

# Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016



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## Outcome Document

The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010  
Towards a World without Child Labour  
Mapping the Road to 2016

# Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016

## Preamble

- i. A new momentum is necessary if the world is to attain the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 as agreed upon by the ILO tripartite constituents in the Global Action Plan.<sup>1</sup> Around the world, 215 million boys and girls<sup>2</sup> are engaged in child labour.<sup>3</sup> One hundred and fifteen million of these children are exposed to its worst forms.<sup>4</sup> Removing these children from the worst forms and offering them a future without child labour is an urgent priority.
- ii. **We**, participants at the *Global Child Labour Conference 2010. Towards a world without child labour – Mapping the road to 2016*, representatives from governments, employers' and workers' organizations, non-governmental and other civil society organizations, regional and international organizations, have gathered in the Hague, the Netherlands, on 10 and 11 May 2010, to take stock of progress made since the adoption of the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), to assess remaining obstacles and to agree on measures to accelerate progress towards the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016, while affirming the overarching goal of the effective abolition of child labour, which is reflected in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and ILO Convention, 1973 (No. 138) to which ILO Convention, 1999 (No. 182) is complementary, and
- iii. **Considering** that action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour is most effective and sustainable when it is situated within action to eliminate all child labour, including through area-based and sector-based programmes, and
- iv. **Acknowledging** that the effective abolition of child labour is a moral necessity and that all ILO members have an obligation to respect, promote and realize that principle; that it can yield high social and economic returns, and that eradicating child labour - and providing the alternative of education and training, and decent work for adults and children of working age - contributes to households breaking out of the cycle of poverty, and helps countries advance human development, and
- v. **Recognizing** that the international community has identified child labour as a significant impediment to the realization of children's rights, national development<sup>5</sup> and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to poverty alleviation, education, gender equality and HIV/AIDS, and recognizing furthermore that the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 190) reflect a global consensus that immediate and effective measures are required to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency, and
- vi. **Noting** that over the past decade action against the worst forms of child labour has been implemented in all parts of the world and that this has led to significant progress; that this demonstrates that the fight against child labour can be won with sound policy choices and substantial national and international resource commitments, and when capitalizing on new opportunities, such as the G-20 summits and the Global Jobs Pact, and
- vii. **Acknowledging** the available data concerning the incidence of child labour, by sector, with the highest incidence of child labour in agriculture (60%), and 26 % in services,<sup>6</sup> while recognizing the need for more data collection covering hard-to-reach children including in domestic work, slavery, sexual exploitation and illicit activities, and
- viii. **Agreeing** that with six years remaining until the target date of 2016 for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, it is imperative to substantially upscale and accelerate action, given the overall pace of progress and that the global economic crisis puts recent progress at risk, and

- ix. **Recognizing** further that now, more than ever, political leadership is needed to achieve the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, and that governments in partnership with all other relevant actors need to act swiftly and with determination in this endeavour, particularly in the informal economy where most child labour occurs, and
- x. **Acknowledging** that international cooperation and/or assistance among Members for the prohibition and effective elimination of the worst forms of child labour should complement national efforts and may, as appropriate, be developed and implemented in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations,
- xi. **Declare** that we will substantially increase efforts to ensure that we achieve the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 and **we agree** to this Roadmap, and **we urge** the international community to substantially increase its efforts in this regard.

## Part I – Principles and Action

### *Guiding principles*

1. Governments have the primary responsibility for enforcing the right to education for all children, and the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. The social partners and other civil society organizations, and international organizations have important roles in promoting and supporting such action.
2. Government responsibility should be assumed at the highest level and with the best interests of children in mind, taking into consideration the views of children and their families, and should include due attention to the most vulnerable children and the conditions that create their vulnerability. In doing so governments should assess the impact of relevant policies on the worst forms of child labour, taking into account gender and age, put in place preventive and time-bound measures and make adequate financial resources available to fight the worst forms of child labour, including through international cooperation.<sup>7</sup>
3. In a globalized economy, government responsibility includes developing and strengthening policies and programmes, in consultation with social partners, that address child labour issues, in particular the worst forms, in international supply chains.
4. Government actions to combat child trafficking, prostitution, production of pornography and the trafficking of drugs should where necessary include international cooperation.
5. Governments should consider ways to address the potential vulnerability of children to, in particular, the worst forms of child labour, in the context of migratory flows.
6. All actors should work towards strengthening the world wide movement against child labour, including by using traditional and new media. They should – according to their expertise – raise awareness and sensitize the public on the rights of children to be free from child labour, the value of education and training, and the longer term costs of child labour, in terms of health, employment opportunities, persistent inequalities and intergenerational poverty.
7. There is no single policy that by itself will end the worst forms of child labour. However, evidence has shown that targeted action that simultaneously addresses the implementation and enforcement of legislation, the provision and accessibility of public services (including free, quality compulsory education, training and non-discriminatory social protection services), and the functioning of labour markets, yields high returns in the fight against child labour, including its worst forms. The elimination of child labour should therefore be integrated in broader policy frameworks at national and sub-national levels, and policy coordination should be strengthened through appropriate inter-ministerial mechanisms.

