

Child Labour and Education in Humanitarian Settings

Background paper



Acknowledgements:

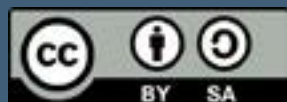
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Executive Summary

The goals to achieve inclusive and equitable quality education for all children (as laid out in SDG 4) and to eliminate all forms of child labour by 2025 (as put forth in SDG Target 8.7) are inextricably linked. On the one hand, education is not only a fundamental right for all children, but also a key element in preventing child labour. Conversely, there is clear evidence that the insufficient provision of education keeps children out of the classroom and pushes them into work. In this regard, both the access to education and the quality of education play an important role. On the other hand, child labour is one of the main obstacles to education. Child labour harms children's ability to enter and remain in the school system, and it makes it more difficult for children to derive educational benefit from schooling if they do attend school.

In humanitarian situations, the risks of children being out of school and engaging in child labour are both significantly elevated, particularly for displaced, refugee, and migrant children. Hence, while education is critical for the successful prevention of and response to child labour in humanitarian crisis settings, the potentially negative effect of child labour on education participation must be countered by targeted interventions. This is best done through collaboration and integrated programming between education and other sectors, covering child protection, food security and livelihoods, and other essential services to meet humanitarian needs.

This paper proposes various actions, which have been adapted from the “Inter-Agency Toolkit: Preventing and responding to child labour in humanitarian action” and are structured around the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies. They include key actions for community participation, coordination, analysis, equal access, protection and wellbeing, facilities and services, curricula, professional development and support, law and policy formation, and planning and implementation.

It is important to keep in mind that an effective response to child labour in humanitarian situations includes not just education, but rather a range of multi-sectoral interventions, such as child protection interventions (including case management, psychosocial support, access to justice and security, among others), health services, and socio-economic interventions such as livelihoods programmes, cash assistance, decent and lawful work opportunities for parents, and other workplace interventions. Such an approach requires proper inter-sectoral coordination among relevant stakeholders, as well as joint advocacy and knowledge management.



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1. Introduction

The latest global estimates on child labour indicate that 160 million children – 63 million girls and 97 million boys – were in child labour globally at the beginning of 2020, accounting for almost 1 in 10 of all children worldwide.¹ Out of all children engaged in child labour globally, 70 percent (or 112 million) are found in agriculture and its sub-sectors, namely crop farming, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture.² The number of children and youth who are not in school is even higher: It is estimated that 244 million children between the ages of 6 and 18 worldwide were out of school in 2021.³ While gender disparity at the global level has disappeared, there are persistent gaps in both directions in individual regions, especially among upper secondary school age youth.⁴ Many of these children are subjected to a violation of both of these child rights (i.e., the right to protection from child labour, and the right to participation in education), and these risks are exacerbated in humanitarian situations.

A record number of people globally – 235 million – required humanitarian assistance in 2021, expected to rise to 274 million in 2022.⁵ Millions of children and their families need humanitarian support to enjoy an education and be protected from various risks, including child labour, in particular its worst forms.⁶ In humanitarian settings, education is critical, as it protects children's right to survival and development. However, 30 percent of children living in crisis settings worldwide are not in school, a situation that is even worse for adolescents aged 15 to 17 years, 60 per cent of whom are not in school.⁷ Likewise, the risk of child labour for children who live in countries in fragile and conflict-affected situations is three times higher than the global average.⁸

1 ILO and UNICEF. 2021.

2 Ibid.

3 UNESCO. 2022.

4 UNESCO. 2022. / For example, the female out-of-school rate is 4.2 percentage points higher than the male rate in sub-Saharan Africa, but 3.1 percentage points lower in Eastern and South-eastern Asia.

5 OCHA. 2022.

6 For a definition of "child labour", "worst forms of child labour" and other key concepts, see Appendix 1.

7 ILO and UNICEF. 2021.

8 ILO and UNICEF. 2021.

In addition, the COVID-19 crisis has reversed progress toward reducing child labour, and has added to the number of out-of-school children.

This paper attempts to highlight some of the key issues regarding child labour and education in emergencies. Even though an effort was made to identify literature from humanitarian settings, many references in this paper come from development settings, which is largely due to data limitations (highlighting the need for increased investment in data collection and research in humanitarian settings). At the same time, it also fits with current reforms inspired by the World Humanitarian Summit, which focus on the ongoing quest to find “new ways of working” that bridge humanitarian action, development, peace, and security in a “nexus” approach, amidst protracted global displacement. In this context, humanitarian and development actors need to collaborate side-by-side at global and country levels.⁹ In effect, education and child labour stakeholders need to find ways to improve coordination across their humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding activities as they consider both short- and long-term responses regarding child labour and education.

