



International
Labour
Organization

ILO-IPEC CONTRIBUTIONS TO **ELIMINATE** THE WORST FORMS OF **CHILD LABOUR** IN TAJIKISTAN



2005-2013

Decent Work
Technical Support
Team and Country
Office for Eastern
Europe and Central Asia

International
Programme on
the Elimination
of Child Labour (IPEC)

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CHILD LABOUR IN TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan is among the countries in Central Asia that are seriously affected by the worst forms of child labour (WFCL). Children mainly work in the construction, agriculture (cotton, tobacco, and rice plantations), and service sectors, performing such work as car washing, shoe cleaning, transporting carts in the markets, etc. The prevalence of WFCL has disastrous consequences on the safety, education, health and overall well-being of children.

According to the 2009 Labour Force Survey,¹ during the period 2004-2009, the number of children aged 12 to 14 who work at least one hour per week increased by 33.3 per cent, reaching 179,600 (34.4 per cent of the total number of children of that age) and from these, 52,000 children (10 per cent) worked more than 20 hours per week. According to this survey, child labour is used mainly in agriculture (98 per cent), in trade (0.9 per cent), in the processing industry (0.5 per cent), and in civil construction (0.5 per cent).

The IPEC Rapid Assessment Survey on Child Labour in Urban Areas² showed that most children are found working as cart drivers, loaders, car washers, market aids, also selling plastic bags, changing money for mini-van and public transport drivers at bus-stops, doing small repairs or work at construction sites, carrying out unqualified work or helping at gas-stations. These tasks are also performed by 14 to 15 year old girls, while girls work mainly as waitresses, dish-washers or cleaners in cafeterias.



Fruits crops in a family orchard by children, Sougd Region, Tajikistan, 2009.

¹ Agency of Statistic of Tajikistan: *Labour Force Survey 2009*, Dushanbe, 2009.

² ILO-IPEC: *Rapid Assessment Survey on Child Labour in Urban Areas (Dushanbe and Kurgan-Tube)*. Dushanbe, ILO, 2005, not published.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON CHILD LABOUR

By ratifying ILO Conventions related to child labour along with a number of international instruments, the Government of Tajikistan has made a commitment to take all necessary measures to address child labour at the national level, including legislative and policy measures. The relevant conventions, international instruments ratified by the Republic of Tajikistan and national legislation are presented below.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS	DATE OF RATIFICATION
ILO Convention No. 138 on the minimum age for admission to employment, 1973	26 November 1993
ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour, 1999	8 June 2005
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	26 October 1993
Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts, 2000	5 August 2002
Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000	5 July 2002

NATIONAL LEGISLATION	
1994 Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan	According to the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan (November 6, 1994), mother and child are under special protection and patronage of the state. The current constitutional norm guarantees that Tajikistan can apply international standards pertaining to child protection according to the international conventions that are recognized by the State in the best interests of children.
1997 Labour Code	It is the basic legislation that regulates work relationships and the primary piece of government legislation in the field of child labour and youth employment.
2006 Family Code	One of the main objective of the Family Code (amended No. 183, 29 April 2006) is to protect a child's right to live and grow within the family.
1999 Criminal Code	Its guarantees special protection for children and young people for crimes committed against them. It also provides measures to protect children and young people from involvement in danger, kidnapping, trafficking, recruitment with the aim of exploitation, involving teenagers in committing crime, and trafficking of children.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ON CHILD LABOUR

The following institutional framework on child labour is in place in Tajikistan:

