

# Prevalence and impacts of child labour in agriculture

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## Question

*Where is child labour in agriculture most prevalent and what are the impacts of this labour on children? This query will identify and summarise evidence on:*

- Where is the biggest issue of child labour in agriculture? Which countries? Which supply chains? Which farm structures?*
- How are gender roles and age differences reflected in the understanding about child labour in agriculture and supply chains?*
- Do any other features of marginalisation stand out in the literature e.g. caste, household income?*
- In what situations is child work/labour in agriculture/agricultural supply chains most harmful and dangerous?*
- In what contexts might child work in agriculture/agricultural supply chains lead to beneficial outcomes such as learning new skills etc.?*

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# 1. Overview

This exploratory rapid review finds that child labour in agriculture is a global issue, with the agricultural sector accounting for the majority of child labourers. Across regions and countries agriculture is usually the main sector for children's economic activity. However, there is considerable variation in the prevalence of child labour between and within countries. Agricultural child labour is mainly unpaid work on smallholder family farms, but is also found on commercial farms and plantations as well as through forced and trafficked child labour. Child labour is involved in crop production, livestock (including herding) and forestry as well as fishing and aquaculture. There are more boys than girls in agricultural child labour, and both tend to start young, sometimes before 10 years old. Girls tend to combine agricultural and domestic duties, and their work is more invisible, while male adolescents are more likely to be in hazardous work in agriculture than their female peers. Children from poor households, ethnic minorities, migrants and families with HIV/AIDS or disabled members are particularly vulnerable to agricultural child labour. Other drivers include agricultural dependency, social norms and a lack of higher returns to basic schooling. Almost 60 per cent of girls and boys (aged 5–17 years) in hazardous work are found in agriculture. Situations of heightened harm and danger include forced and trafficked child labour for agriculture as well as conflict and emergency situations. Nevertheless age-appropriate tasks can contribute to children's well-being and development – in particular in rural contexts with a lack of returns to formal education, labour-intensive agricultural livelihoods and social acceptance of child labour.

Global and regional estimates provide a rough indication of the prevalence of child labour in agriculture. There are, however, considerable challenges for data and research on child labour in general, and in agriculture specifically. Different indicators and measurement tools have led to inconsistent estimates, and cross-country comparability is hampered by national differences in definitions. While ILO and FAO produce substantial resources on child labour in agriculture (find online resources here – [ILO](#); and here – [FAO](#)) given the numbers involved and often hazardous nature of their work, children working in agriculture have received surprisingly little research attention. Child labour involved in international supply chains (e.g. cotton, cocoa) has received more attention than that involved in staple foods (e.g. rice, fish).

This rapid review has not found a breakdown of the prevalence of child labour in agriculture across regions and countries. There are some regional summaries on children's employment by economic sector (see resources by the [Understanding Children's Work](#) research initiative). The scale of the issue can be estimated from general child labour statistics, as well as available regional, country, sector and supply chain studies. It is beyond this study's scope to identify and synthesise findings from all available reports; resources for future research are listed.

Key findings from literature and experts consulted by this rapid review include:

## Framing the evidence

- The evidence on the topic of child labour and child work is value-laden and dominant narratives on these issues are increasingly being challenged and nuanced.
- ILO convention definitions are clear but real life distinctions between child labour and child work are complicated and enforcement of minimum age can be problematic.
- Recent literature brings to the fore considerations of children's agency and the whole political socio-economic context rather than addressing individual risks in isolation. (Bourdillon & Myers, 2014: 9)

## Prevalence

- Worldwide there are an estimated 98 million child labourers working in agriculture, accounting for 58.6 per cent of all those in child labour. (ILO-IPEC, 2013: 7)
- The largest number of child labourers is in Asia and the Pacific (77.7 million) while Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest incidence of child labour (21.4 per cent). (ILO-IPEC, 2013: vii)
- In many countries agriculture is the largest sector for child economic activity (with data available mainly for 5-14 year olds): it can account for over 90 per cent in various countries in different regions. However, there is a wide variation in the prevalence of child labour between and within countries, often masked by regional rates (Ortiz-Ospina and Roser, 2016).
- Child labour in agriculture consists primarily of work on smallholder family farms, but also includes livestock production, fishing, forestry and aquaculture.
- The majority of child labour takes place as unpaid family labour (68 per cent) (ILO-IPEC, 2013: 23). Agricultural child labour is also on commercial farms and plantations. There is evidence in the agricultural sector of child trafficking and forced child labour/slavery.

## Gender roles, age differences and other features of marginalisation

- Boys outnumber girls in all sectors of child labour (with the exception of domestic work): agriculture accounts for 61 per cent of boys and 39 per cent for girls (aged 5-17 years). (Diallo et al, 2013: 14)
- Girls tend to have a double burden of agricultural and domestic duties, and their work is often more invisible. Jobs held by male adolescents in agriculture more likely to be hazardous than those by their female peers in most countries.
- Children work in agriculture at very young ages, sometimes younger than 10 years old; there is a high share of adolescents aged 15-17 years in hazardous work (Guarcello et al, 2016: abstract; Diallo et al, 2013: 8).
- Child labour is driven by low income and limited options but the relationship between household wealth and child labour is complex. Other drivers include a country's agricultural dependency, social norms and a lack of higher returns to basic schooling.
- Groups vulnerable to child labour in agriculture include: migrant children; families with HIV/AIDS; excluded ethnic minorities; families with elderly or disabled members; landless or near landless households; poor households in rural areas with traditional class or caste structures; and children of parents involved in illicit work. These vulnerabilities may be heightened or created by natural disasters and conflict situations.

## Most harmful and dangerous situations

- Almost 60 per cent of 5 to 17 year olds in hazardous work are in agriculture (in comparison with 30 per cent in services and 11 per cent in industry). (IPEC, 2011: 9; FAO, 2015: 15)
- Potential hazards are numerous and levels of risk high; these vary widely depending on the specific farming environment.
- Situations of heightened harm and danger include forced child labour and child trafficking as well as children affected by conflict and emergencies.

## Contexts for beneficial outcomes

- Lower risk age-appropriate tasks can contribute to children’s well-being and development – in particular in rural contexts with a lack of returns to formal education, labour-intensive agricultural livelihoods and social acceptance of child labour.

## 2. Child labour and child work

### International and national definitions of child<sup>1</sup> labour

According to the ILO, child labour refers to a subset of children’s work (sometimes called employment or economic activity) that is injurious, negative or undesirable to children and should be targeted for elimination (ILO-IPEC, 2013: 17). Three international conventions – UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)<sup>2</sup>, ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms)<sup>3</sup> and ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age)<sup>4</sup> – provide the main legal standards<sup>5</sup>. These form the basis for child labour legislation enacted by signatory countries.

In sum, child labour as defined by the ILO comprises of: “(i) all children between 5-11 years of age who are economically active, (ii) children between 12-14 years of age who work in an economic activity for 14 or more hours per week, and (iii) children between 12-17 years of age who work in an economic activity that is classified as belonging to the “worst forms of child labour. The ‘worst forms of child labour’ comprise of (i) slavery or economic activity in slave-like conditions, (ii) prostitution or pornography, (iii) illicit activities such as drug production and trafficking, and (iv) economic activities that are likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of the child. The ILO classifies the first three types as ‘unconditional worst forms of child labour’.” (Fares and Raju, 2007: 3. Also see ILO-IPEC 2013: 45-47.) In sum, the ILO-IPEC definition of child labour excludes all children working legally in accordance with ILO Conventions Nos. 182 and 138<sup>6</sup> (Diallo et al, 2012: vii).

UNICEF collects data on child labour. They consider a child aged 5-14 years old to be involved in child labour activities as: (a) children 5-11 years of age that during the week preceding the survey did at least one hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of domestic work, and (b) children 12-14 years of age that during the week preceding the survey did at least 14 hours of economic activity or at least 42 hours of economic activity and domestic work combined<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Under international law a child refers to persons being below the age of eighteen years. See the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C182](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C138](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C138). The ILO Minimum Age Convention No.138) specifies the minimum age for different types of employment: • 13 years for light work; • 15 years for ordinary work; • 18 years for hazardous work. Developing countries that ratified Convention No. 138 have the option to designate a higher age or, in exceptional cases, an age 1 year lower than the standard. (FAO, 2015: 11)

<sup>5</sup> Dachille et al (2015: 8-9) has a useful summary of the conventions.

<sup>6</sup> Which includes: 1) children aged 12-14 in permissible light work – where “permissible light work” is defined as any non-hazardous work of less than 14 hours during the reference week and 2) children aged 15-17 in work not designated as worst forms. (Ortiz-Ospina and Roser, 2016; Diallo et al, 2013: 18)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/stats\\_popup9.html](https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/stats_popup9.html)

## Distinction between legal definitions of child labour and understandings of child work

The evidence on the topic of child labour and child work is value-laden, with dominant narratives increasingly being challenged and nuanced.

In reality distinguishing between child labour and appropriate child work is complex (Abebe and Bessel, 2011). Work harmful to children or that impedes their development is a distinct concept from work that violates international standards on a minimum age for employment; however the two are often conflated (Bourdillon, 2006: 1212). Moreover recent literature brings to the fore considerations of children's agency and the need to understand the whole political socio-economic context rather than attempting to address individual risks in isolation (Bourdillon & Myers, 2014: 9).

This report provides a summary of the available evidence on child labour in agriculture, which tends to be structured by the legal definitions of child labour. The review highlights nuance with respect to child work where found in the literature.

### 3. Data

#### Data sources<sup>8</sup>

ILO – through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) – publishes the key global and regional statistics on child labour, and analysis of trends<sup>9</sup>. The most recent ILO statistics are for 2012 (with a new set of estimates due in 2017<sup>10</sup>). There is an ILO report analysing the 2008-2012 trend (Diallo et al, 2013) and another looking at the trends 2000-2012 (ILO-IPEC, 2013). These provide the main global statistics on child labour in agriculture, for boys and girls 5-17 years old. UNICEF also provides global and regional statistics covering 5-14 year olds – available as a web resource<sup>11</sup>. The main sources of statistical data on the prevalence of child labour are the survey instruments: ILO SIMPOC<sup>12</sup>, UNICEF MICS<sup>13</sup> and World Bank's LSMS<sup>14</sup>, as well as other national surveys.