## *Action by governments*

### 8. Government actions should be guided by the following policy priorities:

#### 8.1 National legislation and enforcement:

- 8.1.1 Working towards implementation of the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) and, for states party to the ILO Conventions addressing child labour, full implementation of those conventions, and for states that are not party to those conventions, consideration of ratifications, as well as the optional protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;<sup>8</sup>
- 8.1.2 Adopting and enforcing national legislation against child labour and its worst forms in particular, ensuring that these rights are respected for all children without exception, and ensuring that information on relevant legislation is widely disseminated;
- 8.1.3 Developing and implementing cross-sectoral national action plans to eliminate the worst forms of child labour as a priority, in consultation with social partners and taking into consideration the views of other parties as appropriate. Providing adequate resources to achieve the goals so established;
- 8.1.4 Periodically reviewing and updating national lists of hazardous work prohibited for children in consultation with social partners;
- 8.1.5 Ensuring access to justice by children and their families, including by ensuring that justice systems and processes are child friendly;
- 8.1.6 Enforcing appropriate sanctions against perpetrators of the worst forms of child labour, strengthening the inspection and monitoring machinery that bring these to light, and documenting court cases. Particular emphasis should be given to strengthening labour inspection, including on occupational health and safety.

#### 8.2 Education and training:

- 8.2.1 Extending and improving access to free, compulsory, quality education for all children, with a particular focus on girls, and ensuring that all children under the minimum age for employment are in full-time education, and including where appropriate and consistent with relevant international labour standards, in vocational or technical education;
- 8.2.2 Adopting strategies to remove costs that represent a barrier to education, in particular fees and school supplies;
- 8.2.3 Adopting strategies to (i) encourage and monitor school enrolment, attendance, retention and reintegration, through, for instance, scholarship and school meal programs to help poor families reduce the costs of education,<sup>9</sup> and (ii) create a child-friendly learning environment, in which children are protected from abuse, violence and discrimination;
- 8.2.4 Developing concrete plans and mechanisms to meet the needs of children engaged in the worst forms of child labour as per ILO Convention No. 182 and support their transition into appropriate education or vocational training.

### 8.3 Social protection:

- 8.3.1 Implementing strategies, policies and programmes that offer access to and delivery of social and health services to vulnerable and socially excluded households, hard-to-reach children, and children with special needs, where possible including a basic social protection floor;
- 8.3.2 Fighting discrimination that contributes to child labour;
- 8.3.3 Supporting families' capacity to protect their children by working towards a system of social protection through, for instance, cash transfer schemes; public works; access to credit, insurance and savings schemes; strengthening and implementing national protection frameworks to protect children from exploitation;
- 8.3.4 Assisting victims of the worst forms of child labour to prevent their return to child labour.

### 8.4 Labour market policy:

- 8.4.1 Taking action to foster a well-functioning labour market, as well as access to vocational training for adults and young people of working age that corresponds with the current and future needs of the labour market so as to facilitate the school to work transition;
- 8.4.2 Supporting employment creation and promoting decent and productive work for adults and young people of working age, that is consistent with the fundamental principles and rights at work;<sup>10</sup>
- 8.4.3 Working towards regulating and formalizing the informal economy where most instances of the worst forms of child labour occur, including through the strengthening of state labour inspection and enforcement systems and capacities;
- 8.4.4 Creating an environment, together with social partners, that aims to combat child labour in supply chains.

### ***Action by the social partners***

#### 9. Social partners should be guided by the following priority actions:

- 9.1 Taking immediate and effective measures within their own competence for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency including through policies and programmes that address child labour;<sup>11</sup>
- 9.2 Advocating for the effective abolition of child labour, where appropriate in collaboration with other civil society organizations;
- 9.3 Advocating for effective training and education policies and for extended access to free, compulsory, quality education up to the minimum age for admission to employment;
- 9.4 Improving outreach (by workers' organizations) into the economic sectors in which child labour is prevalent, and implementing initiatives in particular sectors;
- 9.5 Working to ensure that effective systems are in place to combat child labour in supply chains, recognising the usefulness of social dialogue in the design and implementation of such systems. Publicising, promoting and learning from successful initiatives to combat child labour and in particular its worst forms, with the support, where appropriate, of governments and international organizations.

***Action by non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors***

10. NGOs and other civil society actors should be guided by the following priority actions:
  - 10.1 Generating support in society for the effective abolition of child labour , including by contributing to knowledge on the extent and impact of child labour, by developing demonstration projects for up-scaling by governments, and by calling upon governments to implement education for all and effective policies against child labour, especially its worst forms;
  - 10.2 Calling upon governments to respect children's rights and ensure that appropriate services are offered to vulnerable children to protect them from child labour, especially its worst forms, and assist those that have been withdrawn from child labour;
  - 10.3 Supporting multi-stakeholder initiatives in sectors of the economy that involve the worst forms of child labour;
  - 10.4 Contributing to monitoring the incidence of child labour and related issues, including through appropriate research and capacity building;
  - 10.5 Engaging children and their families in an inclusive and participatory manner so that policy makers can consider their views when developing policies.