- **Coordination Council for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour** (former National Working Group on the Elimination of Child Labour (NWGECL) set up in 2007) was established on July 28, 2012, based on the Decree No. 102 of the Minister of Labour, Employment and Migration (MLEM). The Council coordinates all activities on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour at the national level based on the provisions of ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182.
- **Child Labour Monitoring (CLM) Unit** was established in 2009 and is under the supervision of the MLEM. The CLM Unit is responsible for the design and implementation of the Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) in the country which is a process of periodically checking places where child labour might be found and then referring child labourers to viable alternatives. The CLM Unit acts as the secretariat of the Coordination Council for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. It organizes regular meetings and ensures the flow of information among the representatives of the Coordination Council and other relevant stakeholders.
- **Sub-division on child labour** has been created within the Department of Labour Protection of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Tajikistan. It serves as a centre on child labour for trade unions and coordinates trade union activities on the eradication of child labour in Tajikistan.
- **Child Labour Monitoring Committees for Dushanbe and Isfara** were set up according to the Decree of the Mayor of Dushanbe City (14 February, 2012) and Isfara (13 March, 2012). The two Committees supervise and provide technical guidance during the monitoring process and make referral decisions for children at risk or identified as involved in WFCL.
- **Commission on Child's Rights**, established in 2001, is a permanent interdepartmental advisory body responsible for the overall coordination of the activities implemented by governmental bodies at central and local levels, NGOs, social partners, international organizations and businesses activities related to the application of Tajikistan's legislation and the observance of its international obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international instruments for the protection of child rights.
- **Child Rights Departments** function under the Commission on Child Rights in four districts of Dushanbe city and in the Sougd, Khatlon and GBAO regions, at regional and district levels and implement the state policy on child protection. They aim to ensure that the interest, rights and freedom of children are respected.
- **Inter-Ministerial Commission on Combating Human Trafficking**, established in 2005, under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, dealing with the problems of trafficking in persons and make recommendations for its prevention and combating.
- **Department for the Social Protection of the Family and Children** is responsible for setting up a comprehensive system of support for motherhood and childhood and for families with children.

ILO-IPEC STRATEGY IN TAJIKISTAN

ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has been operating in the Republic of Tajikistan since 2005 in order to provide technical assistance on the implementation of 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. ILO-IPEC activities in the Republic of Tajikistan have been funded by the Department of Labor of the United States (USDOL) and the Federal Republic of Germany, according to the regional project "Combat Child Labour in Central Asia: Commitment becomes Action" (PROACT-CAR), which also includes Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

ILO-IPEC strategy has been a combination of policy-related **upstream** interventions to create a conducive environment with **downstream** service-oriented activities at the community level for working children. ILO-IPEC priorities in the country continue to be guided by the framework provided by the ILO Global Action Plan (adopted by the ILO's Governing Body in 2006) which sets the internationally agreed goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016; the Hague Roadmap³ and the Decent Work Country Programme for Tajikistan.

ILO-IPEC main pillars of intervention

1. Mainstreaming child labour into national development policy frameworks.
2. Increasing the knowledge base on the worst forms of child labour.
3. Enhancing the capacity of Government officials, employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs on child labour issues.
4. Advocacy and awareness-raising on child labour.
5. Direct services provided to working children and children at risk, including the implementation of the Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) and promotion of youth employment.



Meeting of the President of Tajikistan and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration with working children, unidentified in the frame CLSM programme, Dushanbe, 2012.

³ The Hague Global Child Labour Conference (May 2010), adopted the Roadmap for achieving the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016.

MAINSTREAMING CHILD LABOUR INTO NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

The first **National Action Plan on Prevention and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Tajikistan for 2013-2020** was based on wide consultations with key stakeholders at national and local levels. It entrusts the Government, trade unions, and employers with the implementation of activities aimed at preventing and eliminating the worst forms of child labour in Tajikistan.

The **Regional Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour for Sougd Region (northern part of the country) for 2011-2014** was approved by the Sougd Regional Government in November 2010. Some 300,000 Tajik Somoni⁴ were allocated for 2011 by business structures, regional financial departments and regional departments on child rights. The main areas of intervention are: awareness-raising activities, prevention and protection of child labour, rehabilitation and withdrawal of children from the WFCL.

State Labour Market Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2012-2020, approved in 2011 through the Decree no. 277 of the Government of Tajikistan is an instrument to promote economic growth and enhance the employment rate. With IPEC support, the issue of the elimination of the worst forms of child labour was mainstreamed into the Strategy.

State Integrated Anti-Trafficking Programme for 2011-2013 was developed by the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Combating Human Trafficking and was approved on 3 March 2011 by Decree no. 113 of the Government of Tajikistan. Objectives of the programme include the elimination of forced child labour in agriculture and child trafficking.

The goal of the **National Action Plan to reform the juvenile justice system 2010-2015** is to bring the law, policy and practice in the field of juvenile justice in line with international norms and standards in order to create a system for children who are in conflict with the law. It will ensure the proper treatment of children, respecting their rights and dignity, seeking to reduce juvenile criminality and relapse among young people under 18 years and effectively respond to the needs of each child.