Another important resource is the inter-agency research programme – Understanding Children's Work (UCW) (involving ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank) – which consolidates available child

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<sup>8</sup> For further information on the global data on child labour, a recent K4D helpdesk report provides a rapid review (see Avis 2017).

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/ipeclang-en/index.htm>

<sup>10</sup> The 2017 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery and Child Labour are being published by Alliance 8.7, authors and partners at a launch in New York during the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly (12-25 September 2017) [http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/publications/WCMS\\_547398/lang-en/index.htm?ssSourceSiteId=ipeclang](http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/publications/WCMS_547398/lang-en/index.htm?ssSourceSiteId=ipeclang)

<sup>11</sup> <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-labour/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/ipeclang-it/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/lang-it/index.htm>

<sup>13</sup> <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-labour/> and <http://mics.unicef.org/>

<sup>14</sup>

<http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/EXTLSMS/0,,contentMDK:21610833~pagePK:64168427~piPK:64168435~theSitePK:3358997,00.html>

labour datasets, and provides access to the country-level data as well as producing a series of regional and country analytical reports<sup>15</sup>.

The U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) publishes an annual report on the worst forms of child labour and efforts to eliminate these for 137 U.S. trade beneficiary countries and territories<sup>16</sup>. It includes regional summaries with some information on child labour in agriculture. U.S. DOL also publishes an annual list of goods produced by child labour<sup>17</sup>, including agricultural commodities.

The “Maplecroft’s Child Labour Index” evaluates the frequency and severity of reported child labour incidents in 197 countries. However the private risk analysis firm producing the data does not provide details about its methodology, although it does publish periodic analysis reports (Ortiz-Orspina and Roser, 2016). The latest Child Labour Index appears to be for 2014<sup>18</sup>. It covers child labour in general and provides an analysis of individual country performance.

For information and analysis on child labour in agriculture, ILO<sup>19</sup> and the FAO<sup>20</sup> provide substantial resources, as does the UCW research programme. There are also some one-off academic studies providing a statistical breakdown of child economic activity by sector across countries (Fares and Raju, 2007; Edmonds, 2008). There are a few studies looking in depth at child labour in individual agricultural sectors globally or across a number of countries. For example, the FAO (2013) report on child labour in livestock and Dachille et al (2015) looking at children’s agricultural employment in Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria and Tanzania. There are also some country studies looking in-depth at child labour in agriculture: for example, Rwanda (UCW, 2016). Substantial research has also been generated by campaigns against child labour in individual agricultural supply chains (such as coffee, sugar, cocoa and cotton among others). The “World Day Against Child Labour” has also generated relevant resources: in 2016 the theme was ending child labour in supply chains<sup>21</sup>, and in 2007 it was child labour and agriculture<sup>22, 23</sup>.

## Data limitations and challenges

Global figures are considered a rough indication of the serious nature of the problem of child labour (IREWOC, 2010: 7). Efforts to collect statistics on child labour have been undermined by the absence of an internationally accepted operational definition of child labour, according to UNICEF (2014: 11). There are different indicators and measurement tools, leading to

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.ucw-project.org/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/findings>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/ilab/reports/child-labor/list-of-goods/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis/2013/10/15/child-labour-risks-increase-china-and-russia-most-progress-shown-south-america-maplecroft-index/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.fao.org/childdlabouragriculture/en/>. Also see in particular the FAO 2015 Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture (FAO, 2015) and the FAO e-learning course “End Child Labour in Agriculture” <http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/CL>

<sup>21</sup> <http://ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/2016/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>22</sup> <http://ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/2007/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>23</sup> A number of the other themes include relevant information for understanding child labour in agriculture. For example, 2017 conflict and disasters <http://ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/2017/lang--en/index.htm>; 2009 gives girls a chance <http://ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/WorldDay2009/lang--en/index.htm>

inconsistent and incomparable estimates, often with large differences (ibid.; Le, 2014: 11-12<sup>24</sup>). Moreover, cross-country comparisons are difficult given that international legal standards on child labour allow member states to set definitions of minimum ages, light work, scope of application and hazardous work (UCW, 2010: 5; Ortiz-Ospina and Roser, 2016<sup>25</sup>).

There are limitations for data and research on child labour in agriculture specifically:

- Data on children's agricultural activities, as well as risks (and possible benefits), is scarce: it is often "invisible" (or actively hidden) work (<sup>26</sup>; FAO, 2010a). Much of children's agricultural work is considered "helping out" and seldom recognised in official statistics; child labour in agriculture may also go unnoticed when underage workers are supplied through labour contractors and sub-contractors, or are in remote and dispersed locations (IPEC, 2006: 3; FAO, 2015: 16). Given the numbers involved and often hazardous nature of their work, children working in agriculture have received surprisingly little research attention (Dachille et al, 2015: 1).
- There are important limitations in how the data is made available (Ortiz-Ospina and Roser, 2016). There are UN global estimates of the number of child labourers in agriculture, for custom age ranges, sometimes broken down by gender and type of work (ibid.). However publicly available cross-country time series data of the number of children working in agriculture appears not to be available (ibid.).
- There are aggregate estimates of children working in agriculture available for most countries (Dachille et al, 2015: 1); UCW regional reports present data by region on children's economic activity by sector. However, this rapid review has found limited synthesis presentation of data on child *labour* in agriculture by region or country.
- Moreover, far fewer countries have detailed information on the agriculture sub-sectors where they work, the modalities of their farm work, the specific tasks performed, the hazards they face, or the their relative importance in agricultural production (ibid.).
- Varied perceptions of work and childhood affect whether children's agricultural work is viewed as 'work' and therefore captured by surveys<sup>27,28</sup>.
- Common exclusion of non-economic activities such as household chores and child care for siblings limits the availability of sound data to analyse child labour in agriculture because girls (as well as boys to a lesser degree) often combine agricultural tasks with household chores (de Lange, 2009: abstract).
- More research has been generated around certain agricultural commodities and supply chains; ordinary crops and the production and processing of staple foods (e.g. rice and fish) have been relatively neglected.

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<sup>24</sup> Citing Guarcello et al (2010) who examined survey estimates from 35 countries.

<sup>25</sup> <https://ourworldindata.org/child-labor/>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.fao.org/childlabouragriculture/en/>

<sup>27</sup> Analysis by Dayioğlu (2012: 2) finds a high capture rate of child labour in agriculture in three African case studies where agricultural work is common among children, is an important source of livelihood for their families, and is, therefore, more likely to be recognized as work. In contrast, in countries like Moldova where commercial agriculture is more widespread, work on the family farm may not be recognised as work for anyone – adult or child (ibid.: 3). Dayioğlu (2012: 3) finds that unpaid farm work and animal husbandry are among the economic activities that are most often 'missed' when testing a child employment questionnaire.

<sup>28</sup> See Dillon et al (2010) for an analysis looking at the variation in child labour statistics, which describes how data on child labour participation in agriculture can be affected by survey designs.

## How data is presented in this report

This report presents evidence from across different data sources covering disparate geographical areas and sectors. As much detail as possible is provided for the numbers presented, so the reader can ascertain their scope as well as the probable lack of comparability across sources. Given this rapid review has not found an existing overview of the statistical breakdown of child labour in agriculture (by region, by country, by sector, by value chain), this report attempts to provide a brief summary of the wider picture, by including data on 1) *child labour in general* and 2) *child economic activity in agriculture*, where this enriches the available data on 3) *child labour in agriculture*.

## 4. Prevalence

### Global

Historically, children have been part of the agricultural workforce and this is still the reality in many countries today (IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 2, p5):

- Most child labourers aged 5 to 17 years old are in agriculture. In 2012, there were over 98 million child labourers in agriculture, accounting for 59 per cent of all those in child labour (ILO-IPEC, 2013: 7). See Table 1.
- While most child labourers are found in agriculture, data from 2008 to 2012 shows that child labour outside the agriculture sector, particularly in services, is gaining in relative importance (ILO-IPEC, 2013: 8, 39)
- In absolute terms, boys outnumber girls in child labour in all sectors<sup>29</sup>: in agriculture 60.7 for boys versus 39.3 per cent for girls (Diallo et al, 2012: 14).
- Rural children tend to be at much greater risk of child labour than their urban peers (Guarcello et al, 2014: 10). This is because of the important role played by children in the agriculture sector; poorer basic services infrastructure in rural areas; and less access to schooling as an alternative to child labour in rural areas (ibid.).

### Regions

According to ILO-IPEC (2013: vii)<sup>30, 31</sup>, the largest absolute number of child labourers is found in the Asia and the Pacific region (77.7 million) but Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) continues to be the region with the highest incidence of child labour (21.4 per cent), and has 59 million child labourers. To put this another way, the risk of child labour is highest for children in SSA, where one child in every five is in child labour (ibid.: 3). See Table 2 and Figure 1.

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<sup>29</sup> These figures might underestimate girls' involvement in child labour relative to that of boys as they do not reflect involvement in household chores, particularly *hazardous* chores, a dimension of child labour that is not included in the global estimates (ILO-IPEC 2013: 5).

<sup>30</sup> The regional picture for child labour is not complete because of a shortage of data. In the 2013 global trends report, ILO-IPEC highlighted that there was insufficient data to generate separate estimates for the Eastern European and Central Asia regions, for the Pacific and the Caribbean countries or for the industrialised economies. (ILO-IPEC 2013: 5).

<sup>31</sup> Also see UNICEF regional data for 5-14 year olds: <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-labour/#>

Table 1: ILO-IPEC sectoral distribution of child labour, 5-17 years age group, 2008 and 2012

Sector <sup>1</sup>	2008		2012	
	('000)	% share	('000)	% share
Agriculture	129,161	60.0	98,422	58.6
Industry	15,068	7.0	12,092	7.2
Services	55,109	25.6	54,250	32.3
(of which domestic work)	(10,557)	(4.9)	(11,528)	(6.9)

Note: <sup>1</sup> Excluding children with missing information on economic sector

Source: ILO-IPEC (2013: 8)

Table 2: Children in employment, child labour and hazardous work by region, 5-17 years age group, 2012

Sector <sup>1</sup>	Children in employment <sup>2</sup> (children's economic activity)		Child labour (excludes all children working legally in accordance with ILO Conventions Nos.138, 182)		Hazardous work (any activity or occupation that, by its nature or type, has or leads to adverse effects on the child's safety, health and moral development)	
	('000)	% share	('000)	% share	('000)	% share
Asia and the Pacific	129,358	15.5	77,723	9.3	33,860	4.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	17,843	12.5	12,505	8.8	9,638	6.8
Sub Saharan Africa	83,570	30.3	59,031	21.4	28,767	10.4
Middle East and North Africa	13,307	12.1	9,244	8.4	5,224	4.7

Note: <sup>1</sup> Regional totals sum to less than world totals because latter include countries outside of the four main regions presented here. <sup>2</sup> Hazardous work is a sub-category of child labour; child labour is a sub-category of child employment.

