

United to end **child labour** in **agriculture**

12 June 2019

World Day against Child Labour

CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP

Wednesday 12 June 2019 from 8:30 to 17:30

Residence Palace, rue de la Loi 155,

1040 Brussels



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



OBJECTIVE

To mark the World Day against Child Labour (WDACL), this year the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) is hosting the event and is jointly organising the conference and an interactive workshop with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). This year, the WDACL will link to the [ILO future of work Centenary initiative](#). It will be an opportune moment to reflect on the history and progress in tackling child labour and the challenges and opportunities within a changing world of work to accelerate action towards the achievement of Target 8.7. The ILO recalls that the future of work we want and the eradication of child labour on which it depends require renewed and concentrated focus on the rural economy, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa where the situation has deteriorated.

The event aims at informing and raising awareness of the development community and the public about the situation and the root causes of child labour, in particular in the agricultural sector, hosting 71% of all child labour, and the compelling urgency to address it.

The conference will reaffirm the EU and UN commitment in tackling child labour in agriculture and will discuss how to properly upscale efforts, how to reach all those involved in child labour in global and domestic supply chains, and in subsistence farming.

The conference panellists from various organisations and areas of expertise will share best practices, explore tangible opportunities and underutilized potentials to reduce and end child labour in agriculture to accelerate the achievement of SDG target 8.7.

Integrating child labour prevention in supply chains, large-scale programmes in agriculture, rural development, food security will be tackled and the importance of multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approaches will be discussed to end child labour in agriculture.

The panellists' interventions and interactive debates will contribute to feed the workshop where participants are invited to formulate recommendations for short and long-term action plans, with links to the pledges of the [2017 Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour in Argentina](#) and the SDG interconnected targets.

BACKGROUND

Today, of the **152 million** working children worldwide, more than half of them are engaged in the worst forms of child labour. **71% of child labour** worldwide takes place **in the agriculture sector**, including farming, livestock, forestry, fishing and aquaculture. **85%** of child labour in **Africa** is found in the agriculture sector.

Child labour in agriculture is a global issue that is harming children and damaging the agricultural sector by **perpetuating rural poverty**. For instance, when children are forced to work long hours, their opportunity to attend school and develop their skills is limited, which interferes with their ability to access decent and productive employment opportunities later in life.

Child labour is defined as work that is inappropriate for a child's age, affects children's education, or is likely to harm their health, safety or morals. Not all work carried out by children is considered child labour. Some activities may help children to acquire important livelihood skills and contribute to their survival and food security. Yet, much of the work children carry out in agriculture is **not age-appropriate and is hazardous** and therefore might interfere with their wellbeing. For instance, when children work in fields where pesticides have been applied, stay up all night on fishing boats, or carry heavy loads, it can interfere with their moral and physical development.

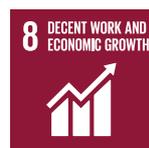
The **root causes** of child labour in rural areas are multiple: household poverty, low family incomes and few livelihood alternatives perpetuate the intergenerational vulnerability. Poor access to education, lack of decent jobs and social protection, and weak labour law enforcement contribute to worsen the situation.

KEY FACTS

- More than **70 percent of child labour** worldwide takes place in **agriculture**, affecting **108 million girls and boys**, and hindering agricultural and rural development
- This is an **increase of 10 million** children in child labour in agriculture since the previous estimates from 2012
- **Africa** has the highest absolute number of child labourers: **72 million**, followed by Asia with 62 million

While globally child labour has moderately declined as reported in the latest ILO Global Estimates, **child labour in agriculture has risen from 98 million to 108 million from 2012 to 2016**.

However, to end all forms of child labour in agriculture there is still have a long way ahead to urgently reverse the alarming trend of a growing number of girls and boys being trapped in child labour. This will require substantially upscaling efforts and improving the effectiveness of actions. It will involve to reach those harder to reach child labour situations in agriculture that have received little or no attention.



The UN Sustainable Development Goal 8, Target 7, calls for 'immediate and effective measures to ... secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour ... and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.'

PROGRAMME

The conference will be moderated by **Mr Chris Burns**, a professional moderator and journalist, experienced in FAO and EC debates.