Child labour was mainstreamed in the **UNDAF Tajikistan (2010-2015)** under Output 1.4.1 "National legislation, policies and implementation mechanisms are in compliance with international standards especially on child labour and family violence and institutional settings, including ILO Convention No. 182", as well as under Output 1.4.2 "International standards for monitoring and analysis of gender equality, children with disabilities, child labour, refugees are integrated into the national statistical framework".

⁴ Equivalent of USD 67,415 at the UN exchange rate for January 2011, USD 1 = 4.45 TJS.

INCREASING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR

Capacity building and awareness- raising activities were based on the following tools, publications and materials, produced by IPEC partners in the country as well as existing IPEC materials, adapted and translated into the Russian and Tajik languages:

- ACT/EMP; OIE: *Eliminating Child Labour: Guides for Employers*. Geneva, ILO, 2008. Available at: www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/actemp/whatwedo/projects/cl/index.htm. Guidelines available in English, French, Spanish, Indonesian, Mongolian, and Russian.
- ILO/ACTRAV: *Trade Unions and Child Labour*. Dushanbe, ILO, 2006. Translated into Russian.
- ILO-IPEC: *Training materials package for elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture*. Dushanbe, ILO, 2010. Translated and adapted into Russian.
- ILO-IPEC: *Guidelines on Child Labour Monitoring*. Dushanbe, ILO, 2010. Translated into Russian.
- ILO-IPEC: *Safe work for youth" Manual*, Dushanbe, ILO, 2012. Translated into Russian.
- ILO-IPEC: *Child Labour Monitoring in the Republic of Tajikistan*. Dushanbe, ILO. Manual developed by an independent expert for ILO-IPEC.
- ILO-IPEC: *Code of Conduct for the Employers' Association of Tajikistan to eliminate the worst forms of child labour in agriculture*. Dushanbe, ILO, 2012.
- Guidelines for monitoring and reporting on the direct beneficiaries (children), receiving support from the IPEC projects, 2012.
- Guidelines on Non-Formal Education for working children in the Russian and Tajik languages, 2012.

At the request of the Government of Tajikistan, a National Child Labour Survey (CLS) is on-going and supported by the IPEC Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) in 2012-2013. The CLS will provide comprehensive data on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of all children aged 5 to 17 years, as well as necessary information on children's activities, including schooling and both economic and non-economic activities.



Advisory Board's meeting on implementation of National Child Labour Survey at the Agency of Statistic, under the President of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, 2012.

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

Capacity development of the Government

- The Child Labour Monitoring Unit was established in 2009 under the **Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration (MLEM)** and is responsible for the preparation of a broad organizational child labour monitoring framework, as well as the identification and formulation of a systematic response to combat child labour. The process of planning and management carried out in close collaboration with the Coordination Council on Elimination of the WFCL and the CLM Unit continues to forge close cooperation with institution-members of the Coordination Council.
- 38 staff of the MLEM participated in a two-day National Orientation Workshop on CLMS based on IPEC's Child Labour Monitoring Training Manual and Hand-outs for the CLM National Orientation in order to strengthen their knowledge on CLMS, increase their capacity and motivation to support CLM implementation at national and local levels.
- 10 staff of the MLEM participated in a three – day training on Combating Trafficking in Children for Labour, Sexual and Other Forms of Exploitation in order to strengthen the skills and knowledge on these issues. This training was given in order to address the needs of the governments at policy and outreach level and to ensure their support in delivering capacity building activities on trafficking in children for labour, commercial sexual exploitation and other forms of exploitation for key stakeholders at national and regional levels.
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan, with the support of IPEC, launched a national web site on child labour www.no-childlabour.tj, which is regularly updated and maintained by the National Centre for Adult Education of the MLEM of Tajikistan.



Study tour on Child Labour Monitoring System in Tajikistan for IPEC partners from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Dushanbe, 2013.

Capacity development of Employers' Organizations

- A Training of Trainers (TOT) on the "Elimination of Child Labour in Agriculture", with a particular focus on cotton and with the objective of establishing and training a pilot group of trainers on the elimination of child labour in agriculture was conducted by the IPEC HQ Specialist on Hazardous Child Labour.
- 200 heads of farms from four regions of the Republic of Tajikistan were trained on hazardous child labour in agriculture.
- A Resource Centre on Child Labour in agriculture was established in 2009. It collects and disseminates information on hazardous child labour in agriculture in Tajikistan, organizes awareness-raising activities, training and seminars with the members of the Union of Employers.
- A Code of Conduct for the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture intended for the employers of the agriculture sector was developed and discussed with 100 leaders of Farmers' Associations and was approved on 13 of February 2012 by the Chairman and Board of Directors of the Union of Employers of Tajikistan.