Source: ILO-IPEC (2013: 4); definitions added from Diallo et al (2013).

Figure 1: Child labour by region, 5-17 years age group, 2012



Source: National Geographic<sup>32</sup> (using data from ILO-IPEC, 2013)

<sup>32</sup> <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/2015-09-26-data-points-children-behind-child-labor/>

There is some (older) regional data on the sectoral distribution of economically active children across regions. Using survey data for 65 countries from 1993-2003, Fares and Raju (2007: 6) find that SSA and Middle East and North Africa have the largest shares of economically active 7-14 year old children employed in agriculture (87.6 and 75.2 per cent, respectively). See Table 3.

Table 3: Sectoral distribution of economically active children by region, 7-14 year olds

Region	N	Agriculture	Manufacturing	Services
Mean (%)				
Sub-Saharan Africa	10	87.6	1.5	9.9
East Asia and the Pacific	2	67.3	4.4	27.2
East Europe and Central Asia	2	67.8	14.6	6.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	15	56.5	8.5	32.9
Middle East and North Africa	2	75.2	4.9	8.3
South Asia	2	66.1	10.9	21.4
All regions	33	69.6	6.7	21.2

Notes: In calculating the various statistics, each country's child economic activity rate was weighted by the country's child population (0-14 years)

Source: Fares and Raju (2007: 22)

Here is a summary of further regional information on child labour in general and child employment in the agriculture sectors. Much of the information is from U.S. DOL and UCW regional reports<sup>33</sup>.

- **Middle East and North Africa:** the 9.2 million child labourers are engaged primarily in agriculture, domestic work and street work (U.S. DOL, 2016a: 39). Child labour, while not high relative to the global average, remains an important policy concern in the Arab states, with the largest share of those in child labour found in agriculture (UCW, 2014b: 1,12) The share of children (5-14 years old) working in agriculture are: Yemen (70 per cent), Iraq (63 per cent) and Jordan (40.5 per cent) (ibid.: 2, 15).
- **Europe and Central Asia:** Regional statistics on child labour do not exist for Europe and Eurasia but there is child labour, predominantly in agriculture and street work (U.S. DOL, 2016a: 33). ILO (2010: 71) highlights areas where child labour is still endemic – such as Central Asia and in some parts of the Caucasus. There are concerns about the impact of

<sup>33</sup> UCW reports present data on children's economic activity, taking this approach: "... relies on the broader concept of employment as an approximation of child labour. Children in employment are those engaged in any economic activity for at least one hour during the reference period.4 Economic activity covers all market production and certain types of non-market production (principally the production of goods and services for own use). It includes forms of work in both the formal and informal economy; inside and outside family settings; work for pay or profit (in cash or in kind, part-time or full-time), or as a domestic worker outside the child's own household for an employer (with or without pay). It is worth repeating that these child labour approximations are not necessarily consistent with child labour as defined in legal terms in individual countries." (UCW, 2014a: 12).

migration, trafficking and the economic crisis, as well as the continued social exclusion of indigenous minority groups, such as the Roma and Sinti peoples (ibid.).

- **South Asia:** “South Asia is home to the greatest numbers of child labourers”. ... “In sheer numbers, India and Pakistan have by far the largest out-of-school child population in the world” (ILO, 2010: 68-69). There are 16.7 million child labourers aged 5-17 years in South Asia<sup>34</sup>, according to conservative estimates (UCW-ILO report by Khan and Lyon, 2015: 8). In *absolute terms*, child labour for the entire 5-17 years age range is highest in India (5.8 million)<sup>35</sup>, followed by Bangladesh (5.0 million), Pakistan (3.4 million)<sup>36</sup> and Nepal (2.0 million) (ibid.). In *relative terms* a child in Nepal faces the highest *risk* of being in child labour with over one-quarter (26 per cent) of all 5-17 year-olds in child labour (compared with 15 per cent in Bhutan, and 12 per cent each in Bangladesh and Pakistan) (ibid.). Agriculture absorbs the highest percentage of children (7-14 year olds) in employment in every South Asian<sup>37</sup> country for which data is available, from 46 per cent in Bangladesh to 94 per cent in Nepal (ibid.: xi).
- **East and South-East Asia:** Child labour rate in this region<sup>38</sup> stands at around six per cent for 5-14 year-olds and eight per cent for 5-17 year olds, slightly lower than the rates for the Asia and Pacific Region and the world averages (UCW, 2015a: 6). There is considerable variation by country: child labour is most common in Vietnam, where it affects almost 14% of all 5-17 year-olds, followed by Cambodia (13.3%) (ibid.: 7). In absolute terms, Indonesia host to by far the largest number of child labourers in the 5-17 years age range (3.1 million), followed by Vietnam (2.5 million), Philippines (2.5 million) and Cambodia (0.5 million) (ibid.). The agriculture sector accounts for by far the largest share of children’s employment (5-14 year olds) (for example, 98 per cent in Timor-Leste and 95 per cent in Lao DPR) (ibid.: 15-16).
- **Latin America and Caribbean:** 12.5 million 5-17 year old child labourers are primarily engaged in agriculture and street work (U.S. DOL, 2016a). A 2006 UCW report<sup>39</sup> finds that farm work accounts for at least two of every three working 5-14 year old boys in all countries except Venezuela (Guarcello et al, 2006: 27). 5-14 year old girls are also concentrated primarily in the agriculture sector in Bolivia and Ecuador but elsewhere their economic activity appears mixed (ibid.). ILO (2010: 70-71) highlights that while **the Americas** as a region has had the most significant reduction of child labour during the last decade, indigenous children disproportionately miss out on education and are found in some of the worst forms of child labour in mining, agriculture and other sectors.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** ILO finds that “Although the decline in child labour during 2008-2012 offers some cause for optimism, Sub-Saharan Africa is still the region where

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<sup>34</sup> This sum excludes Afghanistan for which recent data is not available, and the Maldives, where information is only available for the children below the age of 15 years, and child labourers below the age of 10 years in Pakistan. [http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS\\_IPEC\\_PUB\\_26295/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_26295/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>35</sup> The India survey does not collect information on working hours. For this reason, the group of children aged 12-14 and 15-17 are classified as in child labour only on the basis of their involvement in designated hazardous industries and hazardous occupations (Khan and Lyon, 2015: 8).

<sup>36</sup> Figures for Pakistan exclude the under 10s.

<sup>37</sup> The report looks at Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka (Khan and Lyon, 2015).

<sup>38</sup> The study countries are Cambodia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand, Mongolia, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. (UCW, 2015a)

<sup>39</sup> Using recent surveys from 12 LAC countries – Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela (Guarcello et al, 2006: 4).

children face by far the highest risk of child labour and also the region where progress has been slowest and least consistent<sup>40</sup>. The 59 million children engaged in child labour (according to ILO statistics) work largely in agriculture, mining and domestic service (U.S. DOL, 2016a: 41). Maplecroft's Child Labor Index 2014 reported that "child labour risks are also increasing in Sub-Saharan Africa, which hosts 43 (over 50 per cent) of the 'extreme risk' countries in the Child Labour Index"<sup>41</sup>.

- **Eastern and Southern Africa Region:** High levels of economic activity among 7-14 year olds across the region, but particularly high in Ethiopia, Somalia and Zambia (UNESCO & UNICEF, 2013: 34).
- **Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria and Tanzania:** Children's employment is overwhelmingly agricultural for both the 5-14 and 15-17 years age ranges and for both boys and girls in all four countries (Dachille et al, 2015).
- **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**<sup>42</sup>: Child labour rates (for 5-14 year olds) are highest in Guinea Bissau (39 per cent), Togo (38 per cent), Burkina Faso (36 per cent) (UCW, 2014a: 16). When expressed in absolute terms, Nigeria is host to by far the largest number of child labourers (5-14 year olds) (10.5 million), followed by Ghana (2.1 million), Niger (1.9 million) and Burkina Faso (1.8 million) (ibid.). The agriculture sector accounts for at least two of every three children (5-14 years old) in employment in all countries in the region (ibid.: 23).
- **East and West Africa:** Maplecroft finds child labour risks increasing in some regions, e.g. Tanzania and Kenya in the East and Ghana and Mali in the West<sup>43</sup>.

#### Other resources

UCW regional reports:

Arab States: UCW (2014b); East and South East Asia: UCW (2015a); ECOWAS: UCW (2014a); LAC: Guarcello et al (2006); South Asia: Khan and Lyon (2015)

ILO-IPEC resources on child labour in regions:

Africa - <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/Africa/lang--en/index.htm>

Arab States - <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/arab-states/lang--en/index.htm>

Asia and the Pacific - <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/Asia/lang--en/index.htm>

South Asia - [http://www.ilo.org/newdelhi/areasofwork/child-labour/WCMS\\_300805/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/newdelhi/areasofwork/child-labour/WCMS_300805/lang--en/index.htm)

Europe and Central Asia - <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/europe-and-central-asia/lang--en/index.htm>

Latin America and the Caribbean - <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/latin-america-and-caribbean/lang--en/index.htm>

See also publications:

Hindman, H. (Ed.) (2009). *The world of child labor: a historical and regional review*. Routledge. [https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/The\\_World\\_of\\_Child\\_Labor.html?id=lrKec5YTVYAC](https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/The_World_of_Child_Labor.html?id=lrKec5YTVYAC)

Bass, L.E. (2004). *Child Labor in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynn Rienner Publishers [https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Child\\_Labor\\_in\\_Sub\\_Saharan\\_Africa.html?id=e-QksyKt\\_fMC&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Child_Labor_in_Sub_Saharan_Africa.html?id=e-QksyKt_fMC&redir_esc=y)

<sup>40</sup> <http://ilo.org/ipec/Regionsandcountries/Africa/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>41</sup> <https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis/2013/10/15/child-labour-risks-increase-china-and-russia-most-progress-shown-south-america-maplecroft-index/>

<sup>42</sup> Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo (UCW, 2014: 13).

