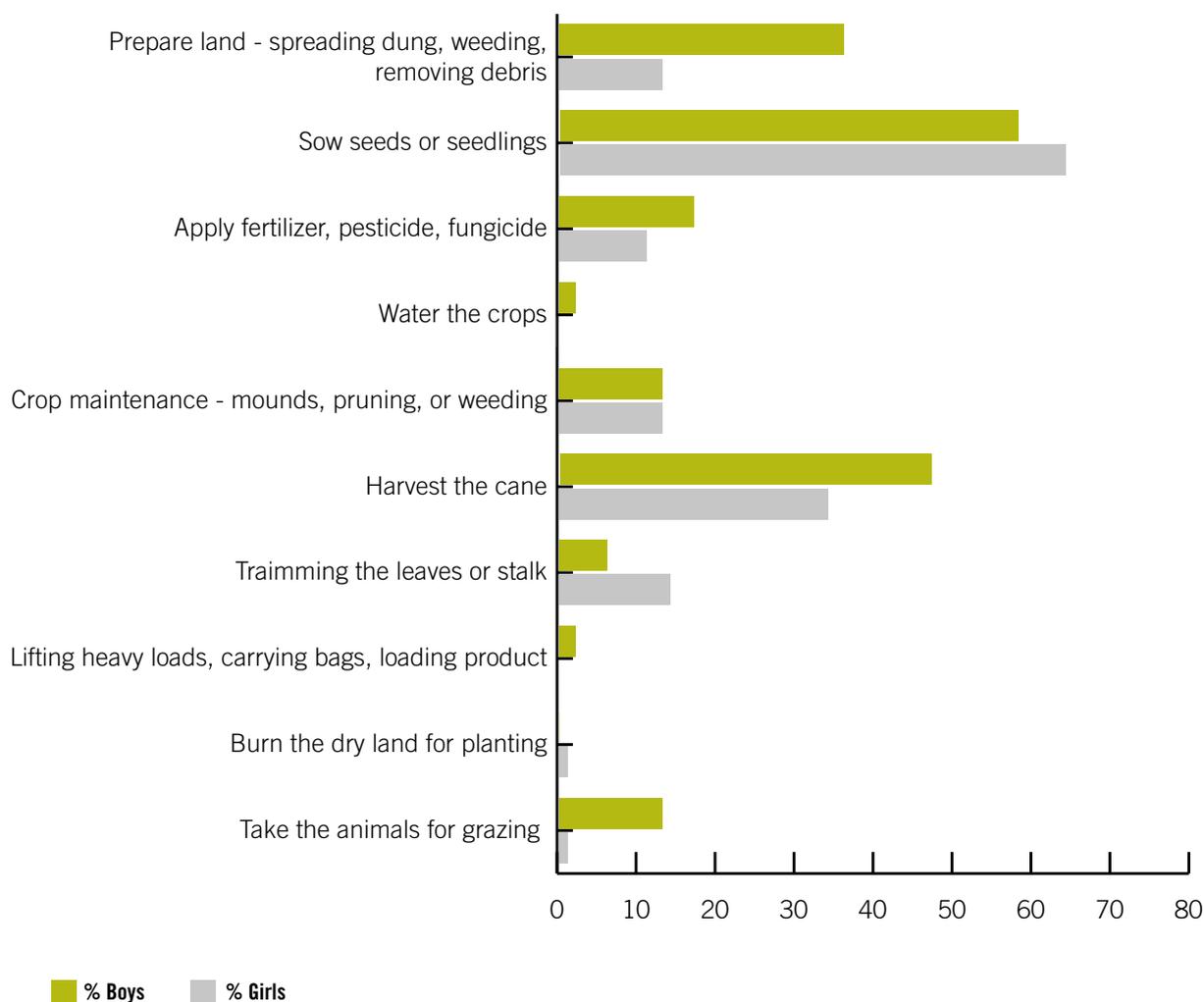
**Figure 35: Activities done in the past year by children in sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**



**Figure 36: Activities carried by children in the past year, total number of children by sex, Aung Lan Township**



**Figure 37: Main activity in sugarcane cultivation and production during reference year, percentage within sex, Aung Lan Township**

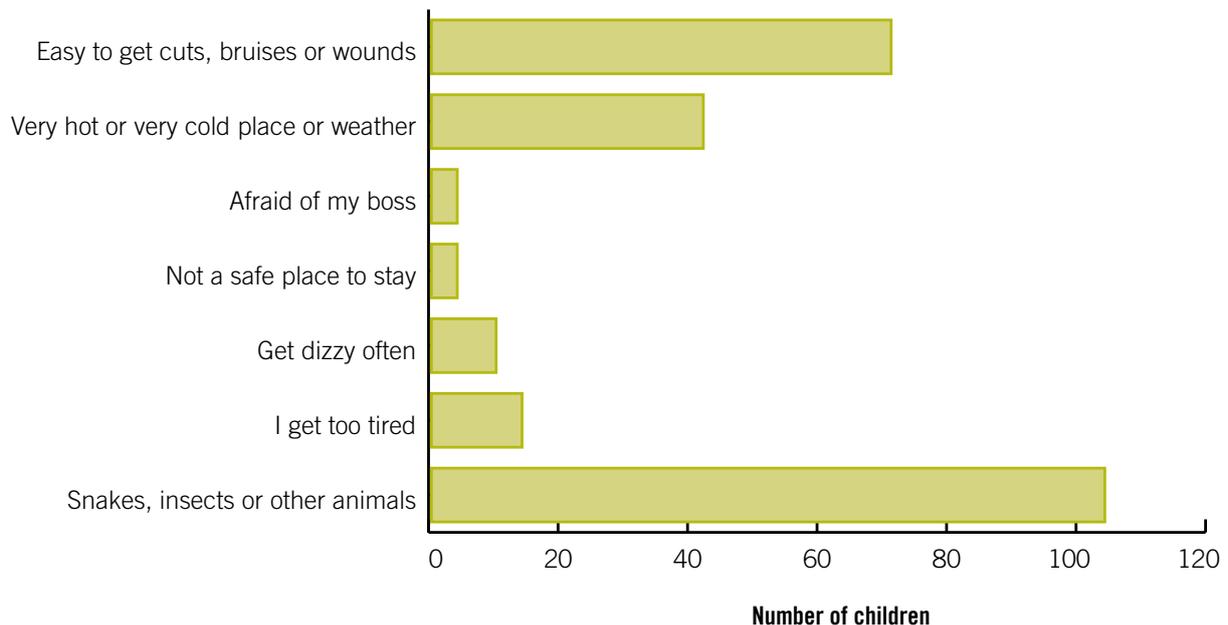


Though there is a division of labour by sex, it is not universal. Boys do more harvest than girls and are more likely to handle the grazing of work animals. Girls tend to do more sowing and crop maintenance. Overall, boys do a greater variety of work activities, on the whole, than girls, as captured by the survey, however, when expanding to household chores, girls engage in a scope of activities on par with boys.

For rural, agriculture households, there is often not a clear line between economic activities and household chores. In Aung Lan, 17% of children reported that household chore burden was the main reason for not attending school

in the previous year. Responsibilities at home are having an impact on children's health and well-being. Most children in Aung Lan regularly carry water, collect firewood, sweep, cook, shop at the market, wash dishes and take care of siblings on a regular basis. Carrying water takes up a large percentage of a child's time and depends on the distance to the water source and the amount of water carried, this can be a hazardous activity for children. It entails encountering strangers along the road, sometimes collecting water after dark, and always the carrying of heavy loads. Some children in Aung Lan had bicycles and could ride back-and-forth for water collection, but

**Figure 38: Main danger of their work as reported by children in sugarcane by frequency of response, Aung Lan Township**



researchers observed many young children along the roads and paths carrying double-balanced sets of water buckets. On non-school days, children report spending between one and three hours, some over three hours, on household work, not including sibling care.

## Hazards to encountered by children in sugarcane

Seventy-eight percent are aware that their work is dangerous. In sugarcane this notably increased with the age of the child. The main fear (91%) is snakes, animals and insects. In sugarcane more children reported being afraid of their bosses or supervisors. Because more children in sugarcane work for non-family landowners, there is a different relationship between grower and child worker than in a household setting. Though not working for a parent, children work for individuals or families considered members of their communities. They are not working for large plantation or corporate producers. So, children have an

ongoing relationship and network ties to their supervisors.

The extent of that fear alone has the potential to negatively affect a child’s well-being. This study did not attempt to measure the level of emotional burden carried by such work. Being afraid to go to work regularly, fearing on the way to the fields and worrying about the possibilities of an injury or a snake bite to yourself or another worker can be stressful and provoke anxiety.

Most children are afraid of encountering snakes during their work and on the way to-and-from the worksites. In a conversation with the government township administrator, he confirmed that children’s fear is well-founded. Poisonous snakes do inhabit the area and are commonly seen in the agricultural plots, including sugarcane.

Girl workers reported harassment on the way to and from work. The survey did not specifically ask about the transportation to and from the worksite, but through the questioning and in

post-survey conversations, several children reported to researchers. Some children travel quite a distance on their bikes or walked. Adolescent girls report sexual harassment on the way and in the fields (ie: masturbators, catcallers or flashers).

**Figure 39: Exposure to hazards, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Type of hazard	Sugarcane
Insects	66%
Snakes	70%
Other animals	18%
Dirty water	60%
Really hot temperatures	92%
Really cold temperatures	80%
Strong winds or heavy rains	66%
Long hours in the sun	84%
Burning – field fire or fire for other purposes	42%
Carrying heavy loads	43%
Slipping or falling down	69%
Lots of dust	74%
Spreading or spraying fertilizer	63%
Spreading or spraying pesticide	22%

All the children in sugarcane reported exposure to hazards, as shown in **Figure 39**. While working in sugarcane cultivation, children are exposed to, at times, severe working conditions including sun, rain and winds. Children work across all seasons. Of course, using pesticides, or possibly even fertilizers is always a hazard. Twenty-two percent of working children 22% handle and spray such substances. Children also report the commonplace work of burning portion of the field or burning trimming, often unsupervised.

In conversation, several children told us that it was not uncommon to sleep in the field without

supervision from an adult, especially during planting and harvesting when work may begin very early in the morning and finish after dusk. Working in hot, sunny conditions and during heavy downpours was not uncommon, though most children did tend to work in the cooler hours of each day. There can be quite a bit of dust amongst the cane reeds, heightened during controlled burns and land preparation cycles.

**Figure 40: Tools and equipment used by children in sugarcane**

Tool or equipment	Number of working children	% of children in sugarcane used within the past year
A hammer to other heavy tool to beat	1	1%
Tractor **	1	1%
A sickle, knife or machete **	106	75%
A shovel	56	40%
A hoe	48	34%
A spear (catching fish or frogs) **	3	2%
Other machine or equipment	7	4%
None	12	9%
Other machine **	8	6%
Other equipment	46	32%
None	17	12%

\*\* - denotes a tool which is considered dangerous.

Most children regularly used some types of sickle, knife or machete for thrashing the cane, trimming the leaves and even weeding the plots. Sugarcane workers keep sickles quite sharp. Shovels and hoes are general very simple steel instruments used to punch holes into the soil or to drag along the soil's surface to create grooves. They tend to be sharp along the edges, but have to be used, on occasion, with a fair amount of force in order to be effective as the cane is woody.

**Figure 41:** Type of sickle used by most children in the sugarcane fields – about 12-14 inches in length



© ILO Photo / Yangon Office

Some children continued to or had worked with a pressing machine in the market producing sugarcane juice for local consumption. The sugar cane pressing machine that works of the force generated from wheels and cogs is dangerous.

**Figure 42:** Children commonly work in market-based cane juice pressing



© ILO Photo / Yangon Office

Children reported having succumbed to the following injuries in the course of their work in the sugarcane cultivation and harvest:

**Figure 43: Injuries reported by children working in sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Body part	No. of children	Types of injuries
Injury to head/neck/face	6	most were scrapes and bruises but one was the result of a fall which led to a serious and ongoing injury
Hand/wrist and arm	63	scrape, cut or puncture wound, at least one broken bone in the past year and one case of serious burn
Leg, foot or ankle	41	scrapes, cuts or punctures, a couple of bumps, one broken bone

**Figure 44: Activities during which injuries occurred, sugarcane, Aung Lan Township**

Sugarcane-related cultivation or processing activity	% of injuries reported
Preparing land – spreading dung, weeding removing debris	14%
Sowing seeds, planting	3%
Crop maintenance – building mounds, pruning, weeding	3%
Harvesting the sugarcane	42%
Cutting backs the leaves on the cane	25%
Lifting heavy loads, transporting goods	1%
Burning or maintaining fire	2%
Other	15%

Outstandingly, injuries occur during harvest and cutting back the cane and leaves. Many children received cuts and scrapes came while penetrating the dense sugarcane plots often with a machete or steel sickle. In sugarcane cultivation those tasks involving steel equipment, including land preparation are more likely to be injury-inducing. Only some children worked directly on burning the fields or debris. In addition to the harmful inhalation, a serious injury could happen in the event control of the burn is lost. Medical facilities are not generally equipped to handle such incidents.

### Hazard mitigation

Most children wore only the most basic protective clothes and gear during work in the fields. Most children (97%) tended to wear long-sleeved shirts over short-sleeved and hats (91%) to protect themselves from the sun. Both boys and girls generally wear sarongs (*htamin/paso*) and open-toed, slip-on sandals (*paneq*). Four percent of children wear “shoes” and 31% commonly wear boots. Eleven percent of children also wear a face scarf. Apparently this is for the reduction of dust and insect inhalation as opposed to protecting oneself during pesticide and fertilizer application.

By regularly wearing durable boots, children could reduce the number of scrapes, cuts and bruises to their feet and ankles. Additionally, boots may help to protect against snakes bites in the field. Wearing gloves could certainly work to reduce the incidence of surface wounds and cuts on the hands and wrists, all very common.