The remainder of this document is structured as follows: Section 2 summarizes the linkages between education and child labour in humanitarian action. Section 3 considers in more depth the potential impact of gaps in education on child labour, as well as the effect of child labour on education. Section 4 outlines some of the key actions against child labour that stakeholders in education can take, and Section 5 provides concluding remarks.

2. Linkages between education and child labour in humanitarian action

The goals to achieve inclusive and equitable quality education for all children (as laid out in SDG 4) and to eliminate all forms of child labour by 2025 (as put forth in SDG Target 8.7) are inextricably linked. Education is not only a fundamental right for all children, but also a key element in preventing child labour, as it can provide a safe environment for children and support food security through school meals. In addition, education can provide an alternative and beneficial use of time that might otherwise be spent in the labour market.

Child labour is one of the main obstacles to full-time school attendance and, in the case of some, part-time work, may prevent children from fully benefiting from their time at school.¹⁰ Globally, more than one third of all children in child labour are not in school. Boys in child labour are slightly more likely to be out of school (36.3 percent, versus 32.8 percent of girls in child labour). Hazardous child labour constitutes an even greater barrier to school attendance: 45.5 percent of boys and 40.3 percent of girls in hazardous child labour are out of school.¹¹ Once children are in child labour, their reliance on income, lack of time and limited social support become significant barriers to education, depriving them of the opportunity to learn skills that are valuable for the rest of their lives.¹² In addition, the COVID-19 crisis has reversed progress toward reducing child labour, and has added to the number of out-of-school children.¹³

9 Mendenhall. 2019.

10 ILO. 2021.

11 ILO and UNICEF. 2021.

12 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a.

13 Human Rights Watch. 2021. / ILO and UNICEF. 2021.

In humanitarian contexts, major disruption in access to and quality of education often occurs, which is strongly associated with elevated child labour risk factors. At the same time, the gender dimensions of child labour may be more pronounced in humanitarian contexts,¹⁴ as girls may be at increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence, child marriage and school dropout, while adolescent boys in particular may be more vulnerable to hazardous work in certain humanitarian contexts. In addition, intensive involvement in household chores, which can be enhanced in humanitarian situations, may adversely affect children's ability to attend school, adding to the negative impact of child labour.¹⁵

Children who drop out of school in crisis contexts are more likely to enter child labour than those who stay in school, and once they start working, they are likely not to return to education.¹⁶ This means that even short-term crises can have lifelong adverse consequences for children. Furthermore, girls who drop out of school prematurely are three times more likely to marry early, and child marriage is often associated with domestic child labour and forced labour.¹⁷

Children who are refugees are often overlooked in data collection on child labour and education. In many crises, refugee children face specific child labour risk factors due to the specific barriers to protection, freedom of movement, education, and decent work, which they and their families face (for example, stretched resources, exclusion from public services, lack of documentation, and other legal and policy barriers). However, national child labour surveys commonly do not include refugee populations, leaving them largely invisible in child labour statistics.¹⁸

14 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a.

15 Understanding Children's Work. 2013.

16 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a.

17 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a.

18 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a.



3. The two-way relationship between education and child labour

3.1. Gaps in education, and their impact on child labour

There is clear evidence that the insufficient provision of education keeps children out of the classroom and pushes them into work.¹⁹ In this regard, both the access to education (Section 3.1.1.) and the quality of education (Section 3.1.2.) can play an important role in household decisions concerning whether children study or work (or to what extent they engage in both).

It should be noted that many of the studies reviewed in this section focus on non-humanitarian settings, due to the lack of rigorous evidence from humanitarian settings. Nonetheless, most findings can be considered relevant for humanitarian settings, as well.

3.1.1. Access to education impacts child labour

Access²⁰ to education has long been recognised as an important element in determining household choices concerning children's use of time. A wide range of results are available, which show that increased access to school reduces girls' and boys' work in both economic activities and household chores. In particular, the availability of a primary school within a short distance from home has significant effects on the reduction of child labour, particularly for girls.²¹ For example, a study that explored the link between child labour and education in cocoa-growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana found that in both countries, better access to schooling was clearly associated with lower rates of child labour, after accounting for the community's level of remoteness and economic development.²²

Even when school access constraints are limited to secondary and/or tertiary education, they can be part of the reason why children do not attend school at all or drop out of the primary school. The most common explanation for this finding is that longer-term economic benefits of education tend to be much higher for (lower) secondary than for primary. Hence, parents have an incentive to send their children to primary school rather than to work if they know that they will also have access to (lower) secondary education, where the seed of the initial investment in human capital begin to bear fruit.²³

