



International
Labour
Organization

REDUCING THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR IN TOBACCO-GROWING COMMUNITIES IN BRAZIL, MALAWI AND ZAMBIA

In 2012, the ILO estimated that 10.6 per cent of children globally (168 million) were in child labour – and that over half of these were engaged in hazardous forms of work. Brazil, Malawi and Zambia are among the largest producers of tobacco worldwide. Brazil, for example, is one of the top three contributors to global production (after China and India); in 2012 alone, its exports in tobacco were valued at USD 3.2 billion. With its significant economic reliance

on agriculture, tobacco production makes a crucial contribution to national employment levels and gross national product. Unfortunately, a variety of socio-economic factors, such as the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, the cultural acceptance of child labour, and the accepted distribution and use of land, have exacerbated the incidence of child labour in these countries.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Partners:

Japan Tobacco International (JTI)

Beneficiary countries:

Brazil, Malawi, Zambia

Timeframe:

2011 – 2015

Budget:

USD 4.5 million

THE RESPONSE

The ILO and Japan Tobacco International (JTI) have forged a partnership to achieve a greater impact in their campaign against child labour and have, together, established the Achieving Reduction of Child Labour in Support of Education (ARISE) programme. By addressing the identified social and economic factors that encourage small-scale tobacco farmers to employ children in dangerous work, the programme makes strides towards the elimination of child labour in supply chains.

Due to the complex nature of the root causes of child labour, the programme draws on representatives of national and regional governments and tobacco-growing communities. ARISE places the child labour issue in its broader context and considers the encompassing economic, social and cultural factors – thus allowing the programme to tackle the challenge effectively and in earnest.

To achieve this common goal, the programme:

Promotes equal access to quality education for children in tobacco-growing communities and raises awareness of the need to eliminate child labour among these communities.

This includes improved attitudes with regard to the difference between work that is and is not acceptable for children;

Economically empowers tobacco-growing communities through the promotion of alternative income-generating activities, entrepreneurial skills, improved agronomic practices, and access to credit;

Works with governments, employers' and workers' organizations to improve regulatory frameworks, and to create an enabling legislative and policy environment that is conducive for the elimination of child labour and the promotion of education.

RESULTS

Work on the ground commenced in 2012 and the partnership has already demonstrated to what extent multinational companies working with the ILO can achieve sustainable progress in eliminating child labour from their supply chains. It is foreseen that by the close of the project in 2015, over 10,000 people in the target communities will have benefited from it.





“The issue of child labour is not one that any one organization alone can solve. As a result, ARISE was born; a unique programme where JTI is working with the ILO and Winrock International to help eliminate child labour in JTI’s value chain, based on the belief that the greatest impact can be achieved by drawing on the expertise of specialist organizations in long-term partnerships.”

Maarten Bevers -
Vice President,
JTI Global

The programmes’s achievements to date include the following:

- At the global level, JTI’s staff received training on the importance of child labour standards. The training has demonstrated the way in which these standards can be integrated into company operations to increase JTI’s capacity to eliminate child labour in its supply chains. Over the course of the partnership, further training will provide skills to improve the implementation of occupational safety and health standards in the workplace.
- In Brazil, a Junior Field Farm School was established. This school provides vocational training for the next generation of farmers. Students can practise agronomy safely and gain the knowledge and skills to help achieve food security. The school also enhances the image of agricultural businesses in rural communities, thereby giving young persons a viable and desirable alternative to migrating to urban areas. In its first year 136 adolescents were trained in a wide variety of sustainable and profitable agricultural activities.

- In addition, 105 rural mothers of school-age children received education on child labour awareness, entrepreneurship and technical agribusiness skills. Out of these 105 women, 36 established their own commercial ventures, thus allowing them to support their children’s education and protect them from child labour.

- In Malawi, the project distributed 598 ‘scholarship kits, which provide children with everything they need to go back to school. These kits improve school attendance and academic achievement among poorer students, which in turn reduces the likelihood they will participate in child labour. Furthermore, 96 people received training to start or improve their own business, and 48 people were given start-up capital and materials – thus providing parents with the means to keep their children from working. Along with other actions, it is already estimated that 195 girls and boys have been withdrawn from – or prevented from engaging in – child labour in a sustainable manner.



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BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

Companies receive technical assistance on the elimination of child labour from the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), the world’s leading programme on the subject.

Companies have a reduced supply chain risk on account of higher occupational safety and health (OSH) standards, and improved sustainability as an outcome of positively influencing labour standards and legal compliance in the tobacco farms from which they source.

Improved product quality and higher levels of productivity as a result of farmer training. Farmers’ schools also help to enhance the image of agricultural business among younger generations, ensuring a stable qualified workforce for the future.

Companies acquire a greater awareness that causing, contributing, or being linked to child labour through business relationships can damage a brand and have strong repercussions on business performance.