## Working hours and working arrangements

In Aung Lan, children more often worked for supervisor who are not family members. The difference in this relationship may be significant in children’s opportunity to negotiate for the better working conditions including flexible schedules for attending school or other educational programs. Children can lose their jobs and fear the impact that this could have on their families.

**Figure 45: Supervisors of children working in sugarcane**

Supervisor	
Other child	1%
Sibling	13%
Parent	33%
Other adult	50%
Nobody	4%
DK/Refused	0%

In Aung Lan, and possibly in sugarcane growing areas across the country, more children work outside the home as wage labourers than in the other sub-sectors included in the study. Eighty-nine percent of children worked outside of the family/home to get money. 95% of the children work more than three hours per day. Even young children worked in sugarcane for more than three hours a day in peak season and on non-school days.

Payment is generally structured by the “half day.” This means either waking up early and starting at dawn until the heat sets in or starting in the late afternoon as the heat subsides and into last light or by the “whole

day” which includes both working periods. 84% earn between 1400 MMK (1.16 USD) and 2000 MMK (1.67 USD) per “half day” work period. A small percentage (8%) earns as much as 3000 MMK (2.50 USD) per whole day. Children that reported working “half-day” make half of the wages that a “whole day” worker makes. Half day ranges from three to five hours of work, not included the time needed to travel to the worksite. Adult labour in the area is structured similarly.

Not surprisingly, the wages tend to increase with age, with older children making 2000 to 3000 MMK per day and younger children making 1500 MMK per day. Though the difference is not a sharp increase, just slight. For 14 and 15 year old, the wages are generally the same as they are for 16 and 17 year olds. There is a difference across sex. Girls tend to hit a daily ceiling of 2000 MMK per day, while boys are more likely than girls to get the higher wages of 3000 MMK per day. Only 8 girls earned over 2000 MMK per day, while 20 boys earned 3000 MMK or more per day for their work. And, in the sample, there are more girls working in sugarcane than boys.

In conversation local landowners and leaders justified difference in pay between boys and girls. Some children agreed that difference is warranted while others opposed these differences with several older girls expressing their willingness and ability to handle any task their male peers undertook. Though girls and boys often do the same tasks, there is divergence. Girls tend to raise cuttings for transplant, transplant the cuttings, and then provide ongoing maintenance to the crop. In processing of candy girls cut the candy slab and do the packaging. Boys more often thresh the field during harvest, remove the leaves, and carry to the transport. In candy production the boys tend to work at the fire place overnight.

All of the children report receiving cash for the work they do outside of the family unit. Some also occasionally get food support or products from the land. For those receiving cash, 63% collect the cash payment themselves, while for 37% of the child workers, the cash is passed from the employers directly to the parents or guardian. Though younger children are less likely to receive the cash directly, it remains the case across all age groups that parents continue to have control over wages as represented by being the direct recipient of the cash salaries. Aung Lan children almost exclusively (98%) gave all of their earnings directly to parents, keeping none for their own personal savings or expenditures.





## Findings: Beans and pulses<sup>51</sup>

Beans and pulses is the second largest agricultural export product after rice with Green and Black Gram varieties as the country's two most valuable pulse exports. According to the Myanmar Beans, Pulses and Sesame Seed Association a total of 4.5 million hectares of land was sown with beans and pulses, producing 5.4 million tons of product, of which about 1.5 million tons was exported in 2011/12 fiscal year.<sup>52</sup> Over half of all exports head to India for consumption. Most pass through the Bayintaung Commodities Exchange in Yangon, where prices are established and export companies strike deals with international buyers.

Green gram has historically been cultivated more in Lower Myanmar – Bago and Ayeyarwady Regions, but recently extended to Upper Myanmar where it has grown in popularity. Pigeon Pea is also widely grown in Upper Myanmar including the study area. There are at least seventeen varieties of beans and pulses cultivated across the country. The central region of the country often referred to as the “dry zone” is the source of most of the country's beans and pulses. Farmers capture residual moisture at the close of the monsoon season or at the end of a rice harvest to spur the initial stages of cultivation. Most beans are grown by small land holders, just one to two

51 Note on definitions: Beans and Pulses – There is not a broadly accepted definition of all the products which constitute “beans and pulses.” As such, we included all types of beans, seeds and nuts cultivated in a shared geographic area. For practicality, all products included are those referred to in Myanmar as “*Be myo myo*.” This translates as “all variety of beans” and includes peanuts, garam, lentils, mung, sesame and others.

52 Author Interview with Vice President of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seed Association, January 12, 2015.

hectare plots, and cultivation and products remain largely un-mechanized, all stages being done by hand and with the assistance of bullocks.<sup>53</sup> One agronomist described the process as “not very intensive. Farmers sow the seeds, don’t generally weed or fertilize, then come back to harvest.”<sup>54</sup> Drying and initial round of quality sorting takes place on site by family members.

There is generally little additional processing apart from the drying and sorting of raw beans. There has been little government or private investment in the production process. Once harvested and sorted at the village, local market traders either buy beans and pulses or farmers manage to move their own products to the town and sell to a broker there. The product eventually is purchased by privately-owned export companies.<sup>55</sup> Interestingly, despite the size of the market, beans and pulses are not a part of the Government of The Union of Myanmar’s recent drive for increase agribusiness ventures in the country.

Profits in the pulse industry suffer from weak transportation networks and limited communications infrastructure in many of the bean growing areas. Negotiation generally takes place between producers and brokers for the sale and price. Sometimes, there are multiple brokers, decreasing the revenues seen by the grower. Because transportation links are weak, small producers find it difficult to operate without a well-connected broker because the costs of transporting smaller quantities outweighs and financial benefits. Farmers also fall into a cycle of debt. Many beans growers also cultivate paddy rice. Because there are more financial services from government banks for paddy production than bean cultivation,

farmers report that the paddy production can drive the borrowing and in a good year, pulse revenue can help the household climb from the pit of debt.

## Data collection: Household and child survey

**Study Area:** Pakokku Township, Magway Region

**Population:** 289,650 Male – 130,767 and Female – 158,883

The townships in Magway are cultivated mostly by small-holders. Cultivation techniques are non-mechanized and there is limited processing. Pakokku is an area known to be poor and with higher rates of HIV infection than other parts of the country. It is also well-known for civil disobedience amongst the high number of monks living in the Pakokku City.<sup>56</sup> The villages around Pakokku are larger than in other study sites. Villages have as many as 500 households which tend to be more densely situated. Homes are generally made of bamboo and wood, though some residents have begun to add concrete sections to the home. House compounds are spacious and surrounded by bamboo fences as cows, pigs, goats and other domestic animals live in the compound. The open space is used for drying pulse products. Water for household use and irrigation is a serious concern in the region. During the hot months shortage is always imminent and household members expend valuable energy thinking about and seeking out water. Despite the importance of pulses as an export crop, security for bean farmers is not guaranteed. According a World Food Program assessment, in the township of Pakokku, a main bean growing area and the site of this

53 Taking the Pulse of Burma’s Bean Business, Simon Roughneen; The Irrawaddy, Thursday August 29, 2013. DLDED at <http://www.irrawaddy.org/trade/taking-the-pulse-of-burmas-bean-business.html> on January 5, 2014.

54 Author interview with agronomist of the Food and Agriculture Organization in Yangon, March 2015.

55 Author Interview with Vice President of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seed Association, January 12, 2015.

56 The 2007 monk-led uprising which has come to be known as the “Saffron Revolution,” Myanmar’s largest people’s protest since 1998, was ostensibly set off by monks in Pakokku who refused to accept alms from members of Myanmar’s military. The incidence is well documented in journalistic coverage.

research study, almost 40% of the population was considered “severely food insecure” and another 24% “moderately food insecure.”<sup>57</sup>

The cultivation season is relatively short, just three to four months. Once the rain subsides or paddy is harvested, farmers use cows or buffalo to plow fields. They use a scatter methods for sowing seeds which is lower in yield than other more directed methods, but avoids expenditure in additional human resources. Farmers report that government intervention and coercion in paddy plantation in the area translates into little choice for them to add additional bean crops that are amendable to other seasonal conditions.

The beans and pulse value chain is short and quite linear. There is no value-added process apart from simple sorting and cleaning of the dried beans and seeds. Once dried beans move to the regional markets and national market, children are porters and shop workers, though this appears to be a factor of the conditions of the specific market and will apply generally to other products also sold there. In Pakokku town market where bags of beans are transferred from regional brokers to national brokers, researchers did not encounter children doing this work, rather, in shops selling beans for local consumption, children carried about basic shopkeeping tasks.

## Households in villages that cultivate beans and pulses

**Figure 46:** Household sample, beans and pulses, Pakokku Township

Households	Beans and pulses
Target	110
Control	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>

Households in the sample are a mean size of 5.63 members, the largest average size of the three agricultural sub-sector study areas. Male household members were equal in number to female household members. Though most of the household reported having 4 or 5 members, almost a quarter of the households had eight members or more. Compared to Aung Lan, the sugarcane growing area also in Magway Region, households in Pakokku are quite large. Half of all household members are adults of working age (18 to 55 years old). And, 7.7 % of family members are above age 55. This is the highest percent of over-fifty-five across the three sub-sectors study areas. This means that “dependents” are roughly half of the total members of the sample households.

Given that the survey did not employ a probabilistic representative sample of the sub-sectors/areas (including township), it is important to note that statements about Pakokku township refer only to the areas of the township where the survey was conducted.

### Migration

Eleven percent of households had at least one members who was away from home, either nationally, or internationally, for the purpose of wage labour. Of those migrants,

57 World Food Program, “Food Security Assessment in the Dry Zone Myanmar,” February 2011.

one individual was under the age of eighteen, the majority (83.3%) were aged between 18 and 30 years old. Exactly half of the migrants were male. During the data collection period, several women reported that a demographic shift seems to be taking place in their villages. Young men are migrating increasingly for construction work in cities and towns and children and women are taking up types of work previously carried out predominantly by the men. Though not specifically included in the study, several women mentioned the task of climbing to the top of the palm trees to collect the palm fruit which has a variety of uses including feed for work animals. Members of the community believed this work to be quite dangerous and with the young men leaving are not certain how to handle its execution going forward. Though the empirical data gathered in Pakokku captures just a moment in time and not a changing trend, it cannot disprove nor prove the observation of community members. Though, half of reported migrant workers were women.

### Economic situation – Debt and land tenure

86% of households in the survey report holding debt. Farmers in Pakokku have the highest household level of debt of the three sub-sector study areas. Many families are carrying between \$400 and \$500 worth of debt, possibly from harvest cycle to cycle.

**Figure 47: Household debt, beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
<b>Myanmar Kyats</b>	576446	500000	20000	2000000
<b>US Dollar (1200 MMK/USD)</b>	\$480	\$416	\$17	\$1666

**Figure 48: Reason for household debt, beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

Reason for household debt	% of HH's
Buy or renovate a house	3%
To expand or maintain family business	57%
To purchase equipment for business	30%
To pay off another debt	64%
Other – wedding, funeral, health issue	8%

Much of the money owed by farmers in bean growing areas is due to borrowing for loan repayment. In Pakokku and other areas in Myanmar’s agricultural heartlands government banks and ministries regular lend to farmers at the opening of the growing season in order to support the purchase of necessary inputs. Fluctuations in the market then affect repayment. Other forms of borrowing may have undesirable terms of repayment.

**Figure 49: Land tenure situation, Pakokku Township**

Land tenure	% of HH's
Own	51%
Rent	37%
No clear owner – “the land that we work”	12%

Farmers in Pakokku have more stable land tenure than those in Aung Lan, also in Magway Region. This may contribute to their higher rate of debt, given more valuable collateral. Half reported to own their land, a tangible asset. With only 12% working land considered precarious with no clear title or use rights.

## Children working in the cultivation of beans and pulses

**Figure 50: Composition of the child respondents, beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

Age	# of children in sample
7-12 years	59
13-15 years	99
16-17 years	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>

The sample is comprised of 56% boys (122 boys) 44% girls (96 girls). Most of the children are thirteen years of age or older.

Sixty-three percent (137) of children interviewed report being involved in the main economic activities of their household – beans and pulses. As in the other sub-sectors, the nineteen of the thirty children from “control” group perform regular economic activities related to legumes cultivation, so they are included in the data below unless otherwise noted.

**Figure 51: Reason for working in beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

Reasons for working in beans and pulses	% of children, multiple possible
My parents or guardian said that I should	4%
To help my family	96%
I am strong	0%
I am not good in school	2%
To learn how to do this type of work	2%
To get my school fees	1%
To get school fees for a sibling	2%
To pay family debt	30%
To buy clothes and food for myself	4%
I like to work/I want to stand on my own feet	1%
Other reason	9%

## Interference with children’s schooling in beans and pulses villages

For children in Pakokku, the school day generally lasts five to six hours. As in other areas, some children report that school lasts longer than 6 hours per school day. In Pakokku, 68% of the students attend afterschool tutoring in addition to regular school sessions. This was highest rate of attendance such additional lessons across the three sub-sector study areas. This can be a significant out-of-pocket costs for households signally possible a higher perceived return on investments for family’s or otherwise more active cash flow.

During the reference period, the majority of children were attending school at the time of survey conduction. Fourteen percent of children had left school early. Most students reported “missing” days of school either “never” or “sometimes.” When asked to be more specific, children reported missing about one to two days of school per month of the academic year (1.26 days mean). As in other study areas, children were absent from school due to health concerns or illness, which of course may be related to their work in agriculture, but that connection was not isolated in this study.

