

## **Seventh Working Group meeting on EFA**

**19 – 21 July 2006  
UNESCO Paris  
Room X (Fontenoy)**

### Session 2

## Reaching the EFA Goals: Overcoming Child Labour to achieve EFA

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENT**

#### **1. Introduction**

Global estimates by UNESCO and UNICEF put the number of primary school-age children who are out of school at 115 million in 2001/02, (and 103 million, GMR report of 2006) or 18 per cent of all primary school-age children. Similarly, ILO estimates<sup>1</sup> put the global number of child labourers aged 5 to 11 at 109, 7 million in 2000 and 107, 6 million in 2004.

Being deprived of education and being a child labourer are not one and the same thing but they are not unrelated, far from it because both relate to poverty. The fact that estimates of the two phenomena are of similar orders of magnitude, that 94% of out-of-school children of primary school age are in developing countries and that the vast majority of both out-of-school children and child labourers are in South Asia (35%) and Sub-Saharan Africa (40%) is indicative of the linkages that bind them together, linkages that are observed in numerous case studies as well. It is now more widely acknowledged that these problems are inextricably intertwined and are best tackled jointly. Indeed, those involved in global efforts to combat child labour, reduce poverty and ensure access to quality education for all children share a common belief that none of these objectives can be achieved in isolation. It is this recognition that underlies the establishment of the *Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All*.

#### **2. Education systems must be inclusive**

The 2006 *EFA Global Monitoring Report* highlights the need for education to “be inclusive, responding to the diverse needs and circumstances of learners and giving appropriate weight to the abilities, skills and knowledge they bring to the teaching and learning process”. The Dakar Framework for Action (2000) also underlines the need for all countries to promote an inclusive learning environment within the education system. It is essential that education systems reach out to all children, whatever their circumstances, situation, sex, origin, religion or culture.

A crucial target group for inclusive education strategies is the millions of child labourers worldwide who have never attended school, have dropped out of school, or (and) combine school and work. The development of specific programmes to address the education, training and socio-economic needs of working children, their families and their communities is critical to achieve educational objectives, notably the EFA goals. Education systems must become more responsive to the needs, expectations and special circumstances of child labourers. This is also linked to an improved socio-economic situation of parents, families and communities sustained through growth and equitable distribution of the fruits of growth. Only under these circumstances then can real change come about and progress be made in making the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) a reality.

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<sup>1</sup> The , ILO estimates put the global number of child labourers aged 5 to 14 at 186 million in 2000 and 166 million in 2004, or some 16 and 14 per cent of children in that age group respectively.

Providing free, compulsory and good quality education up to the minimum age for employment (up to 14 years of age - less than 15 years old) as defined by the ILO Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age for Employment, is widely regarded as the key to progressively eliminating child labour. Education has a dual role in relation to child labour. It is on the one hand a crucial element in the rehabilitation and social reintegration of child labourers and on the other a powerful tool in preventing children at risk from slipping into situations of child labour.

However, interventions in education need to be accompanied by interventions that aim at changing attitudes in society and addressing the survival needs of families. Improved access to education programmes and better quality of education, including curricula suited to the needs and aspirations of affected children, will have a significant effect, but they need to be supported by other programmes that focus on, for example, poverty reduction, awareness raising, legal reform, regulation and enforcement, income generation, employment promotion for adults and social safety nets for families prone to resort to child labour.

### **3. Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All (GTF)**

In November 2003, an initiative was launched at the first Inter-Agency Round Table on Child Labour and Education organized during the annual meeting of the UNESCO High-Level Group on EFA in New Delhi, India. The Round Table issued a joint statement, the New Delhi Declaration, calling for greater co-ordination between initiatives and resources directed towards providing quality education for all children and eliminating child labour. In order to promote this enhanced co-ordination and to move the agenda forward in terms of mainstreaming and monitoring, the host organizations – ILO, UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank, and the Global March Against Child Labour – proposed the formation of a Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education For All, which should include all concerned parties, other UN agencies, donors, governments, private sector, workers' organizations and other civil society organizations.

The Global Task Force (GTF) was launched during the Beijing Round Table in November 2005, and endorsed by the EFA High Level Group. Its terms of reference are now in place. This alliance of agencies, partners and organizations sharing similar interests and responsibilities, combined with the active involvement of the countries concerned, will enable a more effective approach to policy development, resource management, and project implementation, follow-up and monitoring. The Task Force would facilitate collaboration in ensuring coordination and the best use of the comparative advantage of different partners, resource mobilization, upstream assistance in policy development and reform, capacity building among various partners, including relevant line ministries, awareness raising and other areas of advocacy, promotion of dialogue between governments, social partners and civil society, coordination of knowledge management, and identification of new areas for research.

The GTF membership initially includes the above-listed Roundtable hosts. The Dakar Framework for Action (DFA), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the ILO Conventions No. 138 on Minimum Age for Employment and No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour provide the policy context for the work of the GTF. The ILO, as the secretariat of the GTF, hosted its first meeting in Geneva in January 2006.