Poorer families are often unable to afford school fees, uniforms and other indirect costs associated with school, which can present a particular challenge to girls' education. When a family has to make a choice between sending a boy or a girl to school, it is often the boy who will go. Girls are especially disadvantaged and at higher risk of being excluded from education in fragile states and during emergencies.²⁴

Many out-of-school children are not only disadvantaged, but they may also be "invisible" in education data, such as refugee and migrant children, those from ethnic minorities and children with disabilities. These children may sometimes be unwelcome in school as a result of legal barriers or negative social norms. For example, more than one third of Syrian refugee children were out of school in 2019, due to barriers including bullying, curriculum, language

19 Guarcello et al. 2008.

20 See Appendix A2 for a definition of "access".

21 Guarcello et al. 2008.

22 International Cocoa Initiative. 2019.

23 Guarcello et al. 2008.

24 ILO. 2009a.

of instruction, and certification.²⁵ Meanwhile, UNICEF estimates that at least 75 percent of the roughly 5.1 million children living with disabilities in Eastern and Central Europe and Central Asia are excluded from quality, inclusive education.²⁶

A lack of access to education increases the risk of hazardous child labour. For example, amongst out-of-school children in a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in Côte d'Ivoire, 45 percent are involved in hazardous child labour, whereas amongst those who are in school, 22 percent are in hazardous child labour.²⁷

Furthermore, a lack of options for continuing education at the secondary level through multiple and mixed channels of learning, including formal and non-formal programmes (upper-secondary education, technical and vocational education and training, on-the-job training, etc.), can have negative consequences for adolescents who are above the minimum age for employment. In the absence of relevant and realistic learning options that lead to existing decent work²⁸ opportunities, these adolescents may be at risk of hazardous working conditions (such as long hours).²⁹ The lack of such learning options is often exacerbated in humanitarian crises.

3.1.2. Education quality impacts child labour

Inclusive, quality education,³⁰ in line with the INEE Minimum Standards,³¹ should be holistic and learner-centred, delivered by a teacher who is trained and supported to build social and emotional, and life skills (self-confidence, the ability to work with others, think critically, solve problems and make responsible decisions), as well as academic competencies.

There is strong evidence that education quality has a strong effect on the positive outcomes that households expect to see from education, thereby influencing decisions concerning investment in children's human capital.³² For example, a survey of out-of-school children across a number of countries cited lack of interest and engagement as a primary driver of not attending school.³³

In Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, better educational quality (measured by a range of easily observable indicators, including pupils per classroom, availability of toilets, availability of school canteens etc.) was found to be related to lower rates of child labour in the community.³⁴ Rates of child labour are lower when the number of pupils per classroom is smaller, and when schools are equipped with gender-separated toilet facilities (associated most strongly with the rate of working adolescents). Furthermore, child labour rates tend to be lower when schools operate canteens or school feeding programmes; when members of the school management committee (SMC) have received training for their role; when teacher attendance is monitored by the SMC; and when children at secondary school level receive scholarships.³⁵ Consequently, the 20 percent of communities with the lowest score on the quality education index in Côte d'Ivoire have an average child labour prevalence of 29 percent; whereas the 20 percent of communities with the highest score on the index have a child labour prevalence of 10 percent.

25 UNHCR 2020. / UNHCR 2015.

26 UNICEF. 2019.

27 UNICEF. 2016.

28 See Appendix A2 for a definition of "decent work".

29 UNHCR, ILO and UNICEF. 2017.

30 See Appendix A2 for definitions of "inclusive education" and "quality education".

31 Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. 2010

32 Guarcello et al. 2008.

33 ILO. 2015.

34 International Cocoa Initiative. 2019.

35 International Cocoa Initiative. 2019.



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Conversely, poor quality of education may lead to school drop-out and prioritisation of work over education, acting as a push factor into child labour. For example, there is a strong correlation between the pupil-teacher ratio (used as a proxy for quality) and child labour: As the number of students per teacher increase, the percentage of working children rises.³⁶ It should be noted that the quality of education (as well as the options outlined above) can be compromised in humanitarian settings, particularly during the first phase, or in active conflict settings.

It should be noted that poor quality of education may include not only poor quality of teaching and learning, but also discrimination, bullying, gender-based violence, and other forms of violence against certain groups of children, including refugees, migrant children, children with disabilities, or children from a minority ethnic group.³⁷ Therefore, these “negative quality factors” can exacerbate the exclusion of vulnerable children from education and compound the push factor toward child labour (see Sections 2 and 3.1.1.). It should also be noted that poor teaching and learning may drive these negative factors, while quality teaching and learning approaches will explicitly work against discrimination, bullying and violence through learner-centred approaches that include positive discipline and the building of social and emotional skills.