Capacity development of Workers' Organizations

- A Training of Trainers (TOT) on the "Elimination of Child Labour in Agriculture", with a particular focus on cotton, was conducted by the IPEC HQ Specialist on Hazardous Child Labour for five trade unions specialists in 2009. The main objective of the TOT was to establish and train a pilot group of trainers on the elimination of child labour in agriculture and to help them to develop their future training programmes.
- Training sessions of the Parents' Committees of the Secondary Schools of Khatlon Province on the Prevention of Child Labour in the Cotton Fields were conducted in 2007 by the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Tajikistan for 300 chairpersons of parents' committees from 100 schools in 10 cotton growing districts, within the framework of an IPEC supported Action Programme.
- 180 chairmen of Trade Union Committees of the Agro-Industrial Complex of the Khatlon cotton cultivated region (Vakhsh and Kolkhozabad districts) were trained by the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Tajikistan based on the IPEC training kit "Training Resource Pack on the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture" within the framework of an IPEC supported Action Programme.
- The National Committee of Workers' Unions of Trade, Consumer Cooperatives and other Forms of Entrepreneurship conducted awareness-raising activities and capacity building training on child labour for 65 trade union activities and for 35 administrative and management members of the six biggest markets of the city of Dushanbe (Korvon, Shohmansur, Dehkon, Sahovat, Barakat, Qarai- Bolo). Under the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Tajikistan (central office), a "Sub-division on child labour" has been created within the Department of Labour Protection. The Sub-division serves as the centre on child labour for trade unions and coordinates trade unions' measures with regard to the eradication of child labour in Tajikistan.

ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS-RAISING

World Day Against Child Labour, 12 June

Since 2005, IPEC campaigns every year to increase public awareness on child labour issues.

The message of World Day 2008 “Education: the right response to child labour”, and it was celebrated by organizing a national campaign in the northern part of the country with the participation of more than 400 children from Sughd Oblast. Through drawings, presentations and various sports competitions they expressed their views against child labour.

The message of World Day 2009 “Give the girls a chance: End child labour”, was devoted to working girls in the country. The national awareness raising campaign was organized jointly with the Farmers’ Association of GBAO and the Employers’ Organization of the Republic of Tajikistan in GBAO.

The message of World Day 2010 was “Go for the goal... end child labour”. The programme “Young journalists against child labour” produced four television reports on child labour. A five-day workshop for ten young journalists was held, two radio broadcasts on “Children’s rights and child labour” were broadcast, and a press conference on “Child labour and its consequences for the country” took place.

The message of World Day 2011 “Warning! Children in hazardous work” was marked by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection which organized a round table on the the urgency to tackle hazardous child labour in order to make progress on the global goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour;

The message of World Day 2012 “Human rights and social justice... let’s end child labour” was marked through the collaboration of the Mayor’s office of Dushanbe, the Commission on the Rights of the Child and the mobile company Megafon. They organized: a public campaign and round table on “Children’s rights and social justice - No child labour in Tajikistan”.



World Day Against Child Labour Campaign, Dushanbe 2012.

DIRECT SERVICES PROVIDED TO WORKING CHILDREN AND CHILDREN AT RISK TO WORK

The ILO-IPEC programme has provided direct services to working children and children at risk to work. Children received formal and non-formal education, education and career guidance, vocational educational training, life skills, in-job training, and job placement for children of legal working age. Moreover, family members of working children were referred to Employment Offices and provided with career guidance sessions, vocational training, job placement and working tools to support self-employment, as well as counselling sessions on hazards and risks related to child labour in urban and rural areas.