### **4. Future programme of the Global Task Force**

With the Global Task Force and its terms of reference established, the next important task is to draw up its work programme in the short and medium term. A first step in this direction was taken earlier when the GTF members agreed to work towards the elaboration of two joint initiatives: one on child domestic work and education, for which UNICEF is taking the lead, and another on mainstreaming child labour issues in the EFA and EFA-supporting frameworks such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Fast Track Initiative (FTI) that will be spearheaded by the ILO. These initiatives are envisaged to be implemented in a few pilot countries. Other initiatives, be they country specific or not, are expected to emerge as well in due course.

#### **4.1 *Joint initiative on child domestic work and education***

Child domestic labour (CDL) in third-party households represents a major barrier to access and completion of quality basic education, especially in the poorest countries, as it directly relates to the opportunity costs which families take into consideration in making decisions about whether or not to send their children to school. The present state of knowledge about the phenomenon (which is overwhelmingly a manifestation of the problem of girl children) remains patchy in light of the dearth of significant data and official statistics. CDL is very difficult to measure because of problems of definition and because of its invisible and hidden nature (employment within informal and closed family environments).

However, the experience of several development partners confirms that there are many good reasons to assume that a substantial number of the 65 million out-of-school girls is involved in domestic labour. Girls' involvement in domestic labour entails strong potential for exploitation and abuse and it is often accompanied by harsh working conditions and deprivation of rights. Furthermore, experience also indicates that those children who are simultaneously attending school and engaged in domestic labour will not learn like the others and they have very few chances to complete a basic education cycle.

While there are good practices in education and protection programs addressing the phenomenon of CDL, these remain scarce in comparison to other child labour initiatives. It is very difficult to tackle CDL because of its complex nature (diverse push and pull factors; diverse profiles) and because of its embedding in social fabrics and kinship relationships and its wide acceptance and sanctioning by society. The lack of understanding of the phenomenon from the girl's or child's perspective has also hampered adapted responses. Furthermore, programmatic efforts in the field of education (most in the form of non-formal education) are dispersed, marginal, poorly invested in and not mainstreamed in formal education systems; in fact, they are often relayed to Ministries of Social Affairs and not given much recognition. Last, and not least, the multiple and diverse factors affecting CDL require the concerted input of many sectors (education, social affairs, labour, agriculture, etc.) into a well articulated and effective policy framework on CDL that is based on inter-sectoral collaboration and that leverages the benefits of other development interventions.

Whether in school or not, child domestic workers need to be targeted with specific education and protection strategies and within more strategic approaches which are embedded in education sector reforms, social protection mechanisms and poverty reduction strategies. The education and development community cannot afford to abandon this specific group of children. This is a human rights issue and it has direct implications on the attainment of the MDGs.

#### **The goal of the initiative**

The goal of this Joint Initiative is 1. to support the development – in selected countries – of a comprehensive education and protection program that addresses the phenomenon of CDL within national education plans and sector reforms; 2. to strengthen partnerships and collaborative mechanisms around an intersectoral strategic approach and around the leveraging of the needed technical and financial resources for implementation; and 3. to develop an effective communication strategy at national and global levels that promotes a conducive environment for success. The ultimate goal is the replication of the models developed among a larger number of countries on the basis of South/South exchange and collaboration.

#### **The components of the initiative**

**1. Program development:** In the field of education, the model of Child Friendly Schools will be developed and mainstreamed as a strategy that strengthens outreach and inclusion together with quality and meaningful learning. Flexible education approaches adapted to the learning and rehabilitation needs of child domestic workers will be promoted, while at the same time furthering conducive environments and bridges to the formal education system within a holistic and inclusive rights-based approach to education. Specific responses in the field of protection and social work will accompany education

measures. Participatory action research (PAR) will be introduced as an outreach methodology, bridging the gap between research and practice, furthering learning and empowerment and responding to the specific needs and aspirations of child domestic workers. Programmatic strategies will also include work with families and communities, as well as capacity-building measures. The overall aim will be to develop programmatic models, which are anchored, mainstreamed and scaled within national education plans and sector reform processes.

**2. Partnerships and intersectoral approaches:** The aim will be first to make intersectorality work between education and protection (linking protection mechanisms and services to the school and to programming on formal and non-formal education; training teachers for intervening as social workers; etc.). Efforts will be made to systematize inter-ministerial collaboration between Ministries of Education, Social and Women's Affairs, Labour, Agriculture, etc., and to create linkages with development and poverty reduction policy frameworks (income generating activities; economic incentives schemes linked to school attendance; social safety nets programs; etc.). The PAR approach will be used to facilitate the participation and engagement of different groups of stakeholders including the employers of domestic workers, their families, teachers, social workers, civil society representatives, Government officials and policy makers, as well as development partners. This collaboration will be invested in mobilizing the needed technical and financial resources.