<sup>43</sup> <https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis/2013/10/15/child-labour-risks-increase-china-and-russia-most-progress-shown-south-america-maplecroft-index/>

## Countries

There are findings on the country prevalence of child labour generally, which are also pertinent for understanding trends of child labour in agriculture:

- The prevalence of child labour varies widely by country (Ortiz-Ospina and Roser, 2016). For example, the share of children in employment (here defined in terms of being economically active for one hour a week) was fifteen times larger in Uganda than in Turkey according to 2006 estimates (ibid.). See also the UCW regional studies for ECOWAS and East and South East Asia which find that the average child labour rate masks considerable variation across countries (UCW, 2014; UCW, 2015a).
- While most countries exhibit a downward trend in child labour, influencing global and regional averages, there are many lagging countries where progress has stagnated or is even negative (ibid.; UCW, 2010: xv). Some Sub-Saharan African countries experienced significant rises in child labour rates in recent years (UCW, 2010: xv).
- There are also important pockets of stagnated progress within many countries (ibid.). For example indigenous children and children affected by HIV and/or AIDS often lag significantly behind national progress in reducing child labour (ibid.).
- The problem of child labour in agriculture is not confined to developing countries (ILO, 2010: 56) highlights that child labour is found in agriculture in OECD countries which have not ratified Convention No. 138 and in some cases not prohibited hazardous work in the sector for children under 18 as required by Convention No. 182 (ibid.)

Maplecroft's 2014 Child Labour Index<sup>44</sup> ranks the risk incidence of child labour in individual countries (presented here with the caveat that the Index's methodology is unknown). Maplecroft's ranking of 197 countries includes 83 countries rated 'extreme risk,' with Eritrea, Somalia, DR Congo, Myanmar, Sudan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Zimbabwe, Yemen and Burundi comprising the 10 countries where the problem of child labour is greatest.

This rapid review found some cross-country data on the prevalence of children's economic activity in agriculture. Using data from 2000-2001, Edmonds (2007)<sup>45</sup> finds that for almost all of the 19 listed countries<sup>46</sup>, a majority of economically active children work in agriculture, forestry, or fishing. Using data for 65 countries from 1993-2003, Fares and Raju (2007: 6) find that the share of economically active children in agriculture exceeds the respective shares in services and manufacturing in all countries in their sample. UCW country and regional reports also provide data on children's economic activity by sector for individual countries.

It is beyond the scope of this rapid review to identify all available reports. Examples include UCW (2016) which looks at farm cooperatives and agricultural child labour in *Rwanda*, finding that 69 per cent of the almost 180,000 children aged 7-15 years in child labour in 2011, were in agriculture, up to 72 per cent in rural areas (ibid.: 5). Another example is Abebe and Kjørholt

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<sup>44</sup> Maplecroft Child Labour Index 2014, accessed 21 April 2017. <https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis/2013/10/15/child-labour-risks-increase-china-and-russia-most-progress-shown-south-america-maplecroft-index/>

<sup>45</sup> The final version of Edmonds (2007) was published as a chapter in *Schultz and Strauss (Eds.) (2008). Handbook of Development Economics. Elsevier*. This rapid review did not obtain a copy of this publication.

<sup>46</sup> The countries are: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, Kenya, Namibia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Turkey, Ukraine, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

(2009) who explore livelihoods of children and young people among the *Gedeo ethnic community in southern Ethiopia*, looking at moves from subsistence to cash crop production.

#### Other resources

##### ILO national child survey reports:

<http://ilo.org/ipecc/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/Questionnairesurveysandreports/lang--en/index.htm>

##### Young Lives reports:

Children's well-being and work in Sub-Saharan-Africa <http://www.younglives.org.uk/node/6856>

Balancing School and Work with New Opportunities: Changes in Children's Gendered Time Use in Ethiopia (2006-2013) <http://younglives.org.uk/node/8293>

Is Child Work Detrimental to the Educational Achievement of Children? Results from Young Lives in Ethiopia <http://younglives.org.uk/node/6726>

Perspectives on children's work and schooling: Evidence from a longitudinal study in Andhra Pradesh & Telangana, India <http://younglives.org.uk/node/8291>

Children Combining Work and Education in Cottonseed Production in Andhra Pradesh <http://www.younglives.org.uk/node/6500>

**U.S. DOL reports:** Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2016a); List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor (2016b); Products Produced by Forced or Indentured Child Labor (2014) <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/reports/child-labor>

##### Examples of range of resources and studies available for one country - Nepal:

Gilligan, B. (2003). An analysis of the determinants of child labour in Nepal, the policy environment and response. *Understanding Children's Work*. [http://www.ucw-project.org/attachment/child\\_labour\\_Nepal\\_Gilligan20110628\\_131727.pdf](http://www.ucw-project.org/attachment/child_labour_Nepal_Gilligan20110628_131727.pdf)

Giri (2010). *The Bonded Labour System in Nepal. Perspectives of Haliya and Kamaiya Child Workers*. <http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1850&context=himalaya>

de Groot, A. (2009). *Child Labour in Kathmandu, Nepal*. Institute for Research on Working Children (IREWOC). [https://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story\\_id/IREWOC\\_deGroot\\_Worst%20Forms%20Nepal\\_2010.pdf](https://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/IREWOC_deGroot_Worst%20Forms%20Nepal_2010.pdf)

ILO Country Dashboard – resources searchable by region and then individual countries: <http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/Regionsandcountries/lang--en/index.htm>

ILO and Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Nepal (2012). *Nepal child labour report. Based on data drawn from the Nepal Labour Force Survey 2008*. [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-kathmandu/documents/publication/wcms\\_182988.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-kathmandu/documents/publication/wcms_182988.pdf)

Kumar et al (2013). *Forced labour of adults and children in the agriculture sector of Nepal: focusing on Haruwa-Charuwa in eastern Tarai and Haliya in far-western hills*. Kathmandu: ILO. [https://www.dol.gov/ilab/reports/pdf/Nepal\\_FL%20of%20Adults%20&%20Children%20in%20the%20Agriculture%20S.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/ilab/reports/pdf/Nepal_FL%20of%20Adults%20&%20Children%20in%20the%20Agriculture%20S.pdf)

U.S. DOL 2015 *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor*. Accessed 4 May 2017. (Includes UCW data on working children prevalence, by sector, type of agricultural sub-sector and commodities.) <https://www.dol.gov/sites/default/files/images/ilab/child-labor/Nepal.pdf>  
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/nepal>

## Types of farms and labour

Child labour is found on a wide variety of agricultural undertakings ranging from family farms<sup>47</sup> (small, medium, and large-sized) to corporate-run farms, plantations, and agro-industrial complexes (IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 2, p5). Different types of child labour in agriculture include: child labour on family farms, child labour on commercial farms and plantations, labour contracted to commercial farms, bonded child labour, and trafficking and forced labour/slavery (ibid.). There are also agricultural child labourers in urban areas although most are in rural areas (ibid.). The majority (68 per cent) of child labourers are unpaid family members, followed by paid employment (23 per cent) and self-employment (8 per cent) (ILO-IPEC, 2013: 23). In agriculture the percentage of unpaid family members is higher<sup>48</sup>.

The majority of child labour takes place in family-based agriculture<sup>49</sup> including both subsistence agriculture and commercial agriculture feeding into local and regional food systems<sup>50</sup> (FAO, 2015). Many children work on their parents' farm, or close relatives', often on a regular basis or even full time (FAO, 2015: 16; see also ILO-IPEC, 2006; Guidebook 2, p5). Some farm families live in villages surrounded by farm land; other children work in remote locations, on fishing boats, in plantations, in mountain areas or herding livestock (ILO, 2007; FAO, 2015: 16). Le (2014: 11) finds collecting accurate data on child labour is difficult for remote family farms where work can take place at various times and fluctuate by season (as opposed to forced child labour in large factories or vast commercial plantations). See Dachille et al (2015) for an in-depth analysis of children and youth working in two types of smallholder agriculture – cultivation and livestock production – in Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria and Tanzania.

It is thought that most children engaged in agriculture are linked to some form of commercial activity (Thomas, 2014: 153). According to Nippierd et al (2007: 14), child labour is most prevalent in small farms, often known as out-growers, which are sourced by large agricultural buyers and processing firms further up the supply chain. Historically, child labour, as part of migrant family units or as individually hired workers, has been commonplace on plantations and in other forms of commercial agriculture (IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 2, p7) Many children are employed through intermediary labour contractors in commercial agriculture, which is vulnerable to insecure and harmful conditions of employment (IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 2, p10)

Family farms are often assumed to be small-scale, subsistence-type enterprises/ holdings, but they can also include very large, commercial, family-held corporations with numerous full-time employees (ILO, 2007). ILO finds that the distinction traditionally drawn between “commercial

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<sup>47</sup> This rapid review has found that it is not always immediately apparent in the literature if ‘farm’ refers exclusively to activities connected with terrestrial farmland and crops, or if it includes other types of ‘farms’ and commodities in other sectors (e.g. fishing and aquaculture; herding; etc.).

<sup>48</sup> <http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>49</sup> FAO (2015: 15) reports that family farms account for almost 90 per cent of the world’s farms, and worldwide, 500 million farms are family-owned. The vast majority are small-scale enterprises under 2 hectare in size (ibid.). FAO defines family farming “as a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labour. ... The term “family farming” is often used interchangeably with smallholder, family-based or small-scale agriculture” (ibid.).

<sup>50</sup> De Lange (2009: 5) finds that “The largest part of child work in Africa consists of unpaid family work. For rural areas, most estimates indicate that over 90 per cent of children’s work is in their parents’ farm, fishing enterprise or household”.

agriculture” and “family farm” is slowly eroding with the increasing commercialisation and industrialisation of agriculture (IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 1, p5).

## Sectors

This rapid review did not find global statistics of child labour by agricultural sector. There are regional summaries of children’s (5-14 years old) employment in agricultural sector provided in UCW reports – for example see the ECOWAS report (UCW, 2014a: 27).