As part of the direct services, the Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) has been piloted since 2009. Its main outcomes are the following:

- A Child Labour Monitoring Unit established at the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection for the preparation of a broad organizational child labour monitoring framework, as well as the identification and formulation of a systematic response against child labour.
- Child Labour Monitoring Brochure and the Overview of Child Labour Monitoring were translated into the Russian language, printed and disseminated at national level.
- National Guidelines on CLMS for Tajikistan were developed and were approved by the Coordination Council on Elimination of Child Labour and IPEC.
- 39 Multi-Disciplinary Teams of monitors were selected and were trained on identification and assessment of child labour cases.
- Members of the Coordination Council on Elimination of Child Labour trained in a two-day CLM orientation workshop to improve their knowledge on CLM, to create a National CLM Coordination Chart among the governmental agencies, social partners, and NGOs.
- 120 teachers from the target areas trained in four one-day workshops on child labour, CLMS, non-formal education and SCREAM.
- 250 parents of working children participated in child labour awareness-raising sessions; they were provided with counselling on the consequences of child labour, information on existing social services (including social benefits they are entitled to).
- Two CLMS Committees (20 members each), including the key stakeholders established under the Child Rights Departments of Dushanbe Municipality and Isfara district to supervise and provide technical guidance during the monitoring process and make referral decisions for children at risk or identified as involved in WFCL.
- A Child Labour Database prepared and updated on a regular basis by a consultant based on the information collected by MDTs and documented by CLM Committees (including DBMR data on services provided and progress registered by children).

- State certificates on completion of the Vocational Education Training (VET) courses were officially handed over to 71 children following seamstress', confectioners', plumbers' and computer courses and 110 children received a life skills certificate on attending the mentioned VET courses.
- 62 children received non-formal education classes (45 minutes/session, five days a week).
- 73 children withdrawn from child labour and 109 children prevented from entering child labour through the provision of education-based services.
- Eight CLMS good practices collected, consolidated and documented.
- In 2012-2013 the project "Promotion of youth employment through Child Labour Monitoring System in two pilot areas in Tajikistan" has been in the process of implementation and has been reaching 50 working children aged 15 to 17. The programme is aimed at reinforcing the CLMS institutional framework through: capacity building and mainstreaming safe work for youth sessions into the VET curricula of the National Centre for Adult Education/ MLEM; piloting the CLMS with a focus on promoting youth employment in decent jobs in two pilot areas (urban and rural areas); the provision of direct services to children above the minimum age who are involved in hazardous child labour and children who are at risk of being involved in such labour with a view to preparing them for employment; raising awareness of parents on hazardous child labour.



Vocational education training at the MLEM in the framework of CLMS.

ILO-IPEC NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Government

- Executive Office of the President, Department of Social Protection, Employment and Migration
- Committee on Human Rights under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Centre for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Interdepartmental Commission for the Prevention of Human Trafficking
- Coordination Council on Elimination of Child Labour
- Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection
- Ministry of Science and Education
- Ministry of Justice

Social partners

- Federation of Trade Unions of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Employers' Organization of the Republic of Tajikistan

NGOs

- Madina
- Avrora
- Youth of 21st Century
- Young people and civilization
- The refugees, children and vulnerable citizens
- Dast ba Dast
- Samo
- Youth House
- National Centre for Human Rights and Civil Society
- National Association of Small and Medium Business
- Public association "Nasli Navras"
- National Association SIYB
- Centre for the Promotion of educational reforms "Pulse"
- Information and Advisory Resource Centre for Labour
- Bureau for Human Rights
- Center for Children's Rights

WAYS FORWARD

Linkages between child labour and youth employment

While child labour is unacceptable and must be eliminated, neglecting the potential of young people is an economic and social waste that economies cannot afford. If not adequately addressed, the impact of the crisis on children and youth can jeopardize countries' human capital and generate long term consequences on economies in our region.

Effective action on child labour and youth employment needs to be based on a full recognition of their linkages. An integrated perspective is therefore required in the development of adequate strategies. As a smooth transition from school to work begins with an adequate preparation for the labour market, strategies to improve young people's chances need to be complemented by efforts to eliminate child labour and to improve adults' employment prospects.

Linkages between child labour and social protection

Alongside broader economic and social development strategies, an important key to addressing poverty is the establishment or strengthening of social protection to provide support to those in need. Focusing social protection more on children's welfare has the potential to benefit not only children, but also their families, communities and national development as a whole.

It is extremely important to better link social protection with policies aimed at child labour elimination, based on the recent UN Social Protection Floor Initiative which aims at ensuring access to essential services and social transfers for poor and vulnerable populations. "Building blocks" for a social protection floor could include measures such as: cash transfer programmes, services and transfers related to childcare, food security programmes, school grants, school feeding programmes, and other social assistance programmes.

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