**Figure 52: Reason for missing school, beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

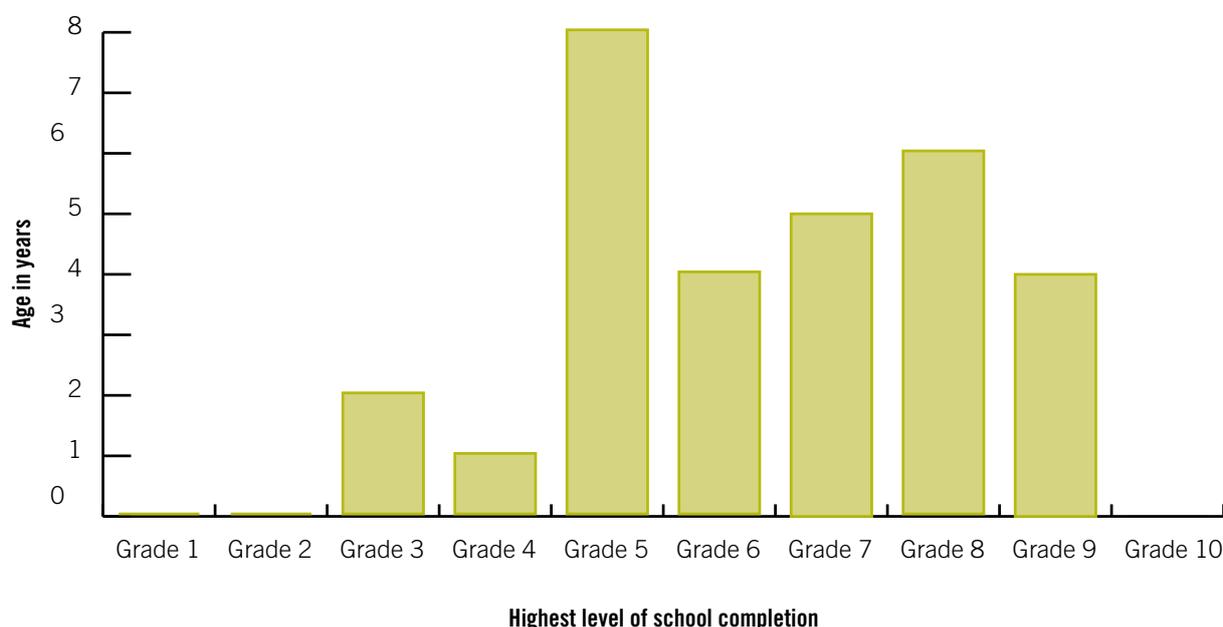
Reasons for missing school	% of children
Household chores	1%
Working for money or in family business	3%
Illness/Health/Injury	94%
Family emergency	0%
Other	1%
Don't know	1%

Fourteen percent of children left school prematurely. This means that 14% of the children that had been interviewed had either not enrolled in the previous school year or had stopped going to school during the school cycle. As was the case in other study areas, the peak period for children to be pushed out of the school system is at the transition between primary and secondary school, after grade five. Although for children in the area, despite the transition year being a pinnacle of push out, there is a steady year-to-year decrease in school adherence. In this case, schools

may be located nearby the homes villages or families were able to handle the additional cost of sending children to distant schools, more regularly than in other areas, where there is a sharp decline in school adherence after Grade 5. In communities where schools are located nearby, children tend to be pushed out of their schooling from year-to-year with a less dramatic break than villages with distant secondary schools.

For children in the cultivation and production of legumes, working for family business was by far the driving factor, as he or she saw it, in their having left school before having completed secondary schooling. Though the rate of being pushed out of the schooling system is lower in Pakokku, the drive to work for family business, beans and pulses, was the key driver. **Figure 54** confirms that both “distance” and “high cost” are not the most influential factors for the divergence from schooling. More children report being uninterested in school than report thinking that school were too high for their families to manage. Costs of schooling are important considerations in Myanmar, as has been shown

**Figure 53: Highest level of school completion, beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**



by significant research, however, to make a great impact in the reduction of child labour rates and the associated hazards, children need to face with educational options that are stimulating to them while parents learn to discourage children from dangerous activities.

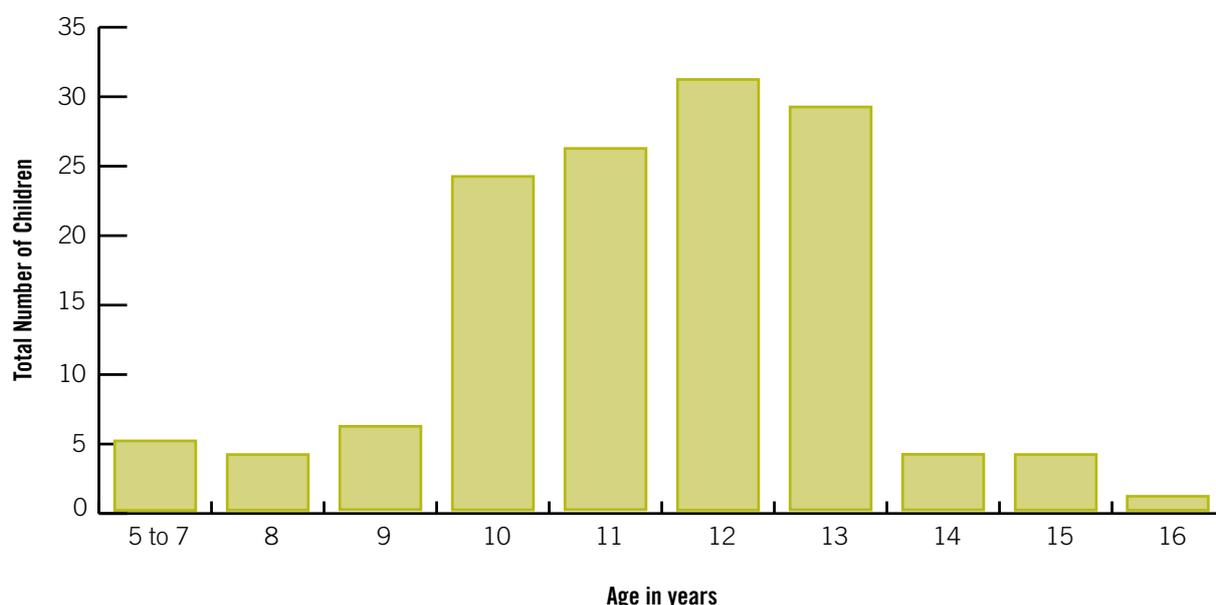
**Figure 54: Reason for leaving school, beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

Reasons for leaving school	% of children, multiple possible
Parents forbid	10%
High cost	29%
Distance	6%
Household workload	6%
Not interested or bored	32%
Perceived lack of intelligence	10%
Missed past grades	0%
Working for money or in family business	74%
Illness/Health	0%
Family emergency	6%

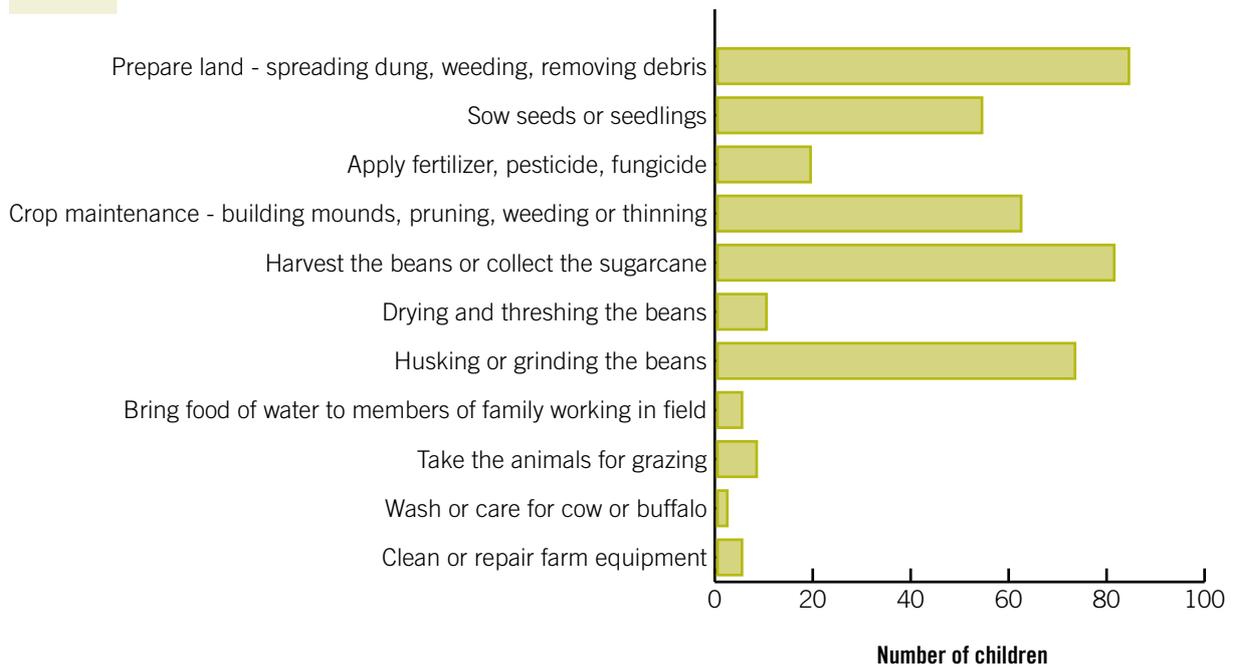
For child workers in the beans and pulses sub-sector uptake of economic activities dramatically increases at age ten. Between ten and thirteen years old, most of the child workers will start with their activities. So, these few years are pivotal for future interventions. Though children’s engagement with schooling more steadily declines than in other sub-sectors, the children start working in cultivation with a dramatic increase at age ten. Once children start working in agriculture they do not necessarily stop their schooling.

Children who work with beans and pulses handle tasks across the fairly brief growing cycle. **Figure 56** shows the scope of direct economic activities, which reflects the processes described by agronomist prior to survey collection – simple land preparation and simple harvest. There is limited regular upkeep during the growing cycle. Some children also handle sorting, husking or grinding beans after harvest is complete. There was little processing after harvest apart from drying and packing in simple rice bags or baskets for transport to market. Compared to other agricultural

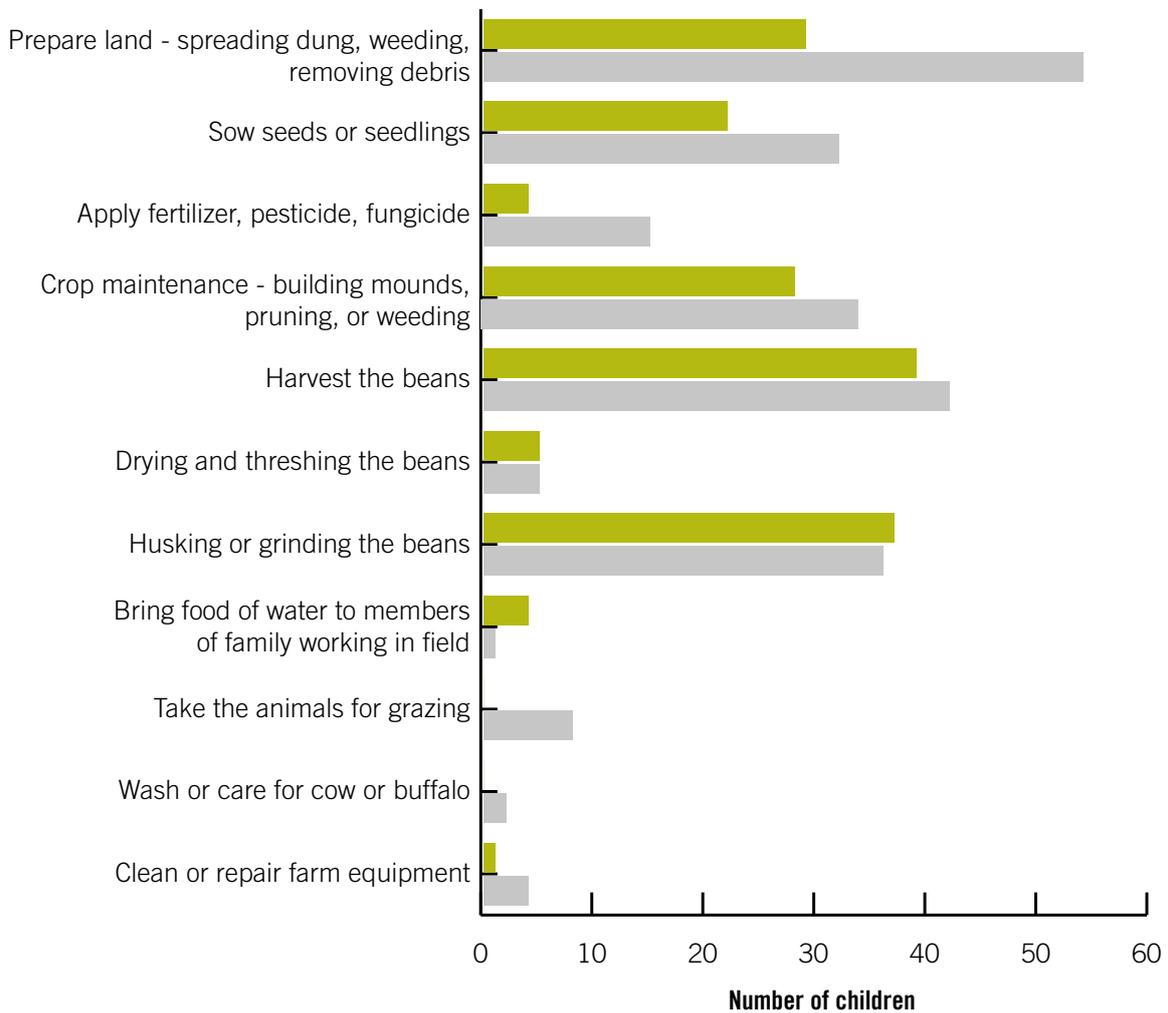
**Figure 55: Age of entry into bean and pulse cultivation, Pakokku Township**