CONFERENCE, Polak Room

08:30 - 09:00 ● **Registration and welcome coffee**

09:00 - 09:30 ● **Opening and introductory messages**

Camilla Hagstrom, DEVCO B3 Deputy Head of Unit Migration, Employment

Neven Mimica, European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, video message

Rodrigo de Lapuerta, FAO Director of the Liaison Office in Brussels

José Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General, video message

Lieve Verboven, ILO Office for the European Union and the Benelux countries in Brussels

Beate Andrees, Chief of the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch, video message

Short video: Children should work on their dreams

09:30 - 10:15 ● **PANEL I: Definition of child labour and main causes analysis in agriculture, facing challenges and exploiting opportunities to achieve SDG 8.7**

Description

Understanding the correct definition of child labour according to the ILO Conventions is crucial to analyse challenges and solutions. By addressing the multiple root causes and connected deficits in particular in agriculture, panellists will share successful experiences and explore ways for improvements. The session will discuss priorities in increasing effectiveness and outreach to accelerate the SDG 8.7 target achievement.

The socio-economic challenges in demographic trends with increased young population, ageing farmers, rural-urban mobility require a strategic approach to integrate child labour into wider policy clusters such as youth employment, social benefits, food security, nutrition, prices volatility, urbanisation and rural transformation.

Possible areas of discussions will explore challenges and opportunities around:

- minimum living wages, decent work, income generating activities
- safety nets, cash transfer schemes, conditional or not conditional for child benefits
- building and strengthening strategic public and private partnerships
- access to basic and compulsory education in rural areas
- rural women empowerment
- multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral and integrated approaches

Speakers

Badra Alawa, ILO Project manager and Chief technical advisor

Kirill Buketov, International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)

Prudence Ayebare, Program Manager, Uganda National Farmers Federation

Marco Dubbelt, Senior Programme Manager, Global March Against Child Labour, Netherlands Office

Françoise Millecam, DEVCO B3 Head of Sector Employment and Social Inclusion

10:15 – 10:35 ● **Debate**

10:35 – 11:00

Coffee break

11:00 – 11:45 ● **Panel II: Addressing child labour in family farming and in local, regional and global local value chains**

Description

Child labour remains prevalent in agriculture and worst, the numbers have increased in this sector. Yet, child labour prevention strategies and programmes have yielded successes in selected global supply chains and new opportunities such as due diligence regulations have opened up. Ending all child labour in agriculture will require to substantially scale-up our efforts and improving the effectiveness of our actions. It will involve to get to those harder to reach child labour situations in agriculture such as local and regional value chains and family based agriculture. In addition, the agriculture sector does not attract significant volumes of investment. Private investment in the agricultural sector remains unprofitable and risky as compared to other economic sectors in particular in African countries.

Possible areas of discussions will explore challenges and opportunities around:

- empowering smallholder farmers
- access decent rural employment and entrepreneurship
- untapped potential or rural youth in local value chains
- tackling child labour in local, regional and global value chains,
- integrating child labour issues in large scale programmes in agriculture, rural development, food security and nutrition.
- reflecting on how to reach the neglected majority of child labour in agriculture in supply chains and subsistence agriculture.
- the role of responsible producers and consumers

Speakers

Bernd Seiffert, FAO Decent Rural Employment Officer

Andrews Addoquaye Tagoe, Deputy General Secretary, General Agriculture Workers Union (GAWU) and African Regional Coordinator Global March Against Child Labour (GMACL) of Ghana

Maria Suman-Negut, Trade and Sustainability Manager, European Cocoa Association

Sarah Lagente, Head of Unit Producers Relation, Programs, Standards and Impact, Max Havelaar, Fairtrade France

Wim Olthof, DEVCO C1 Deputy Head of Unit Rural Development, Food Security, Nutrition

11:45 – 12:15 ● **Debate**

12:15 – 12:30 ● **Closing remarks**

Henriette Geiger, DEVCO B Director "People and Peace"

12:30 – 13:30

Lunch

WORKSHOP, Maelbeek and Passage Rooms

13:30 – 14:00 ● Introduction to the working group methodology and themes

Chris Burns, Nico Keppens and Sara Spinelli, Facilitators

The objective of the workshop is to identify successful practices and lessons learnt and to formulate strategic short and long terms recommendations to end child labour in agriculture.

15:45 – 16:00

Coffee break

16:00 – 17:00 ● Presentations by groups and discussion

17:00 – 17:30 ● Wrap up

Chris Burns, Moderator

● Closing remarks

Maria Rosa De Paolis, DEVCO B3 Policy Officer Employment and Social Inclusion



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Girl carrying goods in Nepal

Related Key Facts

- Nearly 8 out of every 10 working poor live in rural areas
- Less than 20 percent of agricultural workers have access to basic social protection
- More than 42 million jobs are needed every year to meet the growing number of new entrants in labour markets

EUROPEAN COMMISSION, DEVCO

The new [European Consensus on Development](#) commits the EU and Member States to combat child labour in an integrated approach in line with the 2030 Agenda. The EU's Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy sets the objective to support partner countries to promote, protect and fulfil children's rights and their best interests including the fight against child labour. The Plan has also a strong focus on business and human rights to promote social responsible behaviour in enterprises in line with the EU strategy on Corporate Social Responsibility. The EU also has dedicated Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child.