**3. Data collection and analysis:** The Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, together with the documentation of experiential knowledge, will accompany program development with the aim of improving data collection and analysis and monitoring mechanisms on the phenomenon; establishing agreed upon definitions of child domestic work in third-party households; enhancing methodological approaches and informing and sustaining interventions; and feeding into a policy and communication strategy.

**4. Advocacy and communication:** An advocacy and communication strategy – making the case for CDL as a key child labour issue and for the need for strategic and scaled education interventions – will be developed. It will include: key messages for campaigning and awareness rising; campaigns for policy and legislative reforms, for building and sustaining political will and for leveraging resources; campaigns for the mobilization of public opinion, for furthering a better societal understanding and for addressing value-laden cultural sensitivities; and the mobilization and organization of families and communities. The strategy will include a strong partnership-building component with diverse stakeholders, including the media and trade unions, as well as the development of an on-line knowledge network.

## Next steps

UNICEF will lead the process of developing the Initiative's terms of reference within the framework of the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education and in consultation with the diverse partners engaged on the issue. The Initiative will build on the ongoing work and experiences, in the field and at global levels, and it will bring all stakeholders together in an effort to synchronize work, scale up, mainstream and achieve impact. The selection of a first set of countries to engage in will be done on the basis of country and global consultations and of available data.

### ***4.2 Joint initiative on mainstreaming child labour issues in EFA and EFA-supporting frameworks***

In a nutshell, the purpose of this joint initiative is to carry out the mandate of the GTF in two or three countries in a spirit of learning by doing. To this end, the terms of reference of the Task Force point to possible areas for intervention which will need to be more concretely defined in the light of the specific situation and circumstances of each country and national priorities. These "pilot" programmes can then be replicated elsewhere subsequently. Pilot countries will be selected on the basis of various criteria that would include, inter alia, strong political commitment to the implementation of national obligations under the EFA framework and the ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182, strong presence of GTF member

agencies on the ground (for example in the form of a time-bound project of support for the elimination of child labour in the case of the ILO), participation in the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI), and adequate national capacity.

Programme objectives will be based on a diagnostic study of the country's situation and national priorities relating to EFA, FTI and ILO/IPEC's programme of support for the time-bound elimination of child labour.<sup>2</sup> The programme will consist of two interrelated components: (i) one aimed at promoting an enabling environment conducive to the achievement of EFA and the elimination of child labour, and (ii) a second component targeting specific areas with the aim of developing coherent and sustainable models for the prevention of child labour and for the withdrawal and rehabilitation of child labourers through providing educational opportunities in the EFA context.

#### *Component 1: Promoting an enabling environment*

The programme will foster an enabling environment for achieving EFA through prevention / elimination of child labour by establishing the necessary synergies and links with ongoing and planned government programmes related to child labour and education, such as the PRSP and Social Protection. Areas of work will include:

1. **Enhanced policy and legislation coherence:** Gaps and lack of coherence in policy and legislation, including those of education, social protection, poverty reduction and child labour, will be addressed. Technical support will be provided to ensure policy coherence and to build explicit links in policy areas related to child labour and education as well as for the formulation, enactment and monitoring of effective and coherent national legislation framework for dealing with child labour and education.
2. **Improved awareness and policy dialogue:** The programme will support advocacy strategies targeting policy planners and decision makers at all levels. The capacity of NGOs, civil society networks and the media will be enhanced for this purpose. Advocacy and orientation materials for government officials, parliamentarians and the media will be developed and round tables and advocacy meetings with the above groups will be organized.
3. **Strengthened national capacities to mainstream child labour issues:** This objective will be pursued by strengthening technical and institutional capacity of government departments and offices responsible for policy formulation. Techniques and tools will be provided for the integration of child labour concerns into education policies and plans, including those aimed at reaching the MDGs.
4. **Increased capacity to monitor child labour:** The programme will support research on the linkages between child labour, education and poverty to improve knowledge and promote evidence-based dialogue. Training and technical support will be provided to national institutions to ensure that education and child labour monitoring processes are supportive of each other. Support will also be provided for the development of child labour indicators in the context of EFA and for continuous and periodic data collection and analysis.

#### *Component 2: Targeted interventions*

This component concerns targeted action for the prevention and elimination of child labour through educational opportunities. It aims at developing coherent and sustainable models for the prevention of child labour and for the withdrawal and rehabilitation of children engaged in child labour through educational opportunities. Educational support will include identifying distinctive conditions and educational needs of working children and drawing up a specific framework for both immediate action and long-term policy changes.

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<sup>2</sup> A Time-Bound Programme (TBP) is essentially a set of tightly integrated and coordinated policies and programmes drawn up by a country to prevent and eliminate the worst forms of child labour within a defined period of time. Since the adoption of the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, ILO has been supporting this approach by assisting countries to formulate and implement the relevant policies and programmes.