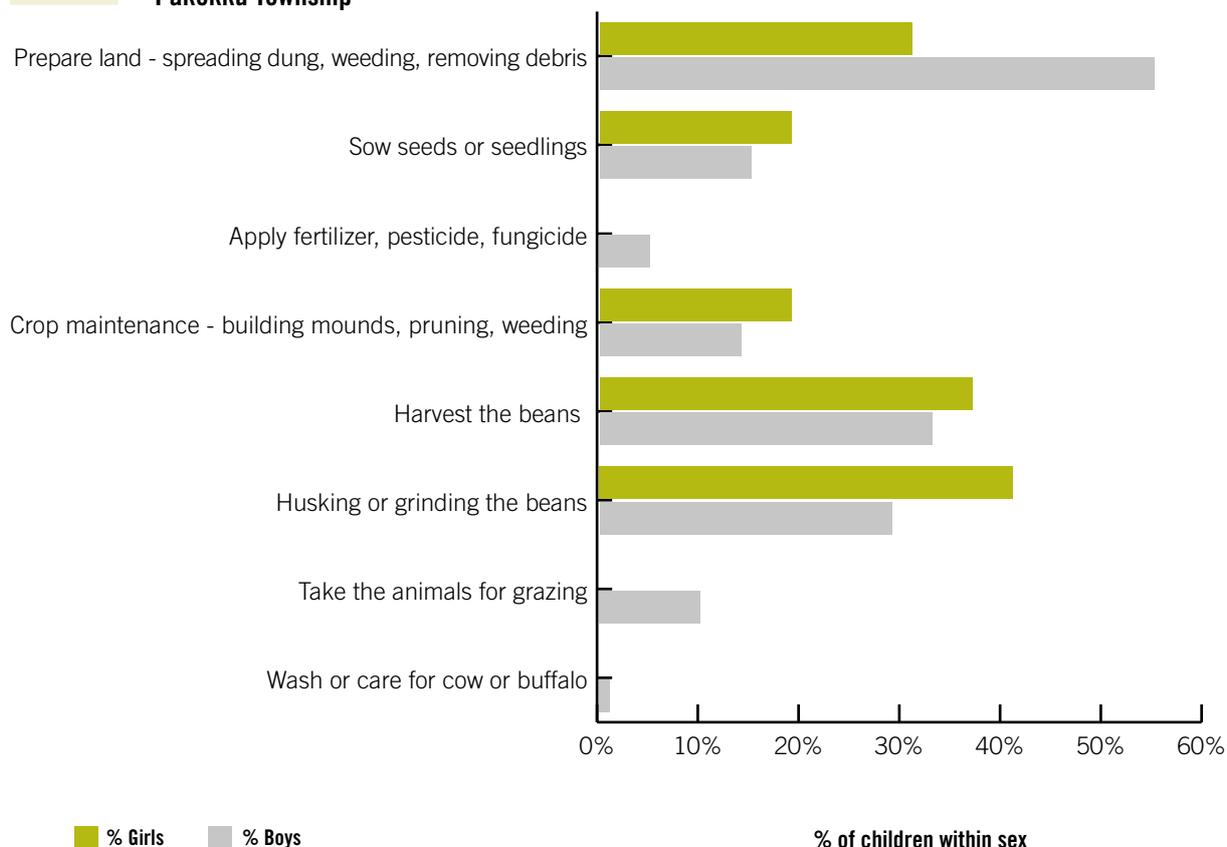
**Figure 56: Activities carried out by children in beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**



**Figure 57: Activities carried out by children in the past year in beans and pulse production, total number of children by sex, Pakokku Township**



**Figure 58: Main activity carried out in reference year in beans and pulses production, % within sex, Pakokku Township**



products, the labour demand is limited and the growing season short.

Almost all of the activities related directly to the cultivation and processing of beans and pulses are handled by both boys and girls. As shown in **Figure 58** girls do more of the harvesting and drying while boys tend to do land preparation. Sorting and husking is usually completed at the household compound, so girls may be limited in their movement and more likely to work at home than in the fields which are outside of the village.

**Figure 59: Local beans and pulses at the town market**



**Figure 60: Children dice palm fruit to feed working cows, Pakokku Township**



Most of the children in pulses growing communities did up to two hours of household chores per day. Children regularly fetch water for the household, cook meals, take care of siblings, wash clothes and dishes, and go to the market. During data collection lead researchers found that children who engaged in certain type of work, though related to pulse cultivation did not necessarily identify as “being involved” in that sub-sector. In one case, two small girls were chopping palm fruit to feed the cow after it return to the home compound after having plowed the field for sowing. For many families whose key source of income is beans and pulses, many tasks in the household and outside of it revolve around the business.

### Hazards encountered by children working in beans and pulses

51% of children working in legumes see their work as “dangerous.” This is a lower proportion than in the other two sub-sectors of this study. Children who work with pulses sometimes engage in other economic activities at times of the year when pulses are not under active cultivation. Several girls reported to work as seamstresses, weaver and in selling *Thanaka*<sup>58</sup> wood. Both boys and girls help with rice sowing and harvest in areas where rice is grown. Though, certainly some of the children, perhaps more so those that are not driven out of education by demands of their workforce

58 *Thanaka* is a locally-grown wood product closely-related to sandalwood. In Myanmar it is a popular cosmetic and medicinal product which can be found in markets across the country, but is largely grown in the central Dry Zone.

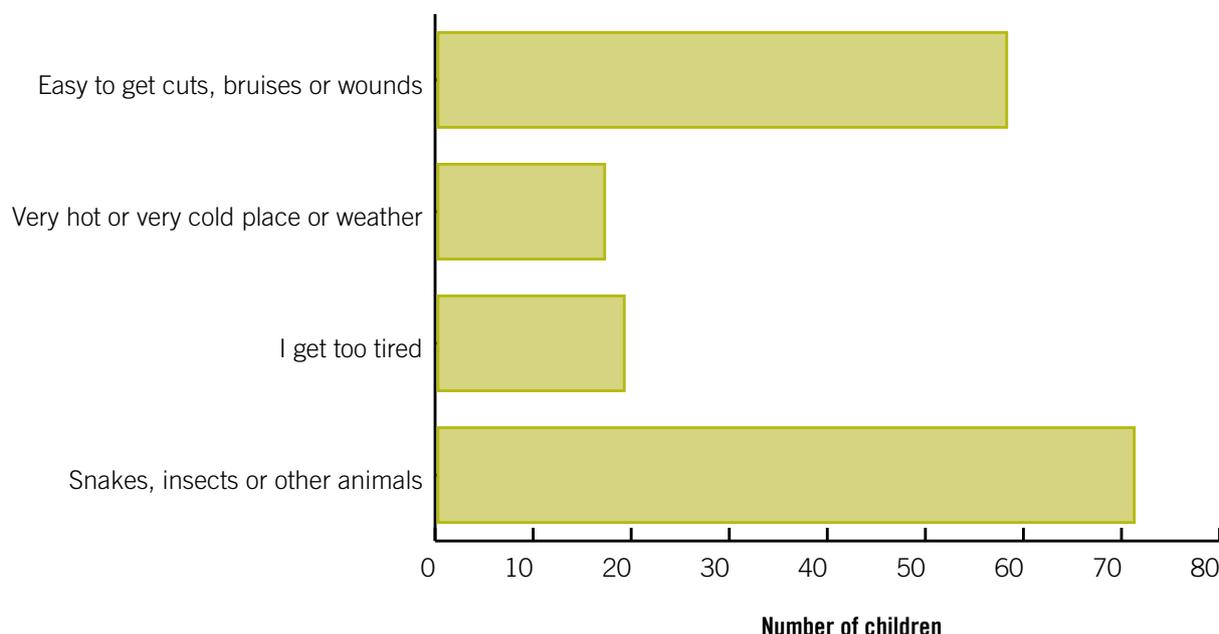
participation, help family throughout the pulse season. Much of the work takes place during the hot season when school is not in session. Ongoing work throughout the year includes caring for work animals, repacking beans, carrying for seeds and ongoing land management.

As in other areas, children primary concern is snakes, animals and insects. Ninety-seven percent of the children are most afraid of one of those three. Children also were afraid to get skin wounds, especially out in the dusty sandy conditions of the dry fields. Generally they are not afraid of supervisor or other adults involved in the industry.

**Figure 62: Children’s exposure to hazards in the last year, beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

Exposure to hazards	% of working children exposed
Insects	65%
Snakes	74%
Other animals	36%
Dirty water	38%
Really hot Temperatures	85%
Really cold temperatures	83%
Strong winds or heavy rains	15%
Long hours in the sun	61%
Burning – field fire or fire for other purposes	17%
Carrying heavy loads	27%
Slipping or falling down	39%
Lots of dust	44%
Spreading or spraying fertilizer	20%
Spreading or spraying pesticide	11%

**Figure 61: Children’s main fear in beans and pulse work, Pakokku Township**



All children working in beans and pulses encountered hazards. Children working in pulses regular report exposure differs somewhat from their concerns over dangers. Children regularly encounter very hot weather, lots of dust and fires or burning of agricultural matter. And, at least 11% of them work with pesticides. The planting and harvesting times are during a height in heat when temperatures get above 40C. Children reported working for at least 3 hours a day on a regular basis, though the total hours will generally be reduced on the hottest days of the year. This can be very dangerous especially for young children who may not notice the signs of dehydration. For all children, particularly given local water shortage, dehydration is a real risk as is sunstroke and, even with an adult present, reaching a medical facility may be slow, especially if out in the field with a bullock cart. During the reference period, there was active flooding in many of the villages and stagnant water was present along with mosquitos.

**Figure 63: Tools and equipment used by children in the cultivation of beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

Tool or equipment	Number of working children	% of children in sugarcane used within the past year
An axe **	1	1%
Tractor **	1	1%
A sickle, knife or machete **	65	47%
A shovel	79	58%
A hoe	26	19%
Other machine or equipment	37	27%
None	5	4%
None	12	9%
Other machine **	8	6%
Other equipment	46	32%
None	17	12%

\*\* - denotes a tool which is considered dangerous.

In addition to the equipment noted in **Figure 63** children mentioned using scissors, rope, buckets, slingshots, scales and weights. The knife that children use is heavy and fairly well-sharpened. It can be used for cutting stalks, trimming weeds, hacking down overgrowth for cow feed, and even digging holes or troughs. Children are injured while using the knife, particularly young children. Carrying it around regularly tucked into one's sarong can lead to simple accidents with serious consequences.

**Figure 64: Commonly used by children in pulses cultivation and harvesting – about 8 to 10 inches with a sharpened edge, Pakokku Township**



© ILO Photo / Yangon Office

Children reported having succumbed to the following injuries in the course of their work with bean and pulse production:

**Figure 65: Injuries reported by children in beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

Body part	No. of children	Types of injuries
Injury to head/neck/face	1	One child in Pakokku reported having received a serious head wound from being hit by another child accidentally during work with the cultivation knife pictured above
Hand/wrist and arm	36	scrapes, cuts or bruises, one reporting some types of twisted wrist joint and one child had been burned
Leg, foot or ankle	25	gotten wounds or bruises on their feet and ankles

**Figure 66: Activity during injury occurrence beans and pulses, Pakokku Township**

Beans or pulse-related cultivation or processing activity	% of injuries
Preparing land – spreading dung, weeding removing debris	26%
Sowing seeds, planting	6%
Crop maintenance – building mounds, pruning, weeding	3%
Harvesting the beans or pulses	23%
Husking or grinding the beans	25%
Burning or maintaining fire	2%
Other	7%

Because of the limited use of equipment and the general environmental conditions during the season, the use of the tool is common to most of the injuries. Children that mentioned activities that were not classed were injured while using a hoe or some type of digger to make holes in the soil.

## Hazard mitigation

Few children wear much in the way of protective clothing or gear while working. Eighty-four percent wore long-sleeved shirts as opposed to a short-sleeved one. Sixty-seven percent work wearing a sarong (*htamin/paso*) while the remaining wear either long or short pants. Most children (70%) work wearing open-toed, slip on sandals (*paneq*), common across Myanmar. Very few, just 3% report ever wearing gloves. 76% commonly wear a sun-reducing hat and 7% will at times wear a face scarf to protect from dust or sun. Simple protective gear including dust masks and gloves could limit exposure to inhalants and minimize common hand injuries. Of course, the extreme weather in Pakokku makes the children vulnerable to heat and sun related incidents as well as flash floods in the monsoon season. There is also risk of lightning strike.

## Work hours and working arrangements

Supervisor	%
Other child	10%
Sibling	3%
Parent	57%
Other adult	30%
Nobody	1%

In addition to their “main” work in the family business, 46% do also work outside of the family unit for earning extra cash. 93% work more than three hours per day “often” or “always” when they are in their work cycle and in this case, commonly on non-school days.

Like Aung Lan, children get paid either by the “whole” or the “half” day. One child reports making as much as 4000 MMK in a day, but most make 2000, some as little as 1000 MMK for a day’s work. Those that reported in the “half” day tended to show more variety in their income. Some as low as 500 MMK for a half day, most at 1500 MMK per half day. Generally when a children reports doing a half day of work, it means either working at dawn until the heat is too intense or working from the late afternoon until its too dark to work. A “half” day could be up to five hours of work.





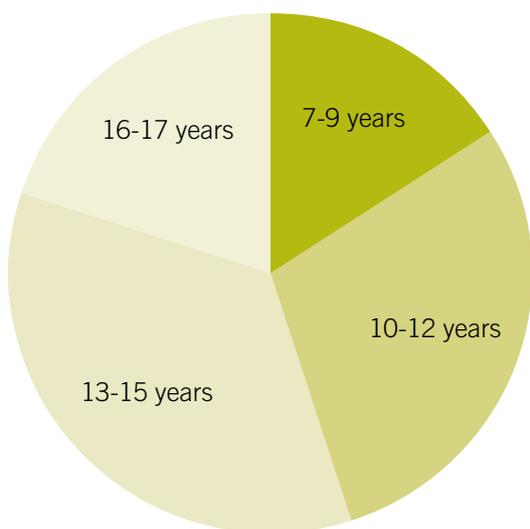
## Key findings: Comparison of three sub- sectors

Exploring similarities and differences across the three sub-sectors facilitates a more generalized understanding of children working in rural villages. The percentage of children interviewed turned out to be even across the three sub-sectors. This was unplanned. However, because the total number of children in each sub-sector is approximately even, some types of comparisons across sector are apt. What is the risk of child labour in agriculture in Myanmar? What underpins choices behind a child's move into the workforce? And, of course, how serious is the risk of injury, psychological impact, loss of education for children in agricultural work?