36 Guarcello et al. 2008.

37 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a.

Furthermore, education quality also includes the relevance of education. This is particularly true for children living in rural areas, where the majority of child labour is found and where households' income and food security is more vulnerable to humanitarian crises and climate change-related events. In these circumstances, the irrelevance of agricultural school curricula may reduce the attractiveness of schools and undermine future opportunities for decent work in agriculture, with parents deciding that they learn more by working with them in the fields.

3.2. The effect of child labour on education

Child labour harms children's ability to enter and remain in the school system (Section 3.2.1.), and it makes it more difficult for children to derive educational benefit from schooling if they do attend school (Section 3.2.2.).

3.2.1. School attendance and retention are impeded by child labour

Children in child labour are disadvantaged in terms of being able to attend school regularly and stay in school. A study conducted in 19 countries found that the school attendance rate of working children was lower than of their non-working peers in each of the studied countries.³⁸ For example, in Bangladesh and Indonesia, non-working children were more than twice as likely to be in school as those who also had to shoulder the burden of work.³⁹

Survey feedback from students confirmed that those working often had greater difficulties in attending class regularly, arriving to class on time, and completing homework, and that these difficulties generally increased with work intensity.⁴⁰

In assessing the detrimental effect of work on education, the length of the working day is an essential dimension. In this regard, girls (and sometimes boys) are often faced with a “double burden”, engaging not only in an economic activity but also bearing responsibility for unpaid domestic work in their own household. This may include household chores and caring duties, such as child-rearing or attending to the sick, which are often hidden and inevitably limit the time available for education.⁴¹ For example, the probability of attending school declined for boys and girls with the increase of hours spent at work in both economic activity and household chores in Bolivia, Mali, Cambodia and Senegal.⁴²

The effects of work on school attendance can also take a more indirect form. Work can lead to late school entry, which, in turn, is often associated with early school dropout and lack of completion of a course of study, especially for boys. For example, in Cambodia, performing economic activity reduces the probability of entering school for boys by 25 percent, and the probability of entering by the official school entry age by 17 percent (for girls, both probabilities are reduced by 9 percent each).⁴³

Taken together, non-entrance, delayed entrance and early drop out combine to reduce the total time working children spend in school. This illustrates the importance of addressing the role of child labour at both ends of the primary school cycle, i.e., to its role in preventing or delaying school entry and in children leaving school prematurely.⁴⁴ (It is worth noting that humanitarian crises can lead to interruptions to education which will have similar effects.)

38 Guarcello et al. 2015.

39 Ibid.

40 Guarcello et al. 2008.

41 ILO. 2009a.

42 Guarcello et al. 2008.

43 Guarcello et al. 2008.

44 Guarcello et al. 2008.

Certain types of child labour may affect children's social status, appearance, or behaviour, and may lead to discrimination from peers and teachers, or expulsion from school, thereby compounding poor education quality factors described in Section 3.1.2. In this regard, there may be a “double discrimination” against refugee or displaced children. In turn, education staff and institutions may feel they do not have the skills, time, or resources to meet the specific learning needs of children in child labour and their requirements for flexible education programmes.⁴⁵

3.2.2. School performance is hampered by child labour

Globally, 72.3 percent of children in child labour aged 5 to 11, and 64.8 percent of children in child labour aged 12 to 14 are also in school.⁴⁶ However, many of these children have limited or no time for learning and doing homework due to their work commitments or additional domestic chores at home. Moreover, these children may experience a negative impact on their psychosocial wellbeing, with associated learning difficulties, such as concentration problems, due to exhaustion, hunger, or illness, all of which can be compounded in humanitarian situations. This may negatively impact their school performance and lead to drop out of school at a young age.⁴⁷ A recent study carried out in West Bank schools suggests that poor academic achievement may contribute to behavioural and emotional disturbances and peer problems, which can further increase the possibility of child labour in the future.⁴⁸

Consequently, teachers reported that the learning of children was frequently compromised by their involvement in work, citing differences between working and non-working children in areas such as class participation, homework completion, extra learning in the home, and afterschool study.⁴⁹

There is causal evidence that child labour significantly impedes educational attainment, for example in urban areas in Vietnam, where a one standard deviation increase in hours worked was found to reduce mathematics test scores by 12.5 points out of 100, or 67.9 percent of one standard deviation of the test score (the impact in rural areas was negligible in this study).⁵⁰ Likewise, a study in Brazil confirmed a negative effect of working on learning outcomes in both math and Portuguese: The effects of child work range from 5 percent to 13 percent of a standard deviation decline in test score, which represents a loss of about one-quarter to three-fifths of an average year of learning.⁵¹

Similarly, a global review carried out in 2015 indicates that children combining employment and schooling lag substantially behind their non-working peers in terms of grade progression (an indirect measure of school performance) at the age of 13 years in 18 out of 19 sampled countries.⁵² The review suggests that the lag in grade progression was likely in large part due to repetition arising from poorer performance. These results point to the difficulty that working children face in keeping up in the classroom with children that are not burdened with work responsibilities and constitute an indication of the educational cost associated with child labour.