What is included by the literature in the definition of ‘agricultural sector’ is not always immediately obvious. ILO (2006: 7) states that in their classification the agriculture sector comprises activities in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing. ILO–IPEC (2013: 23) find child labour in agriculture consists primarily of work on smallholder family farms, although it also extends to activities such as livestock production, fishing and aquaculture. Diallo et al (2013: 20) detail that “agricultural, fishery and related labourers” are included in the list of designated hazardous occupations used in the ILO global estimation of child labour. ILO-IPEC (2006) details that global statistics presented in the report cover work in agriculture, including forestry and inland fisheries, as well as providing a broader definition of the activities covered by ‘agricultural sector’<sup>51</sup>.

### Other resources

ILO-IPEC on:

- farming: [http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172416/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172416/lang--en/index.htm)
- fishing and aquaculture: [http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172419/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172419/lang--en/index.htm)
- forestry: [http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172421/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172421/lang--en/index.htm)
- livestock production: [http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172431/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172431/lang--en/index.htm)

FAO’s 2015 Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture (FAO, 2015)

## Crop production

In both the ECOWAS region and East and South-East Asia regions most children (5-14 years old) in agriculture work in crop and animal production. For example, 96% of children work in crop production in Laos and more than 65% in Cambodia and Vietnam (UCW, 2015a: 22-23). In ECOWAS, children are heavily concentrated in crop production in Guinea, Mali and Togo, whereas both crop and animal production are important in Burkina Faso, Liberia, Niger, and Nigeria (UCW, 2014b: 27).

Crop production comprises a wide range of commodities, but children’s tasks tend to be similar, according to FAO (2015: 17). Children can be involved in all stages of crop production, from land

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<sup>51</sup> ILO-IPEC (2006: Guidebook 1, p5) provides a broad definition of the type of activities that are covered by the term ‘agricultural sector’: “‘Agriculture’ covers different types of farming activities, such as crop production, horticultural/fruit production, livestock raising, livestock-food preparation, forestry activities, fish farming, and insect raising. It also includes many other associated activities: the primary processing and packaging of agricultural and animal products, crop storage, pest management, irrigation, construction and domestic tasks (carrying of water, fuel-wood, etc.), as well as the use and maintenance of machinery, equipment, appliances, tools and agricultural installations. It can include any process, operation, transport or storage directly related to agricultural production. This should be considered as a working definition of agriculture and not exclusive.”

preparation, ploughing, planting and weeding, applying fertilisers and spraying chemicals, transporting, to harvesting and processing (ibid.). In 2007 FAO reported that child labour is increasing in post-harvest processing, transport, marketing and a range of agro-industries<sup>52</sup>. FAO (2015: 17) finds the work children perform in crop production is often invisible and goes unacknowledged for many reasons. For example, they are helping their parents; doing piecework or working under a quota system on larger farms; or in migrant worker families.

### **Livestock<sup>53</sup>**

Livestock production contributes to 40 per cent of the global value of agricultural output, supports the livelihoods and food security of almost one billion people, and is expanding rapidly<sup>54</sup>. Pastoralist societies make up the largest number of livestock-dependent people, around 120 million according to 2002 data (FAO, 2013: 11). Herders represent one of the most widespread and culturally accepted forms of children's work in many regions<sup>55</sup>. Among certain ethnic groups, cattle herding is almost entirely done by children. Children typically herd either for an employer or (unpaid) for their own household or relatives (ibid.: 6). There is a concentration in the literature on children herders; see FAO (2013) for a summary of country case studies<sup>56</sup>.

However, the problem of child labour in the livestock sector is often ignored<sup>57</sup>. A 2013 FAO study found little concrete information on children in the livestock sector and "a strong need for further field research and more age- and sex-disaggregated data collection" (FAO, 2013: 6). UCW reports on East and South East Asia and ECOWAS find that children appear to play an especially important role in livestock production in both regions (UCW, 2015a: 24; UCW, 2014a: 30)

ILO-IPEC finds that in pastoral communities, children may work as shepherds and herders in remote areas; in other cases livestock work can be stationary and larger scale. A typical farm operation may combine the tasks of crop production and harvesting, livestock rearing and handling, and manure disposal. Some tasks often categorised as domestic chores contribute to livestock production (e.g. collecting grass for cattle)<sup>58</sup>. Activities undertaken by children in the livestock sector include: herding and caring for different kinds of animals (cattle herding features most in the literature reviewed); animal traction in farming and guiding oxen to plough land; general pig care; poultry care; dairy activities, including milk collection, processing and marketing; and in slaughterhouses and meat processing (FAO, 2013: 38).

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<sup>52</sup> <http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2007/1000591/index.html>

<sup>53</sup> Livestock as defined by FAO means "any domestic or domesticated animal including bovine (including buffalo and bison), ovine, porcine, caprine, equine, poultry and bees raised for food or in the production of food. The products of hunting or fishing of wild animals shall not be considered part of this definition." (FAO, 2013: 11)

<sup>54</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172431/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172431/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>55</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172431/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172431/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>56</sup> The countries covered include: Chad, Ghana, Mongolia, Peru, Kenya, Ethiopia, Lesotho, India, Morocco, Nepal, Malawi.

<sup>57</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172431/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172431/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>58</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172431/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172431/lang--en/index.htm)

## Forestry<sup>59</sup>

In the UCW regional reports for ECOWAS and East and South East Asia, appreciable shares of child agricultural workers (5-14 years old) were found in logging in Vietnam (7 per cent) (UCW, 2015a: 23) while over one-third of all forestry/logging workers are children in Burkina Faso and Guinea, and over a quarter of all workers in this subsector are children in Liberia (UCW, 2014a: 30). Nayar et al (2014) report that child labour in forestry is the least researched activity according to the ILO.

According to FAO (2015: 19) child labour is found in many forest-dependent communities, mainly in remote areas. Most children in this sector are in their early teens because the tasks require physical strength. Typical activities of children include climbing trees to harvest fruits and spices, collecting honey from beehives, cutting rubber and planting (ibid.). In addition to work in family-based forestry, children often work under sub-contract arrangements and receive payment in food and clothing (ibid.). ILO details the vulnerability to exploitation of child labourers – in particular indigenous and other ethnic minorities – in often remote, sometimes temporary, remote areas. See ILO for additional resources<sup>60</sup>.

## Fishing and aquaculture

There is no global data on the prevalence of child labour in fishing and aquaculture<sup>61</sup>. FAO and ILO (2013: vi) find that case-specific evidence points to significant numbers. Case studies indicate child labour is most common in informal and small and medium scale operations of capture fisheries, aquaculture and post-harvest fish activities (FAO, 2015: 18). Small-scale fisheries provide over 90 per cent of the 120 million livelihoods derived from fisheries and support more than 500 million people<sup>62</sup>.

In fisheries and aquaculture, children are engaged in a wide variety of activities, such as harvesting and farming of fish in capture fishing and aquaculture and all associated operations (processing, distributing, marketing and other post-harvest activities), as well as upstream industries such as net-making and boatbuilding. Many of the sector-specific activities fall within the scope of the worst forms of child labour, including forced labour and other forms of labour abuses (FAO, 2015: 18). For further information see the joint guidance by FAO and ILO on addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture (FAO and ILO, 2013). Also see Nayar et al (2014): a literature review providing a useful summary of the key case study data on the prevalence of child labour in fishing and aquaculture.

## Global supply chains

Most attention – by the media, companies, development organisations and other stakeholders – is paid to child labour in agriculture in global supply chains with which consumers feel a direct

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<sup>59</sup> Forestry production includes the harvesting of wood and non-timber forest products, such as wildberries, bananas, seeds and nuts, oil palm, cocoa beans, mushrooms, honey, maple syrup, vines, ginseng, oils, resins, ferns, tree boughs, coconuts, cones, moss, rubber, cascara bark, among others.  
[http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172421/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172421/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>60</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172421/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172421/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>61</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172419/lang--en/index.htm#P2\\_563](http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172419/lang--en/index.htm#P2_563)

<sup>62</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172419/lang--en/index.htm#P2\\_563](http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172419/lang--en/index.htm#P2_563)

link – such as child labour in coffee, sugar, cocoa, tobacco and cotton (Thomas 2014: 153). Little attention is paid to child labour in neglected sub-sectors of agriculture such as vegetable cultivation, cattle raising, or wood production – or the production and processing of staple foods (rice, fish etc.) (ibid.; Le, 2015: 10).

A more extensive list of goods that are produced globally by child or forced labour is published annually by the U.S. DOL<sup>63</sup>. 61 of the 135 goods on the 2016 list are agricultural goods produced by child labour. Four of the top six goods with the most child labour listings by number of countries are agricultural goods: cotton, sugarcane, coffee and tobacco<sup>64</sup>.

This rapid review has found a large literature on child labour in the agricultural supply chains that have been a focus of media attention. Below are illustrative example of the type of studies and findings that are available for two such supply chains (cotton and cocoa), and a list of additional reports identified for these and other supply chains that could be useful for future research.

The literature review and expert input has brought to the fore critical reflection regarding these data sources and the wider sensational narrative that may be more dominant in the media compared to other sources. From research in Benin and Nigeria, other West African countries and countries as diverse as South Africa and Argentina, Howard (2017) finds that children officially labelled as victims of “child trafficking” do not perceive themselves to have been kidnapped or coerced. Howard (ibid.) discusses the optimum way to understand and intervene such situations, highlighting the need to take into consideration the child’s point of view and agency, as well as a more holistic (less individualised, simplistic) view of the global structures behind some of the media headlines on this issue.

## Cotton

Child labour in cotton production has been reported in: Argentina, Azerbaijan, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, China, Egypt, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Pakistan, Paraguay, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Zambia<sup>65</sup> (FAO and ICAC, 2015: 49). The Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) (2007) notes that disaggregated data for child labour per commodity is generally not available or reliable. Estimates highlight the scale of the issue. For example, 400,000 children – mostly girls – are thought to be involved in hybrid cottonseed cultivation in India, and an estimated 1,000,000 seven to twelve years olds are hired by Egypt’s agricultural cooperatives to assist with cotton pest management every year (EJF, 2007: 12-13<sup>66</sup>).