The EU support is focused on strengthening the capacities of partner countries to combat child labour, improving the regulatory and legislative framework, raising awareness, strengthening community prevention mechanisms and social support structures, and providing alternative training for decent jobs and income generating activities.

Moreover, child labour is addressed through the EU's assistance in key areas of child rights, women empowerment, decent work, social inclusion and protection, education and skills development. Recently the EU has oriented support to promote decent work and responsible supply chains.

The EU's Trade policy can also be instrumental in combatting child labour. The main trade policy instruments for promoting core labour standards are the EU's Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) and in particular the special incentive arrangement for human rights, sustainable development and good governance (GSP+).

Since 2008 the EU supported at least 150 actions to specifically combat child labour across 65 countries. Recently, the EU funded € 7.5 million for the CLEAR Cotton project to address child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains in Burkina Faso, Mali, Pakistan and Peru, implemented by ILO in cooperation with FAO and Civil Society Organisations.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION, FAO

Child labour perpetuates a cycle of poverty for the children involved, their families and communities. Without education, these boys and girls are likely to remain poor. The prevalence of child labour in agriculture violates the principles of decent work. By perpetuating poverty, it undermines efforts to reach sustainable food security and end hunger.

FAO works to promote a greater knowledge base on child labour across countries and within different agricultural subsectors. It enables the exchange of good practices and develops guidance materials and tools in support of national capacity building and institutional development. The Organization also provides support to overcome constraints to agricultural production that create a demand for child labour such as limited take-up of labour-saving practices and technologies. The organization also promotes the adoption of safer agricultural practices to mitigate occupational hazards.

At regional and country levels FAO supports governments to ensure that child labour prevention and reduction are better integrated into agriculture development policies, strategies and programmes. It also promotes coordinated action and implementation of national and regional commitments.

The [FAO Child Labour in Agriculture Prevention](#) (CLAP) team is part of the Decent Rural Employment Team, in the Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division at FAO Headquarters. The CLAP team has solid experience through case studies, and knowledge generation on child labour in different value chains and sub-sectors, capacity development of agricultural actors to address child labour through the promotion of good agricultural practices and advise to improve livelihoods. FAO has adopted specific safeguards on decent work and child labour.

FAO works closely with its partners, including the ILO, at global, regional and country level and co-founded in 2007, along the ILO, the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPCCLA).

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION, ILO

The ILO is the United Nations agency for the world of work, aiming at advancing social justice and promoting decent work. It sets labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men. As such, and according to its mandate, ILO has put in place a supervisory system that is unique at the international level and that helps to ensure that countries implement the conventions they ratify. In 1998, the International Labour Conference adopted the *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up*. The Declaration commits all member states whether or not they have ratified the relevant conventions, to respect and pro-

mote principles and rights in four categories: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. As such, ILO is the lead organization promoting international instruments on child labour including the ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum age for Admission to Employment, 1973 and the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 and implementing relevant programmes. The recently launched [CLEAR Cotton¹](#) project is being implemented by ILO in partnership with FAO.



Rice work in Cambodia

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1 Eliminating Child Labour and Forced Labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains: an integrated approach

USEFUL DOCUMENTS AND WEBPAGES



Buenos Aires Declaration on Child Labour, Forced Labour and Youth Employment – IV Conference of Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, Argentina 2017



Ending child labour – the decisive role of agricultural stakeholders



DEVCO: Employment & Social Inclusion



International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture



Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child



Ending child labour by 2025: A review of policies and programmes, ILO



Child Labour in the cocoa value chain: workshop report and presentations



Children shouldn't work in Fields but on Dreams! ILO brochure illustrating the main achievements with trends and plans for the achievement of the SDG target 8.7. to eliminate child labour by 2025.



Clear Cotton project: Eliminating child labour and forced labour in the cotton, textile and garment value chains: an integrated approach



Historical book 'Tackling Child Labour, 100 Years of Action'



DEVCO: Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development



New SCREAM (Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media) module on music



EU statement on the WDA CL



ILO Helpdesk for Business provides information on how to better align business operations with international labour standards including Business & Child Labour



FAO Child Labour in agriculture



World Report on Child Labour 2015: Paving the way to decent work for young people, ILO



FAO-ILO e-learning course 'End Child Labour in Agriculture'



The Future of Rural Youth in Developing Countries, Tapping the Potential of Local Value Chains, OECD 2018



Visual Facilitator's guide FAO 'Protect Children from pesticides'