45 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a.

46 UNICEF and ILO. 2021.

47 Guarcello et al. 2008.

48 Hallaq et al. 2022.

49 Guarcello et al. 2008.

50 Mavrokonstantis. 2011.

51 Emerson et al. 2017.

52 Guarcello et al. 2015.

A study carried out in nine countries in Latin America shows that non-working third- and fourth-graders significantly outperformed their working peers.⁵³ In math, for example, children almost never working scored 13 percent higher than children working some of the time, and 22 percent higher than children working often. Differences in language test scores were similarly large.⁵⁴

In another study, working more than one hour outside the home was found to lower seventh- and eighth-grade math scores by at least 10 percent and science scores by between 11 and 15 percent.⁵⁵ However, work performed for less than one hour per day had only a very small effect on science scores and no effect on math scores, suggesting that it may not be work per se but rather the intensity of work that is most damaging to achievement. Overall, the adverse effects of child labour on the students in seventh and eighth grade in this study were much smaller than for the third- and fourth-graders in the previous study in Latin America (Gunnarsson 2006), pointing to the possibility that work is more harmful to human capital development at younger ages when the building blocks for more advanced knowledge acquisition are established.⁵⁶

Moreover, it should be noted that the lack of ability to derive the full benefits from education, as described in this and previous sections, have further negative repercussions regarding opportunities for decent work, human development, social skills, the ability to express oneself and participate, realize aspirations, and other opportunities.

53 Gunnarsson et al. 2006.

54 Gunnarsson et al. 2006. The authors show that the strong negative relationship holds up even when possible child-, family- and school-related confounding factors (i.e., involvement in preschool education, parental education, home learning environment, class instruction time, classroom learning environment, compulsory education legislation, etc.) are controlled for and the possible endogeneity of work is taken into account.

55 Orazen and Gunnarsson. 2004.

56 Orazen and Gunnarsson. 2004.



4. Good practices for action against child labour in education in humanitarian settings

Education is critical for successful prevention of and response to child labour in humanitarian crisis settings. At the same time, the potentially negative effect of child labour on education participation must be countered by targeted interventions. This is best done through collaboration and integration of education with other sector programming across child protection, food security and livelihoods, and other essential services to meet humanitarian needs.

With this in mind, the following actions, which have been adapted from the “Inter-Agency Toolkit: Preventing and responding to child labour in humanitarian action”⁵⁷ and are structured around the INEE Minimum Standards for Education⁵⁸, should be envisaged.⁵⁹

4.1. Foundational standards

4.1.1. Key actions for community participation

- Actively engage with community-level structures, including education committees, as well as child protection and/or food security structures, to assess and monitor access to and quality of education for children who are out of school or in child labour.
- Support community-led education initiatives for children who are out of school or in child labour, and provide resources for awareness campaigns on educational rights and opportunities for children in child labour, as well as community dialogues with children, adolescents, parents and influential community members to promote access and quality of education for children who are out of school or working.
- Strengthen community-level education monitoring systems to identify and track children who are at risk of dropout or already in child labour, including children with irregular attendance or poor school performance, or children who are not attending school, or other at-risk groups such as displaced children, refugee children, and unaccompanied and separated children (UASC).
- Strengthen referral mechanisms between community-level education structures and formal, informal and community-based protection services which can link identified at-risk children, adolescents, and their families to essential services such as education, social welfare/child protection, basic needs, food security and livelihoods, and other economic-strengthening programmes.
- Strengthen the relationship between schools and families, and their participation in educational processes.
- Build the capacity of School Management Committees to address child labour.

4.1.2. Key actions for coordination

- Develop comprehensive education strategies to prevent and respond to child labour, involving all relevant education stakeholders and other sector actors covering technical and vocational education and training (TVET), early childhood development, child protection and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), food security and livelihoods, health, and basic needs in strategic planning.
- Collaborate with social welfare/child protection actors to develop joint strategies for working with children and adolescents who are out of school and/or in child labour.