There are international campaigns to end child (and forced) labour in cotton production, some with a focus on individual countries. For example, there a number of reports available on (a state-

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<sup>63</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/ilab/reports/child-labor/list-of-goods/>

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/sites/default/files/images/ilab/child-labor/images/TheListInNumbers.jpg>

<sup>65</sup> See also 1) the 2016 Child Labour Index from Maplecroft, which finds that child labour continues to be reported in the cotton industry in some of the world’s leading cotton producing countries, including India, China, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Burkina Faso. [http://www.just-style.com/news/map-shows-child-labour-risks-in-cotton-supply-chains\\_id128119.aspx](http://www.just-style.com/news/map-shows-child-labour-risks-in-cotton-supply-chains_id128119.aspx) and 2) an Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) report which finds that six of the world’s top seven cotton producers – China, India, Pakistan, Brazil, Uzbekistan and Turkey — have been reported to use child labour in their cotton fields (EJF, 2007).

<sup>66</sup> Further information is provided in the report for Turkey, Brazil, Turkemenistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, China, Pakistan, Tajikistan.

controlled system for) child and forced labour in Uzbekistan's cotton harvests<sup>67</sup><sup>68</sup>. U.S. DOL (2016b: 9) finds that while the Government of Uzbekistan began working with the ILO in 2013 to eliminate forced child labour in the cotton harvest, reports indicate some local and regional government officials have continued to force children to pick cotton<sup>69</sup>.

## Cocoa

The cocoa industry, also a highly labour-intensive agricultural industry, is highlighted in the literature as an example of uses of the worst forms of child labour (Baradan and Barclay, 2011: 12). In 2000 the media started reporting forced child labour under appalling conditions on cocoa farms in West Africa (IPEC, 2007). A BBC documentary reported that hundreds of thousands of children in Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo were being purchased from their parents and sold as slaves to cocoa farmers in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire, and included claims that slavery existed on as many as 90 per cent of Ivorian cocoa farms (Schrage and Ewing, 2005: 99). The international cocoa industry publicly committed to address the problem (ibid.).

Reliable figures of forced child labour on cocoa farms are hard to obtain. Baradan and Barclay (2011: 12-13) summarise some of the evidence. For example, a 2002 study estimated that over 600,000 children were involved in cocoa farming in Côte d'Ivoire, the world's largest cocoa producer<sup>70</sup>. A 2003 ILO study in Ghana suggested that the number of independent child labourers with no family connection may be as high as one-third of the working children<sup>71</sup>. In 2013/14 over two million child labourers were found in cocoa production in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana, an increase by 16 per cent from 2008/9<sup>72</sup> (Tulane University, 2015). In 2015 the Fair Labor Association found incidence of child labour, albeit in reduced numbers, in assessed cooperatives in Nestlé's traced cocoa supply chain in Cote d'Ivoire (FLA, 2016).

Berlan (2015) examines media coverage of child exploitation in the cocoa industry, and makes the case that lasting change in this area will only come from a holistic and evidence-based approach in policymaking.

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<sup>67</sup> <http://www.cottoncampaign.org/uzbekistans-forced-labor-problem.html>

<sup>68</sup> See for example:

<http://www.laborrights.org/sites/default/files/publications-andresources/UzbekCottonFall08Report.pdf>

<http://jilp.law.ucdavis.edu/issues/volume-21-1/Jurewicz.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> For further information see: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/uzbekistan>

<sup>70</sup> By International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA):  
<http://www.globalexchange.org/sites/default/files/IITACocoaResearch.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/ipeinfo/product/viewProduct.do;?productId=690>

<sup>72</sup> Estimates based on representative household surveys, using ILO definitions and guidelines. Child-level estimates are representative of the population of children, 5-17 years, living in agricultural households in the cocoa growing areas of the two countries. (Tulane University, 2015: 4).

## Other resources

Child Labour Platform – a business-led forum for tackling child labour in supply chains<sup>73</sup>

ILO-IPEC (2006, Guidebook 2, p30-36): review of evidence of child labour in specific types of crop production – cocoa, cottonseed, flowers, sugar cane, tea, tobacco.

U.S. DOL annual report on worst forms of child labour (U.S. DOL, 2016) – describes prevalence of child labour in individual supply chains in individual countries (e.g. child labour in coffee in Costa Rica; sugarcane in Cambodia).

Library of supply chain case studies (2008-2011) from Business and Human Rights Resource Centre: <https://business-humanrights.org/en/case-examples-6>

OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains (OECD/FAO: 2016)

### Sugar

- Schwarzbach, N., & Richardson, B. (2014). *A Bitter Harvest: Child Labour in Sugarcane Agriculture and the Role of Certification Systems*. *UC Davis J. Int'l L. & Pol'y*, 21, 99.
- ILO-IPEC (2006: Guidebook 3, Appendix 2, p71-73) provides a detailed case study of the evidence on hazardous child work in sugar cane production in El Salvador.

### Tobacco

- Baradan and Barclay, 2011 – general description and focus on Malawi

## 5. Gender roles and age differences

### Gender

Key findings in the literature on gender roles in child labour in agriculture are:

- Boys outnumber girls in all sectors of child labour, including agriculture, with the exception of domestic work (ILO-IPEC, 2013: 7). See Table 4. Agriculture accounts for 60.7 per cent of boys versus 39.3 per cent for girls (aged 5-17 years) (Diallo et al, 2013: 14).
- However, agriculture can be a significant form of child labour for girls as well as boys. A 2009 analysis of data for 16 countries found that the majority of economically active girls aged between 5 and 14 years (61 per cent) work in agriculture<sup>74</sup> (ILO, 2009: 10-11). ILO (2009: 22) concludes that “There is a need to focus on girls in agriculture because the majority of girls involved in child labour are in this sector”.
- Growing awareness that child labour should be tackled with a differentiated approach for boys and girls (FAO, 2010b: 104). Gender roles, age, birth order and family structure often dictate the occupations and tasks undertaken by boys and girls; the conditions, hours and visibility of their work; their vulnerability and protection concerns; and educational opportunities (<sup>75</sup>, Child Labour Task Force, 2016: 24; Winter, 2016: 34-36).

<sup>73</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Action/CSR/clp/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>74</sup> ILO-IPEC's Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) analysed data on children's work obtained from nationally representative household surveys conducted in 16 countries between 1999 and 2007 (ILO, 2009: 10).

<sup>75</sup> <http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm>

- A lack of sound sex-disaggregated data on child labour in agriculture (FAO, 2010b: 104), and a relative neglect of research and activities focussing on the girl child labourer in agriculture (Murray and Hurst, 2009: 1).

Table 4: Children in employment, child labour and hazardous work by sex and age group, 2012

Sex and age group		Total children	Children in employment <sup>2</sup>		Child labour		Hazardous work	
			(children's economic activity)		(excludes all children working legally in accordance with ILO Conventions Nos.138 and 182)		(any activity or occupation that, by its nature or type, has or leads to adverse effects on the child's safety, health and moral development)	
		('000)	('000)	%	('000)	%	('000)	%
<b>World (5-17 years)</b>		1,585,566	264,427	16.7	167,956	10.6	85,344	5.4
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Boys</b>	819,877	148,327	18.1	99,766	12.2	55,048	6.7
	<b>Girls</b>	765,690	116,100	15.2	68,190	8.9	30,296	4.0
<b>Age group</b>	<b>5-11 years</b>	858,925	73,072	8.5	73,072	8.5	18,499	2.2
	<b>12-14 years</b>	362,146	70,994	19.6	47,381	13.1	19,342	5.3
	<b>5-14 years</b>	1,221,071	144,066	11.8	120,453	9.9	37,841	3.1
	<b>15-17 years</b>	364,495	120,362	33.0	47,503	13.0	47,503	13.0

Source: ILO-IPEC (2013: 15); definitions added from Diallo et al (2013).

Three issues highlighted in the literature on gender roles for child labourers in agriculture are:

### Hazardous work

In child labour generally boys outnumber girls in hazardous work (55 million and 30.3 million, respectively) (Diallo et al 2013: viii). However, the picture is complex. The 2012 ILO-IPEC data finds (in contrast to other years) that girls tend to be involved in more dangerous jobs than are boys, except for the age group 15 to 17 years (ibid.: 11). The data shows that girls outnumber boys in hazardous work across all age groups from 5 to 14 years old (ibid.). Guarcello et al (2016: 23) find that jobs held by male adolescents (15-17 year olds) in all three sectors – agriculture, services and industry – are more likely to be hazardous than the jobs held by their female peers in the same sector in most countries<sup>76</sup>.

ILO-IPEC notes that while both boys and girls face some similar hazards (for example, both may face the risk of violence and abuse due to working on remote and isolated farms) the prevailing division of labour means they are exposed to different risks and hazards<sup>77</sup>. ILO-IPEC details

<sup>76</sup> UCW calculations based on national household surveys.

<sup>77</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172261/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172261/lang--en/index.htm)

how, for example, in farming boys are often responsible for operating machinery, using sharp tools, spraying chemicals, and are more often exposed to amputations, cuts and burns, pesticide poisonings, and other adverse health impacts. Girls are often responsible for carrying water,

### **Unequal gender burden**

A key issue is that many girls face the double burden of performing household chores within their own households (for example, cleaning, cooking, childcare, collecting water and firewood), combined with agricultural activities<sup>78</sup>. As a result there is country specific evidence that girls frequently work more hours than boys (ibid.). Moreover girls are more likely to be unpaid or to receive less pay than boys for the same job (ibid.). FAO (2010b: 77) find that as boys tend to help their fathers and girls their mothers, the unequal gender burden is reproduced in the next generation, with girls often working longer hours to share their mothers' multiple productive, domestic and caring roles. Murray and Hurst (2009) summarise available evidence on how girls combine domestic with agricultural work (see pages 10-11). ILO-IPEC (2006: Guidebook 2, p16-17) provides further detail on the link between child domestic labour and agriculture.

However, the Young Lives study highlights that girls were not always disadvantaged relative to boys; for example in Vietnam, girls had better learning outcomes and remained in school for longer (Winter, 2016: 5).