**Figure 67:** Age breakdown of child respondents across all three sectors and study areas

Age of child respondents	Total	% of child respondents by age
7-9 years	108	16%
10-12 years	192	29%
13-15 years	231	35%
16-17 years	136	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 68: Chart of age breakdown of child respondents across three study areas**



Within each of the three sub-sectors, 63% of the children in the villages worked in the associated sub-sector. Surprisingly, this was consistent across the groups. That each of the sub-sectors was selected with no prior knowledge of the extent of child labour in the sub-sector or study area, this 63% may indicate a larger trend across other types of agricultural work as well. To be clear, this value captures only those children living in rural villages and not those that may have migrated for agricultural work in other parts of the country and be living in a non-family home setting, as demonstrated in the value chain data collection in the inland fisheries sector.

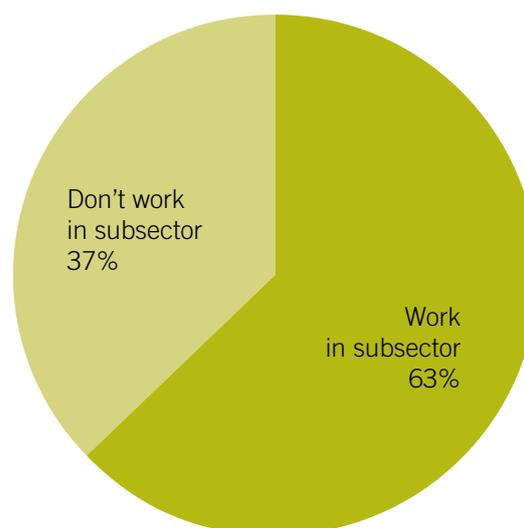
Additionally, the dependency ratios across the households in three sub-sectors were all roughly the same – 50% dependent members. As such, dependency ratios did not stand out as impetus for children to enter the workforce. The study did not explore family structure as a cause. Rather, given the high rates of child labour across all age levels and both sexes, the priority was to understand the extent of child labour and the hazards associated, as it appeared that regardless of what possibly increased likelihood of being pushed into the

workforce based on sibling age, was not of standout relevance given the reality that 63% of children work.

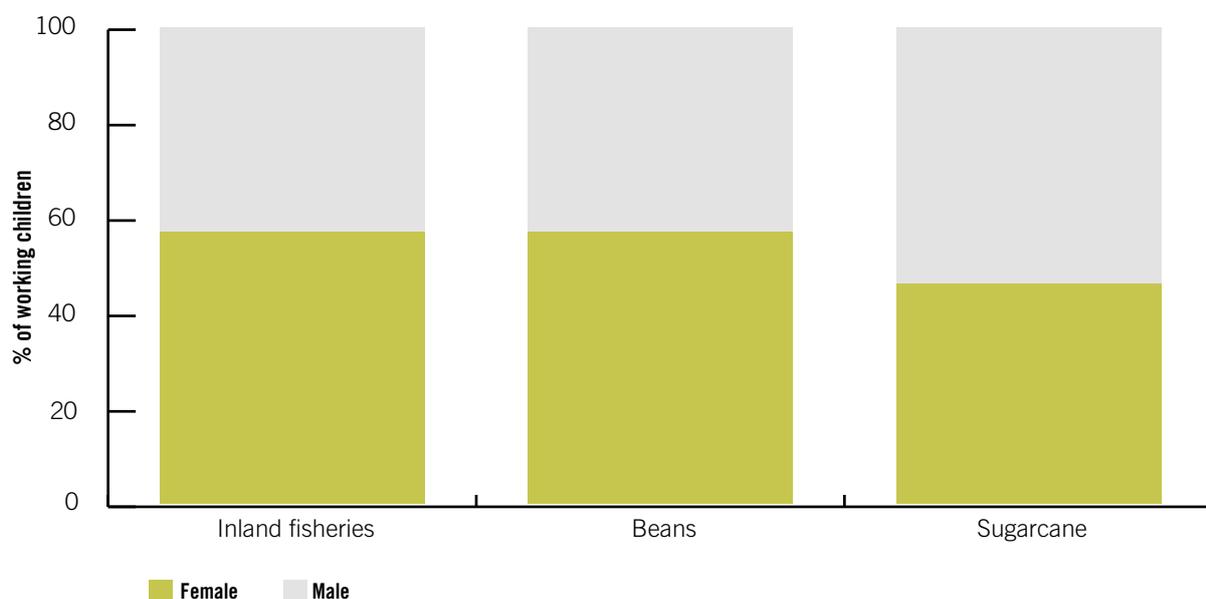
**Figure 69: Proportions of working children by sub-sectors**

	Status of work in the sub-sector			% of children interviewed
	Male	Female	Total	
<b>Beans – working</b>	78	59	137	21%
<b>Sugarcane – working</b>	65	76	141	21%
<b>Inland fisheries – working</b>	81	62	143	21%
<b>Don't work in sub-sector</b>	105	141	246	37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 70: Percent of rural children working in agriculture based on three sub-sectors analyzed**



As shown in **Figure 71** roughly half of the children who regular work in agriculture are girls and half are boys. Though the activities demonstrated a tangible level of division of labour by sex, actually carrying out economic

**Figure 71: Percentage of working children by sex, three sub-sectors**

work related directly to agriculture is not contingent on a child's sex. In Aung Lan, more girls than boys were working directly in the sugarcane, during conversation with these girls there was some indication that many of them lived with their mothers and households were practically "female-headed," with these older girls taking on a huge level of responsibility for generating income and helping their mothers with younger siblings. The conditions that created what appeared to be a concentration of such households were not evident. In Pakokku's bean cultivation, though more boys show up in the data as carrying out beans-related activities, researchers saw girls cutting up cow feed from collected shrubs and fruits, which was not indicted in those girls' survey responses. This is to say, that overall there is no distinct or outstanding preference for boys compared to girls, or for girls over boys, to work in agricultural sector.

## Prevalence

Data on Myanmar's agricultural sector is inadequate to accurately calculate or extrapolate a prevalence of child workers in

an entire sub-sector. There is no agricultural census that estimates the total size of a given sub-sector workforce. Because our household sample is representative in each of the three townships where a single sub-sector is a key product, we can look at the ratio of child workers to adult workers in a sub-sector if we assume that the township represents the sub-sector. So that is, take an adult working, how many children are likely to be working in that township or sub-sector? In other words, what portion of workers in, say, pulses, at the village-level will be child workers? The ratio of children to adult workers in each scenario would be roughly .63. All study areas had a dependency ratio of about half, in which few were elderly members of the household, signaling that the adult, non-dependent, half of the household is of working age and works in the given sub-sector. So, roughly half the population is working age adult and half is children. The total rate of child workers in the sub-sector is uniformly 63% across all sectors. For every adult worker there is .63 children behind that adult at the cultivation and village-level production phase. This is guiding information. It is not statistically rigorous outside of the study areas, but can function as a loose guide

until comprehensive agriculture census is conducted.

## The relationships between schooling and economic activities

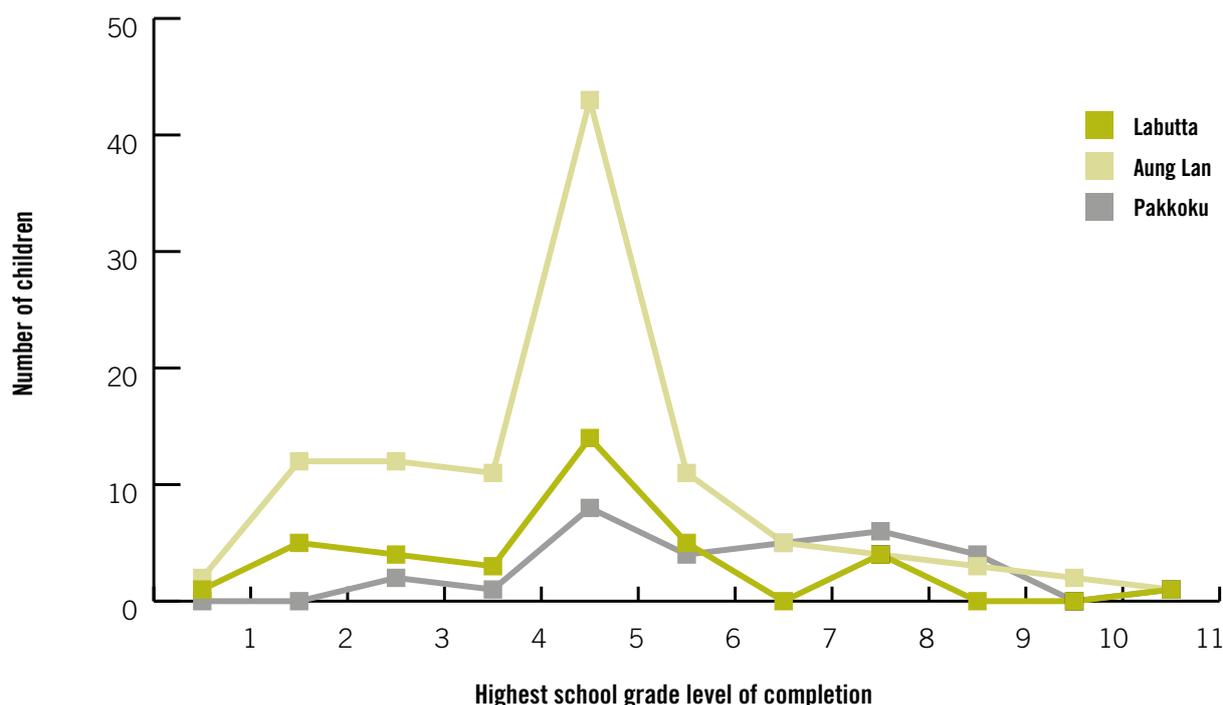
### Grade-level completion across three sub-sectors

Across the entire sample, there were eight total children that had never been to school. Four hundred and eighty-five children, or 73.6% had attended school in the year of reference. Of this 72.4% of girls had attended school the past year and 74.8% of boys had

attended school – a difference of over 2%. For those who did not attend school in the past year the transition between primary and lower secondary with the peak interval for push out from the system. Again, this is not the drop-out rate as the future for all children is not known. We could possibly take a slice of the students in grade eleven to determine drop-out but the sample size would be inadequate for a reliable figure.

Children in the sugarcane areas were leaving school more regularly than those in the other study areas and most frequently at the close of primary school. Though this study did not calculate actually distance to the closest middle school, in conversations, there was no evidence that Aung Lan villages were any further away from schools than in other study areas.

**Figure 72:** School grade level of completion in three sub-sectors



**Figure 73: Children's school status for all three sub-sectors**

Left school early	Attended past year
26%	74%

Clearly children were working while studying in all areas, but as they got older, more children tended to take on more agriculture related work influencing decisions related to schooling. Most students who also worked did not appear to be notably deleteriously impacted with regard to regular attendance. Over 90% of the students reported missing 1-2 days of school monthly for various reasons – though mostly cited as “illness/heath/injury,” which could be the result of a work injury this cannot be directly attributed to economic activities. Compared to boys, girls reported household chores as a main reason for missed days at twice the rate of their male counterparts.

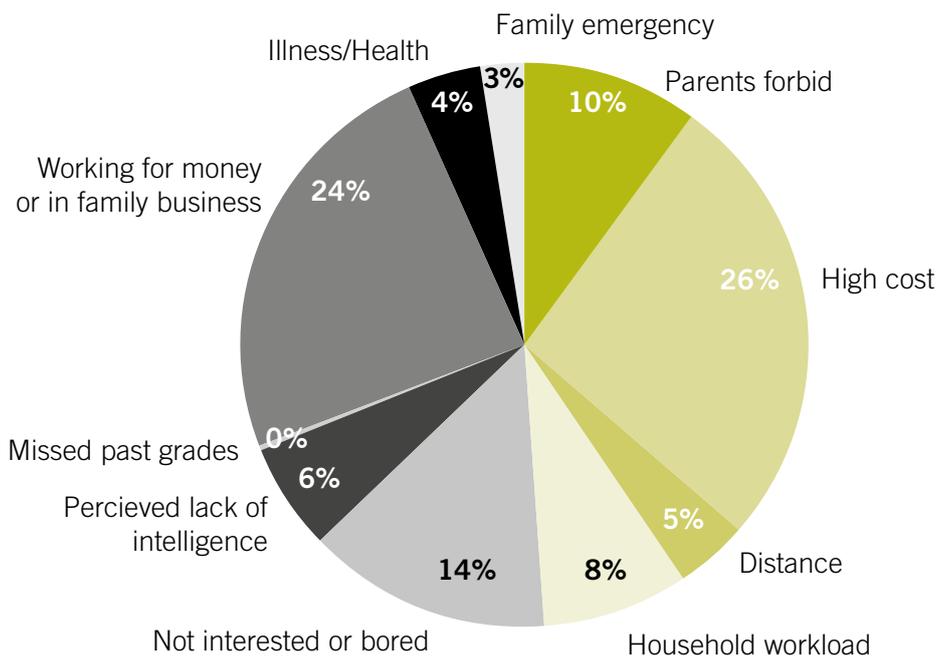
More significant than missing days of school is the phenomenon of school push-out. 26% of all respondents report having left school early.<sup>59</sup> Children in sugarcane reported not having been in school in the past year at a rate of 47%. This is alarming. Despite similarities across other segments of the survey, when we aggregate the three study townships, the target and the control have tangible statistical difference in push-outs. Target is 29% of all children left school early and Control is just 11%. This can relate to the overall economic conditions of the households or possibly differing levels of education, possibly reliance on seasonal agriculture product and its vulnerability. The numbers for absolute proportions of children who leave school early, the difference between Control and Target groups illuminates the difference in these communities and the greater vulnerability of agricultural children to leave school early.