57 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a

58 Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. 2010.

59 In addition, practitioners should be mindful of the “Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action” (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2019), which also contains guidance on children associated with armed forces and armed groups, one of the worst forms of child labour.

- Establish child labour referral pathways to refer children who have dropped out of school back to learning, and immediately refer suspected cases of child labour to school management and child protection actors for safe support and reporting services.
- Advocate with donors for education funding to prevent and respond to child labour by providing data and evidence on the linkages between education and child labour, and the gender and age-specific education needs of children in or at risk of child labour.

4.1.3. Key actions for analysis

- Integrate child labour in education assessments to understand the context-specific dynamics between education and child labour, including barriers to education, and promote data disaggregated by sex, age and place of residence (urban or rural), in line with the compulsory age for education and the minimum age for work.
- Involve protection and other sector actors in education needs analysis and response planning, in particular in relation to children who are out of school, those who are working and those in child labour.
- Consider linking or extending child labour monitoring (CLM) systems to schools in contexts where there are considerable levels of child labour, and where CLM systems are implemented at national, sub-national and community levels.

4.2. Access and learning environment

4.2.1. Key actions for equal access

- Prioritise actions to address the barriers to education for at-risk groups including children who are out of school, children with educational gaps, children in child labour, migrant and refugee children, children with special educational needs, pregnant girls, and young caregivers.
- Sensitize parents and teachers on the importance of investing in both girls' and boys' education, without prioritizing as a result of gender stereotypes.
- Promote admission, enrolment and retention of at-risk children and adolescents (girls and boys) through:
 - o flexible documentation and age requirements;
 - o flexible education programmes e.g., accelerated education, bridging programmes, catch up programmes, remedial programmes⁶⁰, or other non-formal education support, to allow learners who have missed out or never started education to enrol or continue their education;
 - o abolishing, reducing or covering costs associated with education;
 - o linking families to cash and voucher assistance (CVA) or other economic interventions that can help cover costs.
- Promote a range of gender-sensitive quality education opportunities for children and adolescents tailored to age, developmental stage, learning and earning needs and interests.
- Develop specific strategies to reach and cater for the needs of adolescents in or at risk of child labour through tailored life skills, informal learning, and TVET that meet the gender-, age- and knowledge-specific needs and interests of adolescents, with particular attention to agriculture and rural areas.
- Develop specific strategies for children and adolescents removed from the worst forms of child labour:

60 See Appendix A2 for a definition of these terms.

- o Children and adolescents who have been removed from hazardous work, commercial sexual exploitation, children associated with armed forces and armed groups (CAAFAG), trafficking or forms of slavery, require a range of comprehensive support and services alongside education. Therefore, learning programmes should be combined with case management, counselling, psychosocial and health-related services to support their often long and difficult process of rehabilitation and social reintegration.
- o For adolescents above the minimum age for work, offer economic-strengthening opportunities such as vocational training, bridging programmes, youth livelihoods or other income-generating and learning opportunities.
- o For adolescents, always couple education or technical training with life skills education to support socio-emotional learning.

4.2.2. Key actions for protection and wellbeing

- Promote a safe and secure learning environment for all children to protect them from threat, danger, injury, stigma, and discrimination, particularly for children who are withdrawn from child labour.
- Provide guidance and support to teachers to identify and support the psychosocial needs of children with experiences of child labour, and to ensure a safe learning environment.
- Establish early warning mechanisms to detect drop-out risk and act early.
- Give voice to children (formerly) involved in child labour and promote their meaningful participation in programmes or decisions that affect their life.
- In the case of CAAFAG, ensure that programmes integrate CAAFAG (and their caregivers, if relevant), with other at-risk children in the community, which helps to reduce stigma and promote acceptance.⁶¹

4.2.3. Key actions for facilities and services

- Promote safety and accessibility of education facilities for all learners to prevent school dropout and child labour, including secure and disaster-resilient learning structures; sufficient teaching materials; adequate WASH and menstrual hygiene facilities, including safe drinking water, sanitary products, sex-separated bathrooms and hand-washing facilities.
- Raise awareness of menstrual hygiene to reduce stigma.
- Promote multi-sectoral services that equip girls and boys (formerly) in child labour with essential skills and help to reduce barriers to education such as health and vaccination, nutrition and school feeding, recreational and sport programmes, and life skills programmes.
- Carry out a mapping of school facilities, including through digital and innovative tools, to measure distance to vulnerable households, especially in remote rural areas.
- Prevent children's drop out during times of crisis through the use of remote learning tools.