### **Invisibility of girls' work**

Girls' work in agriculture is often invisible, and their additional contribution to domestic work is not given economic value or recognised as work (FAO 2010: 104). The issue of girls combining work in agriculture with domestic chores is one of the key issues not fully addressed in many studies covering girl child labour in agriculture (de Lange, 2009: 3).

ILO (2009: 23) finds there is sometimes a perception that women's and girls' involvement in agricultural production is for the household not the market. However, there is increasing awareness that a large proportion of women and girls are producers in their own right or wage-dependent, taking on seasonal or casual work to supplement low incomes with paid work on other farms or plantations (ibid.). Also girls and young women find work associated with export-oriented agricultural products including coffee, fruit, flowers, sugar cane, vegetable growing and packing, fish and shellfish (ibid.).

De Lange (2009: 1) notes that the availability of sex-disaggregated data on children's activities in local food crop farming is particularly limited, which is relevant from a gender perspective as it is often the domain of women and probably girls.

#### **Other resources**

- ILO-IPEC has an online resource page on "gender and child labour in agriculture" which provides a useful summary of the key issues and an annotated bibliography of relevant research.  
[http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172261/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172261/lang--en/index.htm)
- Additional resources are available from the ILO-IPEC page on the World Day Against Child Labour for 2009 which focused on girls.  
<http://ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/WorldDay2009/lang--en/index.htm>.

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<sup>78</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172261/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172261/lang--en/index.htm)

- Murray and Hurst (2009: 8-10) provide a synthesis of these sector specific studies and other research providing evidence of the extent and conditions of girl child labour in certain agricultural commodities – cotton, coffee and tea.
- Country analyses:
  - Koseleci, Nihan; Kovrova, Irina (2009). *Child labour in Bangladesh and India: a preliminary gender-based analysis*. [http://www.ucw-project.org/attachment/standard\\_gender\\_bangladeshindia\\_6april20110517\\_144747.pdf](http://www.ucw-project.org/attachment/standard_gender_bangladeshindia_6april20110517_144747.pdf)
  - Murray, U. (2004). *Girl child labour in agriculture, domestic work and sexual exploitation: a comparative analysis, cases of Ghana, Ecuador, Philippines* (vol. 2). <http://agris.fao.org/agris-search/search.do?recordID=GB2013201895>

## Age

Key points of the age composition of child labour include: (Diallo et al, 2013: 8)

- In 2012, two thirds (120 million) of the 168 million child labourers in the world were in the age group 5 to 14 years old.
- About 4 in 10 child labourers were younger than 12 years (73 million) in 2012.

Studies report that children work in agriculture at very young ages, before they are ten years old (IPEC, 2006: 3; ILO, 2009: 24; Murray and Hurst, 2009: 7). In some countries, children under 10 are estimated to account for 20 per cent of child labour in rural areas (ILO-IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 2, p13<sup>79</sup>). However, much agricultural labour by younger children is absorbed into the “piecework” or “quota” of the family work units, and therefore is less visible (ILO, 2009: 24).

Initially boys and girls may do similar tasks on family farms, usually within their mother’s sphere (according to de Lange, 2009: 4) but as children get older, and at adolescence, their agricultural work tends increasingly to become differentiated according to adult gender roles (ibid.; Murray and Hurst, 2009: 7). The hours spent on work unsurprisingly increase with age (based on evidence from the Young Lives longitudinal poverty study). Individual agricultural sub-sectors may have particular age characteristics: for example, most children working in forestry are in their early teens because the tasks require physical strength (FAO, 2015: 19).

Studies highlight the high share and absolute numbers of adolescents aged 15-17 years in hazardous work – 47.5 million, accounting for 13 per cent of this age group (compared with 37.8 million children aged 5-14 years) (Guarcello et al, 2016: abstract; Diallo et al, 2013: 8; <sup>80</sup>). Hazardous work is especially common among adolescents employed in industry and agriculture (Guarcello et al, 2016: 23). Rural youth aged 15 to 17 are more vulnerable to exploitation in the labour market due to their lack of skills, low bargaining power, and because they often end up in the informal sector of the economy (finds a recent expert discussion on employment opportunities for 15-17 year olds) (FAO, 2017: 12).

<sup>79</sup> The report presents a breakdown of the age of child agricultural labourers from 5-9, 10-14 and 15-17 years old for Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, using 2000-2002 datasets. It also provides a summary of estimates from several other studies of the prevalence and ages of child labour in agriculture in Egypt, Turkey, districts in India, Lebanon, Moldova, Guatemala and Honduras, and US studies (ILO-IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 2, 14).

<sup>80</sup> See for example the UCW regional report on East Asia which finds highlights, inter alia, the very high share of adolescents aged 15-17 years in hazardous employment in Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao PDR (31 per cent, 29 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively).

## 6. Other features of marginalisation

### Household income

Literature on child labour describes poverty tends to be considered the most common contributing driver of child labour (Baradan and Barclay, 2013: 4-5). Edmonds (2015: 2) finds that child labour is both a cause and a consequence of a lack of economic growth. Data shows a general pattern in which countries with a higher income, such as Costa Rica, have very low rates of working children, while poorer countries, such as Cambodia, have much higher rates (ILO, 2012: 16). Also see a synthesis of evidence from Vietnam and Brazil in Baradan and Barclay (2013: 4-5).

However, the relationship between household wealth and child labour is complex. ILO (2012: 16) reports countries that do not fit the general pattern: for example Kenya has both a higher level of income and a higher incidence of working children than Ghana or Bangladesh. In addition, the proportion of working children has declined dramatically in some countries: for example over a five-year period, the incidence for Brazil dropped from 47 per cent to 14 per cent for boys (ibid.).

De Lange (2009) finds in rural Africa ownership of land/livestock can increase the number of hours children spend on household work, because their labour is used to make these assets productive. Krauss (2013) identifies a broader range of (non-monetary) explanatory factors for children's work in agrarian economies like Ghana, including a country's agricultural dependency, social norms and a lack of higher returns to basic schooling (ibid.: 5).

### Other

The Child Labour Task Force (2016: 23<sup>81</sup>) lists the following groups as vulnerable to child labour:

- Unaccompanied and separated children, including those separated because of work.
- Migrant children (especially if they migrate without proper documentation, without their families, do not have proper legal protection, or cannot access basic services).
- Children who are out of school; not in employment, education or training.
- Children who are already working, managing school and work, or have working siblings.
- Families with HIV/AIDS, children who experience the death/illness of parents may drop out of school, looking for work to survive or to take care of the family.
- Excluded groups (minorities, ethnicity etc.) are usually more marginalised; often geographically isolated and under-serviced by local government.
- Families with elderly or disabled members may rely more heavily on children's income.
- Children of parents involved in illicit work, are more exposed to risky situations where they will come into contact with, be expected to engage in, or exploited in harmful work.

These risk and vulnerability factors may be heightened or created by natural disasters and conflict situations (ibid.). A large number of children are affected by emergencies: "It's projected that 200 million children a year will be affected by climate-change disaster in the coming

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<sup>81</sup> A new Interagency Toolkit on child labour in emergencies produced in 2016 by the Child Labour Task Force, chaired by Plan International and ILO: [http://ilo.org/ipecc/news/WCMS\\_543413/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipecc/news/WCMS_543413/lang--en/index.htm)

decades, UNICEF estimate that one in ten children live in conflict-affected areas and over 10 million children are refugees” (ibid.)<sup>82</sup>.

The literature also identifies:

- **Communities that are particularly vulnerable to bonded and forced child labour** as well as child trafficking. Debt bondage is commonly found in rural areas where traditional class or caste structures and semi-feudal relationships survive, according to ILO-IPEC (2006: Guidebook 2, p11). Landless or near landless households and migrant labourers are particularly vulnerable to debt bondage because they have no alternative sources of credit. It also occurs under land tenancy or sharecropper arrangements. (ibid.)
- **The impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic** on child labour. A series of IPEC rapid assessment studies in Africa suggests that HIV/AIDS is among the major causes of child labour in that region (ILO-IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 2, p23 – citing Rau, 2003). However, ILO-IPEC (ibid.) finds there has been little effort made to correlate rises in child labour and HIV/AIDS in developing countries.
- **The link between disability and child labour** (U.S. DOL, 2016a: 17). Only 10 per cent of the 93 million children with disabilities around the world attend school (ibid.). Some children whose family members are affected by disabilities may be out of school, working to provide for the family or providing care (ibid.). See also ILO (2010: 60-61).

#### Other resources

Further insight into features of marginalisation are available from individual country assessments of child labour. For example, the Malawi 2015 National Child Labour Survey report finds that “step-son/daughters, children that were not related to household head or were live-in servants were more likely to be in child labour”. (National Statistical Office of Malawi, 2017: v)

## 7. Most harmful and dangerous situations

### Prevalence of hazardous work for child labourers in agriculture

Hazardous work is a subcategory of child labour<sup>83</sup>. The key findings from the literature on the prevalence of hazardous work for child labour in agriculture show that much of child labour in agriculture is potentially harmful and/or dangerous:

- The overall global picture is that the number of children in this worst form of child labour accounts for almost half of all child labourers (85.3 million in 2012 – down by 30 million from 115.3 million in 2008).
- Agriculture is one of the three most dangerous sectors for child labourers in terms of fatalities, accidents and occupational diseases (FAO, 2013: 5; ILO-IPEC, 2013: 23)<sup>84</sup>.

<sup>82</sup> In countries such as Lebanon, FAO is working to address child labour in agriculture among refugees (<http://www.fao.org/lebanon/news/detail-events/en/c/418222/>). See also a study of migration and child labour in agriculture in the Punjab (Goyal, 2011).

<sup>83</sup> Hazardous child labour is defined by Article 3 (d) of ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182) as: *(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.* <http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/WorstFormsofChildLabour/Hazardouschildlabour/lang--en/index.htm>.

- Almost 60 per cent of girls and boys (aged 5–17 years) in hazardous work are found in agriculture<sup>85</sup> (in comparison with 30 per cent in services and 11 per cent in industry) (according to 2008 data<sup>86</sup>) (IPEC, 2011: 9; FAO, 2015: 15).
- However, concrete data on fatal and non-fatal accidents and work-related ill health experienced by child labourers is limited (ILO-IPEC, 2006<sup>87</sup>: Guidebook 3, p2).
- Progress in reducing hazardous child labour in agriculture has been slow. Agriculture is, historically an under-regulated sector, and many countries find regulation enforcement difficult (FAO, 2013: 5; IPEC, 2006: 3). Moreover the children are spread out over rural areas and are among the hardest to reach (IPEC, 2011: 9).
- Given the large numbers of children in this sector, IPEC concludes agriculture must be a priority for the elimination of hazardous work (ibid.).