<sup>59</sup> The national drop-out rate is lower than the overall of about 35% gathered from the 2014 Census, though this is not a comparable statistics is can be used for reference.

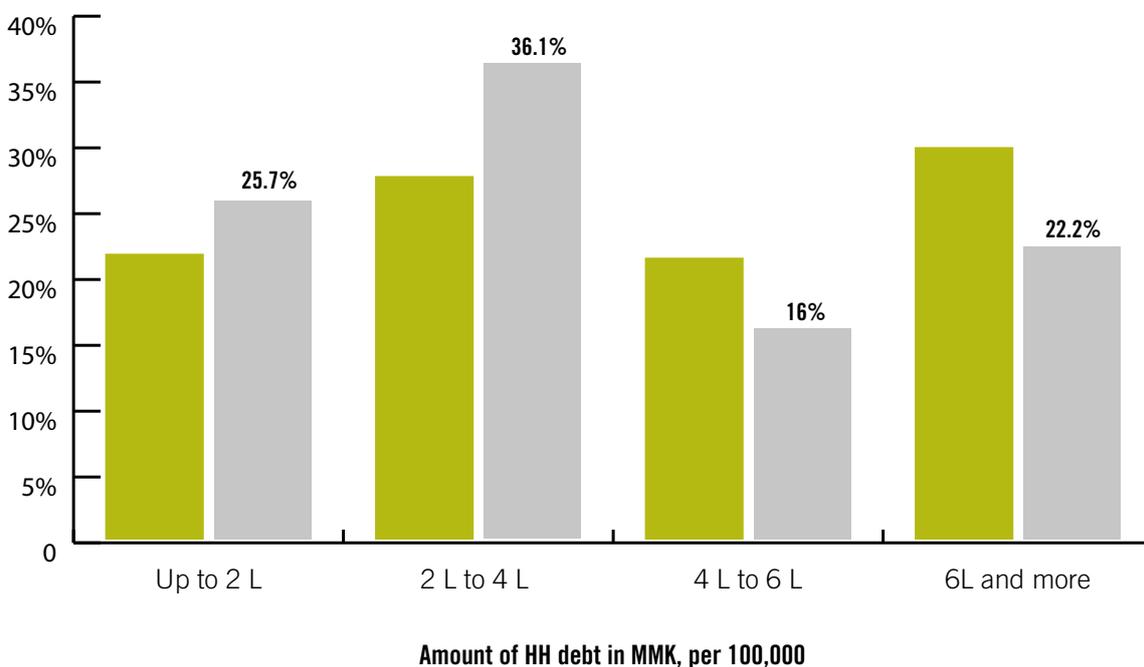
Children reported overwhelmingly that it was “cost of school” (55%) and need to work for family business or to make money (37%) that drove them from the school system. The two most frequently given reasons were to “work for money/family business” “financial output/ costs of schooling.” These are inter-related. Knowing the landscape, these reasons are not unexpected. Furthering the evidence above, children from 41% of children from Target households gave “working for money/in family business” as their main reason for leaving school, while only 30% of the Control children responded as such. However, a total 14% as “not interested/bored” really points to the need for more relevant learning options. Children often see themselves as the decision-makers and given a better set of options could take action to manage their personal trajectory. Children are given few options and often not well informed of what's possible.

The psychological constraints for a child are integrated into his or her perception of the issue. If a child has been told that he or she will no longer be attending school because of the financial outlay, this may result in a diminished sense of self, alternately, it could be an enhanced sense of self-worth as he or she has the opportunity to financially contribute to the household and can feel proud of that. In two of the three validation workshops, participants struggled to accept this element of the data reporting. Participants believed that a child's perception was not a legitimate representation of “cause.” A child's understanding of his or her schooling status provides insight into potential programming aimed at increasing school adherence through direct interventions with children at risk of being pushed out. By attempting to look only at the infrastructural constraints, we obscure critical psycho-social dynamics. Of course, it is important that children can physically access schools, but there are barriers around self-perception, values of school-based education which will not be caught by a survey on the time or money spent on travelling to school.

**Figure 74: Children’s main reasons for not being in school, all sub-sectors**



**Figure 75: Household debt burden and its relation to a child workers school status, all sub-sectors<sup>60</sup>**



<sup>60</sup> Graph uses Myanmar Kyats at the unit for the debt burden. Generally, in Myanmar people will regularly respond to questions about money in 10,000 or 100,000 kyat denominations. Here, we use the term “lakh” to denote 100,000 units, kyats (MMK). One USD is roughly 1200 MMK. So, the categories here are – “Up to \$166,” “From \$167 to \$333,” “From \$333 to 499,” and “more than \$499.”

Within three sub-sectors 25% of children reported that “debt” was a reason to enter the workforce. This was not one of the possible survey responses with regards to a child’s reasons for not being in school. **Figure 75** represents the household debt burden in conjunction with that household’s working children’s school status. Twenty-five percent of children in households with debt did not attend school in reference period, approximately the same percentage of the sample as a whole. Of course, 502 out of the total 667 households report holding at least some debt. Of interest here is that with an increasing debt burden on the household, there is no increase in the number of children leaving school. This means, that debt, although it may statistically correlate with children’s entry into the workforce, does not reflect a direct relationship to a child’s school status. If debt can be understood as a variable of poverty, than in these areas, that aspect of poverty is not a driver that pushes children out of school. Seventy-five percent of working children in households with debt attended school during the reference period.

Hazards in each of the three sub-sectors:  
Worries and exposure

**Figure 76: Children’s perception of danger in the workplace by age, all sub-sectors**

Is your work dangerous?				
Age in years	7 to 10	11 to 14	15 to 17	All ages
Affirmative	48%	59%	75%	64%

Overall, 63% of children interviewed believed their work to be dangerous. The perceived dangers increase with the age of the child. Of course, it could be that the tasks are getting more hazardous or that as children mature, they are more aware of the dangers having better abstract thinking skills and possibly having experienced or witnesses injuries. For even the youngest

children, perceived hazards may have a negative psychological and emotional impact on the child.

Fear of hazards is warranted. Every child in the study who works in the associated sub-sector reports exposure to more than one hazard in the past year. They were exposed to extreme weather, snakes and insects. They had to carry heavy loads. Some used fertilizer or pesticide sprayers. For many of the common hazards more than half of the children working in the three sub-sectors were exposed. Smaller children are more exposed to dangerous currents in inland fisheries because of the activities they do which involve moving the boats, sometimes in the middle of the night according to the tide; fishing off of small wooden boats with lines and the regularity of encountering snakes.

Generally, children used rudimentary equipment and tools. Most fishing children used all sorts of traps and hooks. Children in all three sub-sectors used knives, sickles or machetes. Most children wore only the most basic clothes and no specific protective gear apart from hats and rarely work gloves or face scarf. There is room for occupational safety and health education to mitigate hazards.

### Working arrangements

Strikingly, 25% of all the children entered the workforce due to “pay-off” household debt. This was particularly true in sugarcane cultivation at 43%, followed by pulses at 30% and inland fisheries at 8%. Clearly, these children are hearing about the debt at home. Almost always, salary goes directly to parents creating the potential for various forms of exploitation and a sharp hierarchy between the child worker and the guardian. In this way the commodification of a child’s work can interact with a parent’s sense of the child’s “best interest” to have a detrimental impact on the child’s well-being.

## Gross exploitation

Though certainly not to be characterized as “typical” in any of the given sub-sectors. There is evidence of gross exploitation in the form of debt bondage, serfdom and forced labour. As cash salaries often get paid directly to parents or guardian a child has little knowledge of this or say in the conditions of his or her work, much less the ability to simply leave the worksite in a moment of danger or for the longer-term. In Inland Fisheries there is strong evidence from qualitative interviews that children in the towns working for “brokers” to prepare and transport fish are doing so through a “debt bondage” arrangements. This is also the case at the Sanpya Zei Fish market.

## Causes: Household debt and precarious use rights<sup>61</sup>

There is a significant positive correlation between household debt and child labour. Interestingly, the total reported amount of debt does not have a statistical symmetry with the likelihood of child labour. Rather, the presence of debt meant a greater, survey-wide, likelihood of child labour in the household.

In farming, this was also true of precarious land ownership. The more likely a household is to work land without clear ownership or use rights, there is a greater chance of finding child labour in that household. This reality changes the function of livelihood interventions designed to reduce child labour in a sub-sector or geography. The implications relate to building assets and limiting vulnerabilities

above the increase in household income. Interventions then must be sustainable.

These are working children in households with debt. The percentage is the percentage of these children (ie: children in debt HH’s and the amount of time worked) it not representative percentage of children in these fields, just those in HHs with debt, to show a tendency/tend.

Those households with debt were more likely to have children that work for three or more hours a day. From the evidence it is not clear that more debt leads to increased working hours for children, considering that those households with the highest debt category, Six Lakhs more (roughly 480 USD) had 22% of their children working three or more hours, but those households with 2L to 4 L of debt, had a higher proportion of children working three to four hours.

**Figure 77: Relationship between child’s working hours and household debt, all sub-sectors**

Working children	Up to 2 L	2 L to 4 L	4 L to 6 L	6 L and more
Up to one hour of work	1%	3%	0%	0%
One to two hours of work	1%	1%	0%	1%
Two to three hours of work	1%	3%	1%	1%
Three or more hours of work	18%	32%	18%	22%

As with the relationship between debt and a child’s schooling, though the presence of debt relates to the total number of hours worked by children, the total amount of debt is not a gauge.

Most working children with household debt work at least three days a day with regularity. Of course, most households have debt.

61 As the probability of Pearson Chi-Square is 0.001, it is concluded at 1% significance level that there is a significant association between land ownership and amount of HH debt. Greater percent (55.6%) of HHs without owned land were found to have debt Ks under 400,000 than (34.3%) HHs with land owned. And, less percent (44.4%) of HHs without owned land were found to have debt Ks 600,000 and above than (65.7%) HHs with land owned. It could be because of the fact that HHs with owned had to cost for seed, plantation, fertilizer, harvesting and etc. than HHs without owned land.

# Recommendations

## **Be persistent in highlighting the relationship between household debt and children's entry into the workforce, which is largely comprised of hazardous work, across public and private sector conversation about livelihoods, debt management and poverty alleviation**

The study found that the presence of debt had a significant correlation with children working the three highlighted sub-sectors. The amount of the debt did not necessarily correlate with the likelihood of work in agriculture, but rather the presence of debt, even in relatively small amounts. Conversations, conferences and systematic inquiries on household-level debt are presently circulating in development and government forums. At least some of these conversations have asserted the need for increased access to credit.<sup>62</sup> Given the data, it is not clear that reductions in debt will necessarily lead to fewer children entering the workforce or reducing the duration of their work. The data demonstrates the relationship and the children's citation of household debt as a key reason for entering the workforce is confirmation that, at a minimum, for the child, debt is a cause.

This study cannot assert the type of debt reduction strategies that will be effective given the context. However, regardless of the types of strategies, which will certainly be entertained by development and government agencies, shared interest in debt reduction and income and asset expansion to interest to ensure that stakeholders understand that the real "cost" of debt is to the children and on their futures. Household debt results in lost educational opportunities and long-term health and social impacts, not a "shock" or a short-term crisis, or even "a cycle."

Livelihood development interventions including micro-credit must have reduction of child labour integrated as an outcome. Without that, given such broad acceptance of child labour, and much of it hazardous, increasing household incomes will not necessarily equate to reductions in child labour. Ultimately, despite household economic improvements Myanmar will fall short of commitments it has made to children through the CRC and ILO C182. As was the case in the Brazilian coffee industry localized increases in economic opportunities can lead to children's increased participation in the workforce due to higher revenues.

## **Conduct community-wide education in occupational safety and hazard mitigation**

Interestingly, the rates of child workers in the three sub-sectors were nearly the same between the target group and the control group. That is to say, families that do not have inland fisheries, sugarcane, or pulses as a main source of household income have children who work regularly in those industries almost as commonly as those households that do rely on such products. Children who live in a "pulse-growing village" will participate whether or not their parents are farmers, or perhaps tailors. This was an unexpected finding of the study and can guide the intervention approach. When

62 See Framework for Social and Economic Reform, Nay Pyi Taw, January 2013.

conducting education interventions in hazard mitigation, all families should be included, not just those known to be farmers.

### **Occupational health and safety programs need to provide concrete advice on activities to avoid and ways to protect**

When talking to the children workers it is evident that most see working in the industries as a normal part of life. They told us as much. It's endemic. Hazard mitigation tied to concrete aspects of the children's work activities in their field alongside real cause-and-effect information will present to children and guardians more effectively than generalized data about hazards. Some clear activities, for example, using a pesticide sprayer, can be considered as "to be avoided," while other activities like trimming and cutting sugarcane leaves, which cause deep cuts in the skin and can lead to infection and possibly unintended medical costs, can be minimized through wearing certain thick long-sleeved jumpers. This along with other such activities needs to be included on the hazardous work list. Of course, the protective gear needs to be available at the town and village-level and perhaps there is a way to incentivize purchase. With this data now available, occupational health and safety programs can better target hazardous tasks to make education interventions more concrete and applicable. The benefits of avoiding certain activities and using protective gear during others can be illuminated through real stories and an accessible platform.

### **Work towards the expansion and enhancements of peri-school options including vocational training programs or agricultural extension training for children living in villages**

Many students are bored. School may not relate much to their surroundings. They may see themselves as not really "smart" enough to justify their family's financial sacrifice for their schooling costs. By extending services to children already in agricultural villages, and even those already in the labour force, children could gain soft and hard skills needed to improve their chances of moving to an income strata higher than that of their parents. Improved farming techniques, financial management and hazard mitigation will all contribute to improved incomes. As markets evolve in Myanmar there are sure to remain human resource gaps related to agriculture, even for small and medium landholders. Relating programs to their actual lives will attract children from the areas and build a strong foundation of growth-minded farmers that understand environmental and social risks. Such programs could be flexible with scheduling designed for the ebbs and flows of work in the area and could also function alongside working children for real, hands-on learning. Such programs need to attract parents and young people by recognizing the child as an agent, and presenting the child as such. These programs will not succeed if designed as "charity for poor children." All working children did not see themselves as "poor" or "downtrodden" and many of them would not be considered amongst the most vulnerable on a cursory review or straight household income assessment. Participating in vocational and extension programs is a choice and these programs can meet needs, local relevance and interests.