4.3. Teaching and learning

4.3.1. Key actions for curricula

- Ensure all formal and non-formal education programmes for children in or at risk of child labour adhere to national and international education standards to ensure that children develop core social, emotional and academic competencies regardless of the type of education they access.

⁶¹ This approach can also be used for programmes to reintegrate other children who are discriminated against, e.g. children who have been living on the street, into social groups at school, e.g. by engaging them alongside other children in clubs and activities.



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- Adapt or develop curricula and learning materials to include education about child labour risk factors alongside other key themes related to human rights, child rights and labour rights.⁶²
- Provide inclusive play-based extracurricular interventions, such as play days and child clubs to identify, respond and raise awareness on risks of child labour.
- Design context-specific and gender-sensitive life skills content to meet the needs and interests of working children, including leadership skills, job coaching and employability skills such as job interviewing, communication in the workplace, and conflict resolution.
- Increase the relevance of agricultural curricula in schools in rural areas, through teaching of traditional knowledge on agriculture and safe agricultural practices, as well as climate-smart agriculture.
- Provide comprehensive sexuality education where possible, as a critical way to prevent early pregnancy (which can be a result of protection issues associated with child labour).

4.3.2. Key actions for training, professional development, and support

- Strengthen child labour knowledge and capacity among education personnel, including teachers, instructors, facilitators, and animators in formal and non-formal education programmes, as well as school administrators and supporting staff,⁶³ including content related to:

⁶² A useful resource can be "[SCREAM: Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media](https://ilo.org/)" (ilo.org).

⁶³ This includes the use of learning package available to strengthen knowledge and skills of practitioners for mid-level humanitarian and development in education ([Inter-Agency Toolkit | Preventing and Responding to Child Labour in Humanitarian Action | Alliance CHPA](https://alliancecpha.org/) (alliancecpha.org)).

- o context-specific priority child labour risk factors and consequences, concepts and legal framework, key preventive and response actions, and referral pathways;
 - o child safeguarding and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment (PSEAH);
 - o gender-inclusive and gender-transformative teaching methodologies;
 - o using specific curricula for working children and adolescents;
 - o promoting a learner-friendly environment with special attention to the needs and capacities of (former) working children, especially those in the worst forms of child labour. This may include play-based learning to attract and keep these formerly working children in school.
- Integrate content on child labour in training and professional development opportunities for all education staff in settings where this is prevalent.
 - Provide specialised training and support education staff with a specific role in supporting children (formerly) in child labour such as school counsellors, case workers, mentors, and teachers who provide education to working children.

4.4. Teachers and other education personnel

- Define roles and responsibilities of education staff to safely and confidentially identify, support and refer children at risk of, in or removed from child labour, considering roles for school counsellors, case workers, female mentors and/or teaching assistants in providing specific support to at-risk and working children, especially those in child labour, and ensuring that they are connected with referral pathways to more specialised services related to child protection, health, and mental health.
- Recruit teachers from the affected populations, including from refugee, internally displaced and migrant populations (or advocate for viable solutions), and teachers who can teach in the language of affected children.

4.5. Education policy

4.5.1. Key actions for law and policy formation

- Identify and analyse existing legal and policy frameworks for education and child labour including the provisions for at-risk children in the crisis context (from early years to TVET and tertiary education), addressing relevant barriers, especially in agriculture and rural areas.
- Advocate for authorities to address child labour risk factors and gaps in national education law and policy formation, and in initiatives such as setting minimum standards and developing guidelines for education in humanitarian action at local and national levels.
- Advocate and collaborate with the Ministry of Education to minimise policy barriers for all children who have missed out on education and children at risk of, or in child labour.
- Advocate for the alignment between the minimum legal age for employment and the upper compulsory school age.

4.5.2. Key actions for planning and implementation

- Strengthen linkages and transition pathways between formal and non-formal education and between education and decent youth employment opportunities, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture and other relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure that the national education sector plan, which provides a framework for both quality formal and non-formal education programmes, contains inclusive educational opportunities for children at risk of, in and withdrawn from child labour.

- Use existing legislation and policy to inform humanitarian action to link children in child labour to education opportunities, for example by raising awareness of the legal rights of children to education and decent work, and advocating for resources to meet the specific educational needs of children in child labour.
- Identify and share good practices and lessons learned on improving the accessibility of education for children in or withdrawn from child labour.
- Prepare remote education tools as a temporary and emergency tool in times of crisis, to prevent school dropout.

5. Conclusion

This paper has highlighted the impact of barriers to education on child labour, as well as the negative impact of child labour on education, with a focus on humanitarian settings. It has also provided a range of activities that education stakeholders and others can take in humanitarian situations to address child labour.