## Common hazards and levels of risk

The literature reviewed highlights the potential hazards are numerous and levels of risk high (Murray and Hurst, 2009). Murray and Hurst (2009: 2) find that with much agricultural work, boys and girls are at greater risk than adult workers because of a combination of physical, psychological and social reasons<sup>88</sup>.

Examples of the risks and hazards commonly faced by child labourers in agriculture include: <sup>89</sup> long physically demanding hours; use of cutting tools; toxic pesticides; exposure to high level of dust and fibres; injuries by animals (farm and wild) and agricultural machinery and equipment; exposure to skin disorders or water-borne diseases; physical and sexual harassment (especially girls) and psychological abuse and stress<sup>90</sup> (Murray and Hurst, 2009: 5; ILO, 2009: 24-25). The health consequences of working as a child labour in agriculture may not develop or become significant until the child is an adult (ibid.).

Tasks and related health hazards vary widely depending on the specific farming environment<sup>91</sup>. This review has found a number of detailed summaries of the hazards faced in the various

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<sup>84</sup> Child labour in agriculture can have other harmful effects which are not covered in this section. These include children dropping out of school to work on agricultural activities, therefore impeding their access to education and/or skills training and limit their possibilities of economic and social mobility and advancement in later life (IPEC, 2009: 3-4; FAO, 2015: 15).

<sup>85</sup> IPEC-SIMPOC calculations based on *IPEC: Global child labour developments: Measuring trends from 2004 to 2008* (Geneva, ILO, 2010). (IPEC, 2011: 9)

<sup>86</sup> This rapid review could not find an updated statistic from the 2012 data as reported in ILO-IPEC (2013) and Diallo et al (2013).

<sup>87</sup> The report summarise evidence on the prevalence of hazardous work by children in agriculture from South Africa, Nigeria and cocoa production in four West African countries (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria) (ILO-IPEC (2006: Guidebook 3).

<sup>88</sup> Also see Nippierd et al (2007: 26) for a detailed explanation.

<sup>89</sup> Another summary is provided by ILO-IPEC (2006) in Guidebook 3, Chapter 1 (p5-15). For a list of negative impacts of child labour more generally see Child Labour Task Force (2016: 30).

<sup>90</sup> For evidence on violence against children in child labour from Colombia, El Salvador, Cambodia and Ecuador – see Blanco et al, 2008. Key findings include that although in absolute numbers, abuse is found to be more prevalent in urban areas, most mistreated child workers work in agriculture. Moreover the paper shows that older child workers are more likely to be mistreated than younger workers.

<sup>91</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172416/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172416/lang--en/index.htm)

sectors and types of commodities (see for example: ILO-IPEC, 2006: Chapter 2; FAO, 2015: 95-100; ILO-IPEC online resource pages – livestock<sup>92</sup>, forestry<sup>93</sup>; Guarcello et al (2016: 25) for crop production; IPEC (2011: 21-27) for crop agriculture and fishing and aquaculture).

While family-based work is often assumed to involve fewer risks and hazards, IPEC (2006: Guidebook 2, p6) highlights children working on small family farms may face similar risks to children working on larger commercial farms. With the increasing commercialisation and industrialisation of agriculture, in many countries small farms may be mechanised and make heavy use of pesticides (including without education and training in their handling) (ibid.).

#### Other resources

ILO-IPEC web page for the World Day against Child Labour 2011 which focused on hazardous work<sup>94</sup>

IPEC's 2011 report on children in hazardous work (IPEC, 2011)

FAO puts a particular focus on reducing hazardous child labour by addressing occupational safety and health concerns for young workers in agriculture, including significant work on reducing children's exposure to pesticides. Tools include: the E-learning course on Pesticide management and child labour prevention <http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/CLPEST>.

Morrow and Vennam's (2012) report on – Children's Responses to Risk in Agricultural Work in Andhra Pradesh, India - analyses survey and qualitative data from children, and presents rates of work, injuries experienced, how children deal with risks, and perceived benefits of work.

## Particularly harmful/dangerous situations

Situations highlighted in the literature as particularly harmful and dangerous for child labour in agriculture include:

- Little is known about the worst forms of child labour, including **trafficking and forced labour of children** (UNICEF, 2014: 12). However, studies provide evidence of bonded child labour and child trafficking in agriculture in some countries and in particular agricultural supply chains, including agricultural plantations<sup>95</sup> and herding<sup>96</sup>. In terms of understanding the impacts on children, a series of qualitative studies of forced child labour (looking at Ghana, Haiti, Niger and Pakistan<sup>97</sup>) apparently identifies the main features of what constitutes forced labour of children (according to ILO, 2012, 8). More in-depth descriptions of the impacts of trafficking and forced labour are found in case study country and commodity reports. For example see ILO-IPEC (2006: Guidebook 3, Appendix 1, p66-70) for summary of hazardous working conditions for children in cocoa production in Cameroon and Ghana. See Howard (2017) for critical reflection.
- **Bonded labour – including debt bondage** – is considered a form of modern slavery (ILO-IPEC, 2006: Guidebook 2, p11). Found predominantly in South Asia and Latin America, most commonly in the agricultural sector, sometimes only the child is tied to the

<sup>92</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172431/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172431/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>93</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS\\_172421/lang--en/index.htm](http://ilo.org/ipec/areas/Agriculture/WCMS_172421/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>94</sup> <http://ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/2011/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>95</sup> See summary of studies on forced and trafficked child labour on cocoa plantations in section 4

<sup>96</sup> Involving Chad, Angola, Namibia and Kenya) (FAO, 2013: 29).

<sup>97</sup> Cited in ILO (2012: 8) as: *Le travail forcé des enfants: mécanismes et caractéristiques*, (ILO/IPEC, Geneva, 2007). This rapid review was not able to find this report online.

employer in return for a cash advance/credit, while often debts are fraudulently imposed (ibid.). See Giri (2010) for a case study of bonded child labour in agriculture in Nepal.

- **Conflicts and emergencies** create new risks and exacerbate existing ones (Child Labour Task Force, 2016: 23). Conflict environments create general insecurity, increasing the risk of violence and sexual violence when travelling for work, as well as increasing risk of injuries from landmines etc. when working in fields and forests (ILO, 2011: 6). See ILO (ibid.: 6-7) for a summary of other key findings on conflict pushing children into the worst forms of child labour.
- **Migrant child labourers** face the common disadvantages of the migrant labour force, who tend to be worse off in terms of pay, social protection, housing and medical protection. The migrant labour force often consists of whole families, with children of migrant and seasonal workers working next to their parents while only the head of the family is formally employed (ibid.) .ILO (2010: 60) finds that most migrant children work in sectors such as agriculture, domestic work and the urban informal economy, and are often confronted with hazardous working conditions and the risk of abuse.

## 8. Contexts for beneficial outcomes

The literature reviewed highlights that the dominant discourse on “child labour” has focused mainly (or only, according to some) on the negative aspects of children’s work (Aufseer et al, 2017; Bourdillon, 2006). Recent studies and reviews find not all work undertaken by boys and girls in agriculture is harmful. Moreover focusing solely on the dangers of children working can lead to policies that damage some children’s chances for development (ibid.).

There is evidence lower risk age-appropriate tasks that do not interfere with a child’s schooling and right to leisure time can be a normal part of growing up in a rural environment, contributing to children’s well-being and development, and transitions to adulthood (Murray and Hurst, 2009: 2; Aufseer et al, 2017). The longitudinal study of child poverty – Young Lives – shows the harmful effects for schooling of large amounts or dangerous work, but also that children often balance work and schooling and children’s work can be a place where children learn important skills (Winter, 2016: 37). ILO-IPEC highlights in their online resource on child labour in agriculture that especially in the context of family farming, small-scale fisheries and livestock husbandry, some participation of children in non-hazardous activities can be positive<sup>98</sup>.

Benefits of appropriate children’s work identified in the literature reviewed include:

- Providing valuable work experience as a basis for future employment. (Murray and Hurst, 2009: 2; George, 2014: 61; Krauss, 2013)
- Providing learning to complement and support school. (Aufseer et al, 2017)
- Elevating the economic status of his or her poor family by contributing to household earnings. (George, 2014: 61)
- Providing a critical contribution for many poor households to the survival of the family at certain periods of the year (e.g. harvesting). (ILO, 2009: 23)
- Contributing to inter-generational transfer of technical and social skills. (<sup>99</sup>)

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<sup>98</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>99</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm#P2\\_481](http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm#P2_481)

- Offering psychosocial benefits – in contributing to building self-confidence, self-esteem and work skills. (<sup>100</sup>; Aufseer et al, 2017)
- Helping develop social relations and responsibility. (Aufseer et al, 2017)

Aufseer et al (2017) find these benefits are especially critical for marginalised children.

There are commonly held assumptions that work and school are incompatible and mutually exclusive, and that children's work impedes school learning thereby perpetuating poverty (ibid.: ). However, Krauss (2013) finds that in economies like Ghana – in which most households and nearly all child labourers are working in family farming – many farming families may view child labour as an optimal way to give children an informal education for their future occupation. The context includes a lack of returns to formal education up to the basic level in rural areas, together with labour-intensive agricultural livelihoods and the social acceptance of child labour (ibid.: 24).

Aufseer et al (2017) find the precise causal mechanisms and conditions that relate work to school are not clear. While excess work can damage school outcomes (especially in poor communities) other factors push children away from schools (such as poor quality and access to schooling), with the benefits of schooling often exaggerated (ibid.). Various studies highlight the contribution of education to a “process of ‘deskilling’ of rural youth”, with farming and associated skills neglected and devalued (White, 012: 11). The literature finds benefits of schools taking into account children's specific interests and opportunities for learning outside of school, including by incorporating practical learning in education (Aufseer et al, 2017; FAO, 2017: 2).

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<sup>100</sup> [http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm#P2\\_481](http://ilo.org/ipecc/areas/Agriculture/lang--en/index.htm#P2_481)

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