***Action by international and regional organizations***

11. International and regional organizations should be guided by the following priority actions:
  - 11.1 Providing technical and where appropriate financial assistance to support governments' efforts to mainstream policies regarding the worst forms of child labour into their development strategies at national and local levels, particularly those directed at poverty reduction, health and education, child and social protection, gender equality and human development;
  - 11.2 Promoting an effective partnership across the United Nations and the multilateral system to address child labour, mainstreaming child labour into international policy and development frameworks and indicators and intensifying cooperation regarding child labour, including through the global task force on education and child labour and other existing partnerships,<sup>12</sup> while recognizing the lead role of the ILO in combating child labour;
  - 11.3 Mobilizing additional financing for the effective abolition of child labour, especially in its worst forms;
  - 11.4 Developing further methodologies and capacity to conduct research on child labour, particularly its worst forms, undertaking systematic impact assessments and evaluations of child labour interventions, including the differential outcomes for girls and boys and different age groups, and improving documentation and knowledge sharing;
  - 11.5 Strengthening efforts (together with governments and other relevant partners) to address hazardous work by children particularly in sectors and occupations where child labour is most prevalent;
  - 11.6 Promoting and supporting the continued development of the worldwide movement against child labour, including by supporting the work of the social partners as well as NGOs and others.

## Part II – Promotion of the Roadmap and monitoring of progress

12. The promotion of action and monitoring of progress in eliminating the worst forms of child labour is to be undertaken consistent with, and complementary to the ILO supervisory system and reporting mechanisms, and to enhance progress towards the 2016 goal. Recommended actions include:
  - 12.1 The establishment, by governments, of (i) effective national follow-up mechanisms additional to their obligations under ILO Convention No. 182, to review progress to end the worst forms of child labour domestically – such as annual tri-partite meetings - and (ii) national initiatives to monitor<sup>13</sup> progress in eliminating the worst forms of child labour, taking into account national action plans and other time-bound measures, and capitalizing on information available through reporting under existing obligations such as international conventions' supervisory mechanisms<sup>14</sup> and national Millennium Development Goal monitoring systems;
  - 12.2 The founding of a “Global Leaders against Child Labour Initiative”, composed of eminent persons in order to promote the Roadmap globally and progress towards the 2016 goal;
  - 12.3 The publication of an annual World Child Labour Report by the “Global Leaders against Child Labour Initiative”, in collaboration with the Understanding Children’s Work Programme<sup>15</sup> reviewing overall progress towards meeting the 2016 goal and analysing trends and developments. The report is to be published for World Day against Child Labour.

The participants express their gratitude to the government of the Netherlands for hosting this conference pursuant to the Global Action Plan, and acknowledge the intention of the government of the Netherlands to bring this document to the attention of the International Labour Conference and the Review Conference on the Implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals.

*Adopted by acclamation at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010, 11 May 2010.*

## (Endnotes)

- 1 This goal has been agreed upon by the ILO constituency of 183 member States and workers' and employers' organizations. It was endorsed by the ILO Governing Body in November 2006.
- 2 This figure is taken from the 2010 ILO Global Report on child labour.
- 3 Child labour is work done by a child who is under the minimum age specified for that kind of work, as defined by national legislation, guided by the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and ILO Convention Nos. 138 and 182.
- 4 The worst forms of child labour are defined in the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182) as:
  - (a) 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;
  - (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or pornographic performances;
  - (c) 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;
  - (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Recommendation 190, accompanying Convention No.182, provides further guidance.

- 5 Including in the following instruments, documents and events:
  - ILO Minimum Age Convention, No. 138 (1973);
  - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989);
  - Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995);
  - International Child Labour Conferences in Amsterdam and Oslo (both 1997);
  - ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998);
  - ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182);
  - World Fit for Children (2002), outcome document of the 2002 UNGASS on Children;
  - Global Action Plan against the Worst Forms of Child Labour (2006);
  - ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008).
- 6 See ILO 2010 Global Report.
- 7 As per article 8 of ILO Convention No. 182.
- 8 The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
- 9 See *Rethinking school feeding. Social safety nets, child development and the education sector*, World Bank, 2009.
- 10 See the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998).
- 11 Employers can make use of the ILO/IOE guides: *Eliminating Child Labour: Guides for Employers*.
- 12 Existing partnerships include the Understanding Children's Work (UCW) Programme, the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All (GTF), the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT), the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture and the International Partnership for the Elimination of Child Labour in Mining and Quarrying, and the United Cities and Local Governments network (that has issued a Millennium Declaration entitled *Bringing the Millennium Development Goals back home*).



- 13 In monitoring, giving special attention to younger children, the girl child, hidden work situations in which girls are at special risk, and other groups of children with special vulnerabilities or needs (as per ILO Recommendation No. 190) and to child labour in agriculture.
- 14 The ILO Conference Committee on the Application of Standards, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- 15 The Understanding Children's Work (UCW) Programme is a joint initiative of ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank.



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