**Maintain long-term, sustained messaging to the public**

Even children in hazardous jobs do not necessarily feel put upon. As such, effective messaging may be such that it is not “on-the-nose.” Make use of the growing media sector in Myanmar. Appoint a media officer or key person within ILO or another agency to ensure that stories of child workers are covered by news reports, as characters in community radio and represented on television dramas. There are a growing number of forums that continue that are seeking content and input. As children who work and many families, even child rights advocates, do not view the work children do as dangerous or harmful, despite the findings here, the launch of a big media campaign may be less effective than ongoing messaging, woven into daily media consumption.

**Establish or identify a mechanism for receiving reports and ensure that entity has the technical capacity to work with and in the best interests of the child. Entity must be independently monitored vis-à-vis the CRC**

As it stands the Committee on the Rights of the Child does not consider the National Commission on the Rights of the Child or its Monitoring and Evaluation Subcommittee established in 1999, or the Myanmar Human Rights Commission, established in 2011, to be sufficiently independent to effectively monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of the Convention at the local or national levels. These commission are not currently mandated or capable of receiving reports. Using its technical know-how, ILO can work with either of these bodies, or an otherwise identified a body to build its capacity to receive reports about hazardous working conditions for child workers or from children engaged in hazardous work. This can develop into a systematic Child Labour Monitoring System. Furthermore, make use of community-based child protection committees or groups. These groups can be a first line for reporting and may lack the technical skills to identify or report on infractions against children.

This recommendation comes with the caveat that appropriate response mechanisms must be in-place. Response mechanism should focus on mediation and mitigation as opposed to penal approaches. This moment in Myanmar’s economic and political transition make penal approaches potentially detrimental to the long-term objective on eliminating child labour in the country.

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## Annex B: ILO Recommendation 190

### ILO Recommendation 190

- (a) work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- (b) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;
- (c) work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
- (d) 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 to their health;
- (e) work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

## Annex C: Other relevant definitions (based on international standards)

<b>Child</b>	A person under the age of eighteen.
<b>Child labour</b>	Work undertaken by children under the legal minimum working ages. The law normally lays down various minimum ages for different types of work. (e.g., normal full-time work, light work, and hazardous or potentially harmful work). In principle, the general minimum working age should be in harmony with the standard age for finishing compulsory education.
<b>Forced or compulsory labour</b>	All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.
<b>Worst forms of child labour</b>	A term defined in the ILO Convention No. 182, and which has to be prohibited for all girls and boys (i.e. under18). It comprises (Article 3): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;</li> <li>• The use, procuring, or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography, or for pornographic performance;</li> <li>• The use, procuring, or offering of a child for illicit activities—in particular, for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;</li> <li>• Work which, by its nature or because of the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of the child. (commonly referred to as “hazardous work”)</li> </ul>
<b>Light work</b>	Work permitted by law, as an exception to the minimum working age, for children of at least twelve or thirteen years of age. The law may allow for specific activities which are not harmful to a child’s health and development and do not prejudice attendance at school and participation in vocational training, nor “the capacity to benefit from the instruction received.” For statistical purposes, ILO defines this as work which does not exceed fourteen hours per week.
<b>Domestic worker</b>	means any person engaged in domestic work within an <u>employment</u> relationship; (Excludes work carried out by members of the family)
<b>Child domestic labour</b>	Child labour to be eliminated (as defined above) that is carried out by a domestic worker (as defined above) – in other words: Domestic work undertaken by children under the legal minimum working age, as well as by children above the legal minimum age but under the age of eighteen, under slavery-like, hazardous, or other exploitative conditions.

## Annex D: Filter questionnaire

HH filter questions		
Date / /2015	Enumerator ID .....	HH ID# .....
<b>We are doing a survey on labor and working habits for the International Labour Organization. We would like to ask you a quick question to determine whether or not you are eligible to include in this survey. Is that OK?</b>		
We understand that many people from this village get money beans and pulses, sugarcane or freshwater fisheries. Does anyone from your household participate in such activities?	Yes	1 > go to 2
	No	2 > go to 3
	Don't know	99 thank you, go to next house
Would you consider that a main income for the household?	Yes	1 > go to 3
	No	2 > go to 3
	Don't know	99 thank you, go to next house
Is there anyone under the age of 18 who lives here? (Aged 7-17)	Yes	1 > Cont with full survey
	No	2 thank you, go to next house
	Don't know	99 thank you, go to next house

## Annex E: Household questionnaire

Household composition and characteristics			
We would like to learn a bit about the members of this household. Not all the people you include must be relatives, but anyone who generally stays here on your compound			
1	NICKNAME	WRITE THE RELATIONSHIP TO INTERVIEWEE?	MALE OR FEMALE: APPROXIMATE AGE INCLUDED IN CHILD SURVEY:
	Can you please provide the first name of all individuals who normally reside in the household? Perhaps we can go from oldest to youngest? Include people who are temporarily absent - away for farming, medical reason or other reason for short terms travel.	1. Person being interviewed 2. Wife or Husband 3. Son or Daughter 4. Son in law or daughter in law 5. Grandchild 6. Parent 7. Parent in Law 8. Brother or Sister, Sibling 9. Other relative 10. Adopted/Foster/Stepchild 11. Not related 99. Don't know	1. Yes 2. No 3. Child – Away and can't be reached
	Name (nickname)		
	A		
	B		
	C		
	D		
	E		
	F		
	G		
	H		
	I		
	J		
	K		

## Annex F: Child questionnaire

Children working in three agricultural sub-sectors – March 2015			
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADULT POPULATION			
Interview Date	Enumerator ID	Signature of Supervisor	
/ /2015	.....	.....	
I. Background information			
Introduction and Agreement			
Mingalaba! My name is ..... I am working for the NGO named .....			
I would like to ask a few questions about..... We are in the process of gathering thoughts and views from many people.			
Your responses are important as are the responses from other people as well. It will take about 30 minutes.			
We will keep all of your answers confidential and be sure to protect these documents from other people's view. If you don't want to answer, that is also fine. You can stop anytime during this interview.			
Do you agree to answer these questions? Agree 1 Disagree 2			
			_____ Enumerator (witness)
Ice Breaker with Child			
Enumerator: Which game did you play with the child? <input type="checkbox"/> "My Favorite" <input type="checkbox"/> "Funny Day"			
<i>Please check one as confirmation.</i>			
1	Sex	Male	1
		Female	2
2	How old are you?	..... years	if you don't know, cont 2A
2A	Ok, so you are not sure. We can try to figure that out together.	1-6 years	1
		7-9 years	2
		10-12 years	3
		13-15 years	4
		16-17 years	5
		18 years or older	6
	DK/Refused	99	
II. Education			
3	Have you ever attended school?	Yes	1 > Cont to 4
		No	2 > Skip to Sec III
		DK/Refused	99 > Skip to Sec III\

4	If yes, did you attend this past school year (just closed, 2014-2015)?	Yes	1	> Skip to 7
		No	2	> Cont to 5
		DK/Refused	99	> Skip to Sec III
	<i>Only one answer possible. This refers to the respondent, not the household.</i>			
5	If not, why did you not join school this year in 2014-15?	Parents won't allow it.	1	
		The cost is too high.	2	
		It's too far away.	3	
		Workload at home (housechores, caring for siblings or elderly)	4	
		Not Interested/Bored.	5	
		I'm not good in school.	6	
		Missed past grades.	7	
		Working for money or in family business.	8	
		Illness/Health	9	
		Family Emergency (including other 's health)	10	
		I did not pass the exam in the previous year.	11	
		Maltreatment by teacher	12	
		DK/Refused	99	
6	If you did not attend this past year, what was your highest level of completion?	Grade One	1	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade Two	2	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade Three	3	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade Four	4	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade Five	5	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade Six	6	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade 7	7	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade 8	8	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade 9	9	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade 10	10	> Skip to Sec III
		Grade 11	11	> Skip to Sec III
		Other	88	> Skip to Sec III
		No response	99	> Skip to Sec III

<b>7</b>	If yes, what grade level did you just complete?	Grade One	1	
		Grade Two	2	
		Grade Three	3	
		Grade Four	4	
		Grade Five	5	
		Grade Six	6	
		Grade 7	7	
		Grade 8	8	
		Grade 9	9	
		Grade 10	10	
		Grade 11	11	
		Other	88	
		No response	99	
<b>8</b>	What type of school is it that you have been going to?  <i>Only one answer possible.</i>	Government	1	
		Monastic School (official)	2	
		Monastic School (religious)	3	
		Other:	88	
		No response	99	
<b>9</b>	How many hours a day does your school last?  <i>Help child to calculate the times. Don't include lunch.</i>	1-2 Hours	1	
		3-4 Hours	2	
		5-6 Hours	3	
		More than 6 Hours	4	
		DK/Refused	99	
<b>10</b>	Did you attend additional tuition?	Yes	1	
		No	2	
		DK/Refused	99	
<b>11</b>	Did you take the recent examination?	Yes	1	> Skip to 12
		No	2	> Cont to 11A
		DK/Refused	99	> Skip to 12

<b>11A</b>	If no, why not?  <i>One response.</i> <i>One main reason.</i>	Attendance too low.	1	
		Illness/Injury/Health	2	
		Unable to pay the fees.	3	
		Family Emergency (including other 's health)	4	
		Missed classes	5	
		Workload at home (housechores, caring for siblings or elderly)	6	
		Working for money or in family business.	7	
		Maltreatment by the teacher	8	
		Other: _____	88	
		DK/Refused.	99	
<b>12</b>	In this past school year, how often would you estimate that you missed school? That includes arriving late or missing part of the day.  <i>Circle one main answer.</i>	Never	1	> Skip to Sec III
		Sometimes	2	> Cont to 13
		Often	3	> Cont to 13
		Always	4	> Cont to 13
		DK/Refused	99	> Cont to 13
<b>13</b>	Generally in a given month, how many school days would you estimate that you missed?  <i>Help the child calculate.</i> <i>(Includes missing more than half a day of school)</i>	_____ Days		
<b>14</b>	What are the main reasons that you miss school (part of the day or all of the day)?  <i>Multiple possible.</i> <i>Spontaneous.</i>	Transportation problems/ Severe weather	1	
		Workload at home (housechores, caring for siblings or elderly)	2	
		Not Interested/Bored.	3	
		Working for money or in family farmwork/fishery	4	
		Illness/Health/Injury	5	
		Family Emergency (including other 's health)	6	
		Maltreatment by teacher	7	
		Not pay for extra school- related costs.	8	
		Other: _____	88	
		Dk/Refused	99	

III. Household responsibilities				
15	In the past week, what household chores have you done?  <i>Multiple Responses. Read out the responses.</i>	Sweep or mop	1	
		Wash clothes	2	
		Cooking rice	3	
		Prepraing and serving meals	4	
		Take care of Siblings	5	
		Take care of another family member who is ill or elderly	6	
		Go to the market for family supplies	7	
		Wash dishes	8	
		Get or pump water	9	
		Collect firewood	10	
		House cleaning – general	11	
		Other: _____	88	
		None	99	> Skip to Section IV
16	Do you do these tasks daily? (in the past week or so)	Yes	1 > Skip to 17	
		No	2 > Cont to 16A	
		DK/Refused	99 > Cont to 16A	
16A	In this past week, which days of the week did you do there?  <i>Multiple Responses. Help child to work through their responses.</i>	Monday	1	
		Tuesday	2	
		Wednesday	3	
		Thursday	4	
		Friday	5	
		Saturday	6	
		Sunday	7	
		Not Sure/ Refused.	99	
17	Can we work together to estimate how many hours of housework you do on days of school and non school days?  <i>One response for School Days and One response for non-school days. (only for school children)</i>	A School Days	0-1 Hour	1
			1-2 Hours	2
			2-3 Hours	3
			3 or more Hours	4
		B Non-School Days	0-1 Hour	1
			1-2 Hours	2
			2-3 Hours	3
			3 or more Hours	4
			DK/ Refused	99

**18** How does your housework affect your schooling?

*Record response word-for-word in the space below.*

#### IV. Agricultural work and employment

<b>19</b>	I know that your family and other people in this area deal with (Fisheries/sugarcane/beans and pulses) do you have anything to do with that?  <i>This is only for "target product" – so, Labutta looking for fisheries, Pakkoku is looking for Beans, Aung Lan is looking for sugar cane</i>	Beans	1	> Skip to 19A
		Sugarcane	2	> Skip to 19A
		Fishes, Prawns or Crabs	3	> Skip to 19B
		No	4	> End of Interview
		I don't know. / No response.	99	> Skip to 19B
<b>19A</b>	In the past year have you done any of the following?  <i>Multiple answers possible. Illicit from child the various activities. Probe if needed.</i>	Prepare land – spreading dung, weeding, removing debris	1	
		Sow seeds or seedlings	2	
		Apply fertilizer, pesticide, fungicide	3	
		Water the crops	4	
		Crop maintenance – building mounds, pruning, weeding or thinning	5	
		Harvest the beans or collect the sugarcane	6	
		Trimming the sheaves on the cane or drying and threshing the beans	7	
		Lifting heavy loads, carrying bags, transport and loading product	8	
		Sleep or keep guard in the field alone	9	
		Sleep or keep guard with an adult	10	
		Husking or grinding the beans	11	
		Collect firewood, maintain the fire for production	12	
		Packing of products	13	
		Burn the dry land for planting	14	
		Bring food or water to members of family working in field	15	
		Take the animals for grazing (sleep away from home or not)	16	
		Wash or care for cow or buffalo	17	

	Clean or repair farm equipment	18	
	Other: _____	88	
	I don't know. / No response.	99	
<b>19Aa</b>	What do you spend the most time doing?		
	<i>Multiple – up to Three Activities from Above.</i>		
	Prepare land – spreading dung, weeding, removing debris	1	> Skip to 20
	Sow seeds or seedlings	2	> Skip to 20
	Apply fertilizer, pesticide, fungicide	3	> Skip to 20
	Water the crops	4	> Skip to 20
	Crop maintenance – building mounds, pruning, weeding or thinning	5	> Skip to 20
	Harvest the beans or collect the sugarcane	6	> Skip to 20
	Trimming the leaves on the cane or drying and threshing the beans	7	> Skip to 20
	Lifting heavy loads, carrying bags, transport and loading product	8	> Skip to 20
	Sleep or keep guard in the field alone	9	> Skip to 20
	Sleep of keep guard with an adult	10	> Skip to 20
	Husking or grinding the beans	11	> Skip to 20
	Collect firewood, maintain the fire for production	12	> Skip to 20
	Packing of products	13	> Skip to 20
	Burn the dry land for planting	14	> Skip to 20
	Bring food or water to members of family working in field	15	> Skip to 20
	Take the animals for grazing (sleep away from home or not)	16	> Skip to 20
	Wash or care for cow or buffalo	17	> Skip to 20
	Clean or repair farm equipment	88	> Skip to 20
	I don't know. / No response.	99	> Skip to 20
<b>19Bb</b>	In the past year have you done any of the following?		
	<i>Multiple answers possible. Illicit from child the various activities. Probe if needed.</i>		
	Fished from a boat using any type of net	1	
	Fished with a net on the banks or shore	2	
	Rowing the small fishing boat	3	
	Take responsibility to pull or push the boat into and away from water tide	4	

	Helped with preparation of fish sauce, fish paste of shrimpsauce/paste	5	
	Laid the fish and prawn products out to dry and salt	6	
	Collecting shellfish, small crabs or other things in the tidal zone	7	
	Caught crabs with or without a bamboo trap	8	
	Tying crab's claws for processing or sale	9	
	Sorting the fish, crabs and raw products	10	
	Peeling or shucking shrimps or crabs	11	
	Catching baby prawns	12	
	Clean or repair equipment used for fishing or getting prawn or crab	13	
	Repair, paint or clean the boat	14	
	Selling raw products in the village	15	
	Catch fish or frogs with a spear	16	
	Carry loads of raw products or processed products	17	
	Other: _____	88	
	I don't know. / No response.	99	> Skip to 20
<b>20</b>	Do you generally spend more time on work with _____ (Beans, Sugarcane or Fisheries) household chores or with that other job?  <i>Help to select one or the other.</i>	Beans/Sugar/Fisheries	1
		Household Chores	2
		Other Job	3
		I am not sure of my habit.	99
<b>21</b>	Who do you normally work for – parents, relatives, someone else?  <i>For "someone else" write relationship.</i>	Parents	1
		Other relative	2
		Someone else _____	3
		DK/Refused	99
<b>22</b>	Do you work outside the home for getting money?	Yes	1 Cont to 22A
		No	2 Skip to Section V
		I don't know.	99 Skip to Section V

<b>22A</b>	When you do it, how many hours do you generally work? <i>Choose a single answer.</i>	less than one	1
		1- 2 hours	2
		2-3 hours	3
		more than 3	4
		I don't know.	99
<b>22B</b>	How often do you do that work? <i>Don't read the responses. Can be multiple.</i>	Sometimes	1
		Often	2
		Always	3
		Daily	4
		Weekly	5
		Monthly	6
		DK/Refuse	99
<b>22C</b>	When you do it, how many hours do you generally work? <i>Choose a single answer.</i>	less than one	1
		1- 2 hours	2
		2-3 hours	3
		3-4 hours	4
		4-5 hours	5
		5-6 hours	6
		6 and above	7
		Highly variable	8
		I don't know.	99
<b>22D</b>	How much do you get paid for that work?	Amount/Unit	_____ / _____
		I don't know.	99
<b>22E</b>	What do you receive for that? <i>Multiple possible. Don't read out.</i>	Cash	1
		Food	2
		Clothing	3
		Housing or Shelter	4
		Other products	5
		Learn a new skill	6
		School fees	7
		In exchange for something else: _____	88
		I don't know	99
<b>22F</b>	How is your pay determined?	Based on time	1
		Based on output (piecework)	2
		No clear calculation	3
		Other: _____	88
		I don't know. / No response.	99

<b>22G</b>	If you receive cash, who directly receives that money?  <i>Note: This question is only for children who answered "cash" for the question above (22E)</i>	Me	1
		Parents	2
		Other relative	3
		Broker	4
		Other: _____	88
		I don't know.	99
<b>22H</b>	What do you do with the money you earn?  <i>Multiple Possible. Don't read. Illicit.</i>	Give it all to parents or guardian	1
		Keep some and give some to parents or guardian	2
		Use it for school fees or books	3
		Buy stuff at the market	4
		Save for the future.	5
		Treat myself to food or drink	6
		I don't know	99

### V. Daily diary

Only complete for children over 12 years of age (13 or more) who work in either fisheries, beans or sugar.

Ask the child to describe his/her day yesterday. Starting with the time he/she got out of bed. And using these probes.

What did you do when you first woke up? And about what time did you start that? And finish?

And, after that? What did you do? And, about what time did you finish?

				Activity type:	
23	Work Task	Start time	Task End time		
	<i>Make a brief note.</i>			Farming or fishery	1
				School work	2
				Household chores	3
				Other work	4
29A		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29B		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29C		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29D		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29E		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29F		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29G		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29H		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29I		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29J		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		
29K		_____ : _____ A/P	_____ : _____ A/P		

VI. Safety and health				
<b>24</b>	Do you think your work in <hr/> (fisheries, beans or sugarcane) is dangerous?	Yes	1	> Cont 24A
		I don't think so	2	> Skip to 25
		Not sure/Refused	99	> Cont 24A
<b>24A</b>	What is dangerous about it?  <i>Multiple.</i>  <i>Probe: "Anything else that you are worried about?"</i> <i>Probe: "Anything else that seems dangerous?"</i>	Easy to get cuts, bruises or wounds.	1	> Cont 24B
		Easy to burn my skin or hair.	2	> Cont 24B
		Bad or strong smells.	3	> Cont 24B
		Very hot or very cold place or weather.	4	> Cont 24B
		Strong current or unsafe tides. (Swimming or drowning.)	5	> Cont 24B
		Afraid of my boss.	6	> Cont 24B
		Not a safe place to stay.	7	> Cont 24B
		Other workers are dangerous.	8	> Cont 24B
		Get dizzy often.	9	> Cont 24B
		My boss or other workers shout, scold or tease me.	10	> Cont 24B
		Beating or physical abuse.	11	> Cont 24B
		My boss or others touch me or make sexual comments.	12	> Cont 24B
		The place is not clean.	13	> Cont 24B
		I get too tired.	14	> Cont 24B
		Snakes, insects or other animals.	15	> Cont 24B
		No dangers	16	> Skip to 25
Not sure	99	> Skip to 25		
<b>24B</b>	Which is the main danger that you are worried about?	Code number from above	_____	
<b>25</b>	Do you use any equipment for your work?  <i>Multiple. Read out.</i>	An axe	1	
		A hammer to other heavy tool to beat	2	
		Tractor	3	
		A sickle, knife or machette	4	
		Iron rod to dig with	5	
		A hoe or trowel	6	

	A spear (mostly for catching fish or frogs)	7		
	Boat engine	8		
	Traps – maybe bamboo	9		
	Grinding machine (for paste etc)	10		
	Hooks for fishing	11		
	Fishing nets – all types, with weights or unweighted	12		
	Don't use anything	13		
	Other machine: _____	88		
	Other equipment: _____	88		
	DK/Refused	99		
<b>26</b>	While you are working are you exposed to any of the following:	Yes	No	DK/Refused
	<i>Read the options.</i>			
	(A) Insects	1	2	99
	(B) Snakes	1	2	99
	(C ) Other animals	1	2	99
	(D) Dirty water	1	2	99
	(E) Really hot Temperatures	1	2	99
	(F) Really cold temperatures	1	2	99
	(G) Strong winds or heavy rains	1	2	99
	(H) Strong waves or current	1	2	99
	(I) Long hours in the sun	1	2	99
	(J) Burning – field fire or fire for other purposes of work	1	2	99
	(K) Carrying heavy loads	1	2	99
	(L) Slipping or falling down	1	2	99
	(M) Lots of dust	1	2	99
	Spreading or spraying fertilizer	1	2	99
	Spreading or spraying pest killer	1	2	99
	Any other things that you think can hurt you that you are exposed to:			
	Other: _____	88		
	Other: _____	88		
	Other: _____	88		
	Other: _____	88		

<b>27</b>	What do you normally wear when you are working?	Long sleeved shirt	1
		Short sleeved shirt	2
		No shirt	3
		Sweater or jacket	4
		(Sarong) Baso/tamin	5
		Short pants	6
		Long pants	7
		Slippers	8
		Shoes	9
		Boots	10
		Nothing on my feet	11
		Gloves	12
		Hat	13
		Face scarf	14
		Other: _____	88
		Other: _____	88
DK/Refused	99		
<b>28</b>	Who do you usually work with? <i>Choose one. Main person that you work with.</i>	Other children	1
		Siblings	2
		Parents	3
		Other adults	4
		DK/Refused	99
<b>29</b>	Who supervises you? <i>Choose one. Main person.</i>	Other child	1
		Sibling	2
		Parent	3
		Other adult	4
		Nobody	5
		DK/Refused	99
<b>30</b>	At what age did you start this work? (How long ago?) <i>Help to calculate.</i>	1-4 yo	1
		5-7 yo	2
		8	3
		9	4
		10	5
		11	6
		12	7
		13	8

		14	9
		15	10
		16	11
		17	12
		DK/Refused	99
<b>31</b>	Why do you do this work? <i>Up to three Responses.</i>	My parents or guardian said I should	1
		Help family	2
		I am strong/healthy	3
		I am not good in school	4
		To learn how to manage this kind of work	5
		To got my school fees	6
		To get school fees for my siblings	7
		To pay my families debt.	8
		To buy some clothes and food for myself.	9
		I like working or I like independence.	10
		Other: _____	88
		DK/Refused	99
<i>Important Note: Question 32 and 33 are for students that were enrolled in school this past year.</i>			
<b>32</b>	During the school year, does this work interfere with your schooling? In what way? <i>Record response word-for-word in the space below.</i>		
<b>33</b>	Do you ever miss school for working? How often?	Never	1
		Sometimes	2
		Often	3
		Always	4
		DK/Refused	99
<b>34</b>	Have you ever been injured during work?	Yes	1 > Cont to 34A
		No	2 > Go to section VII
		DK/Refused.	99 > Go to section VII
<b>34A</b>	When was the last time you got injured? <i>One response.</i>	Yesterday	1
		In the past week	2

<i>Help child to figure out the time frame if he/she is having difficulty.</i>	In the past month	3	
	In the past six months	4	
	In the past year	99	
<b>34B</b> Did you receive any treatment for this last (work-related injury)?	Yes	1	> Cont to 34A
	No	2	> Go to section VII
	DK/Refused.	99	> Go to section VII
<b>34C</b> What type of treatment did you receive?	Private clinic	1	
	Sub-rural health center/ Local health worker	2	
	Treatment from parents or relatives/home remedy	3	
	Overnight stay at clinic or hospital.	4	
	Had to go to town or city for treatment.	5	
	Traditional Medecine doctor/ Nat Saya	6	
	Unqualified medical practioner	7	
	DK/Refused.	99	

VII. Health and hazards

In the past year, lets say since (note the last grade level or other feature to help figure) what injuries have you had? (Inlcude the injury just mentioned above)

A	B	C	D
Body Part	Y/N	Injury	Doing what?
Refer to body cartoon	Have you had any injury to your _____?	What type of injury?	Need to add from list in survey form
	Yes [ 1 ]	Scrape/cut/puncture [ 1 ]	
	No [ 2 ]	Bruise/Bump/Swelling [ 2 ]	
	DK/Refused [ 99 ]	Sprain/Strain/Twist [ 3 ]	
		Broken Bone/Joint [ 4 ]	
		Loss of a body part [ 5 ]	
		Burn/blister [ 6 ]	
		Other: _____ [88]	
		DK/Refused [ 99 ]	

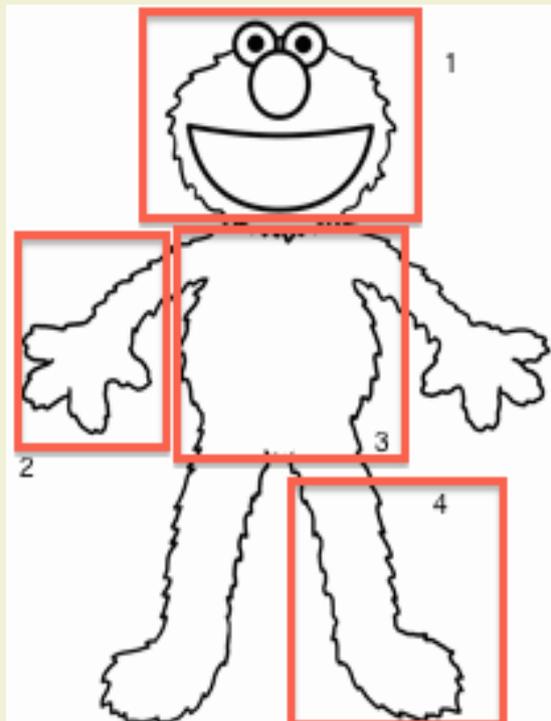
35 Head/Skull/Neck/Face

36 Arm/Hand/Wrist or fingers

37 Torso – front and back

38 Leg/Foot/Ankle

39 Other: \_\_\_\_\_





**Fundamentals Principles and Rights at Work  
(FUNDAMENTALS)**

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