It is important to keep in mind that an effective response to child labour in humanitarian situations includes not just education, but rather a range of multi-sectoral interventions, such as child protection interventions (including case management, psychosocial support, access to justice and security, among others), health services, and socio-economic interventions such as livelihoods programmes, cash assistance, decent and lawful work opportunities for parents, and other workplace interventions. Such an approach requires effective inter-sectoral coordination among relevant stakeholders, as well as joint advocacy and knowledge management.⁶⁴



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Appendix: Relevant concepts and definitions

A1. Child labour concepts and legal framework

(Adapted from: The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. 2020a. "Inter-Agency Toolkit: Preventing and responding to child labour in humanitarian action.")

CHILD WORK is the term used to describe any activity undertaken by children below the age of 18 years to produce goods or services for their own use or for use by others. It includes work in both the informal and formal economy, inside and outside family settings, paid or unpaid, part-time or full-time.

Not all child work is child labour. All over the world children can be seen helping around the home, looking after animals, picking fruit and vegetables, doing internships or earning pocket money outside school hours. Many of these activities can be encouraged because they contribute to a child's healthy development and provide them with skills and experience that will benefit them later in life.

CHILD LABOUR is work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity. It interferes with children's education and negatively affects their development and wellbeing.

Child labour refers to work that:

- is carried out by children who are too young to work – i.e. by children who are below the legal minimum age for this type of work (as defined by national legislation in accordance with international standards); and/or
- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children (worst forms of child labour); and/or
- interferes with children's schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and/or heavy work.

Whether a particular type of work can be called child labour depends on a child's age, the type and hours of work performed, and the conditions under which it is performed.

WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR (WFCL) are prohibited for all children under the age of 18 years and are to be eliminated as a matter of urgency. The WFCL are a subset of child labour, defined by the ILO Convention No. 182 as:

- all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties;
- work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, development, safety or morals of a child (also called: "hazardous work").

HAZARDOUS WORK is work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, development, safety or morals of children.

It is one of the worst forms of child labour and is therefore prohibited for all children under the age of 18 years. Globally, about half of all children in child labour are in hazardous work, making it by far the most common WFCL.

Each country should determine a list of hazardous work activities specific to their country context. ILO Recommendation No. 190 urges governments to consider the following hazardous work activities:

(a) Work that is harmful by its nature

- work which exposes children to physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
- work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces.
- work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads.

(b) Work that is harmful by its circumstances

- work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health.
- work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

A2. Concepts and definitions: Education and decent work

ACCELERATED EDUCATION PROGRAMME (AEP)

A flexible, age-appropriate programme, run in an accelerated timeframe, which aims to provide access to education for disadvantaged, over-age, out-of-school children and youth. This may include those who missed out on, or had their education interrupted by, poverty, marginalisation, conflict and crisis. The goal of Accelerated Education Programmes is to provide learners with equivalent, certified competencies for basic education using effective teaching and learning approaches that match their level of cognitive maturity.

(<https://inee.org/resources/accelerated-education-definitions>)

ACCELERATED LEARNING

Approaches to teaching and learning, informed by research in the cognitive and neuro-sciences, that provide more engaged, proficient and faster development of learned knowledge and basic skills.

(<https://inee.org/resources/accelerated-education-definitions>)

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

An opportunity to enrol in, attend and complete a formal or non-formal education programme. When access is unrestricted, it means that there are no practical, financial, physical, security-related, structural, institutional, or socio-cultural obstacles to prevent learners from participating in and completing an education programme. (INEE 2010)

BRIDGING PROGRAMME

A short-term, targeted preparation course that supports students' success taking various forms such as language acquisition and/or other existing differences between home and host education curricula and systems for entry into a different type of certified education.

(<https://inee.org/resources/accelerated-education-definitions>)

CATCH-UP PROGRAMME

A short-term transitional education programme for children and youth who had been actively attending school prior to an educational disruption, which provides students with the opportunity to learn content missed because of the disruption and supports their re-entry to the formal system.

(<https://inee.org/resources/accelerated-education-definitions>)

DECENT WORK

Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for all, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

(<https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm>)

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education ensures the presence, participation and achievement of all individuals in learning opportunities. It involves ensuring that education policies, practices and facilities respond to the diversity of all individuals in the context. Exclusion from education can result from discrimination, lack of support to remove barriers or use of languages, content or teaching methods that do not benefit all learners. People with physical, sensory, mental and intellectual disabilities are often among the most excluded from education. Emergencies have an impact on exclusion. Some individuals who were previously able to access education may be excluded because of circumstantial, social, cultural, physical or infrastructural factors. Inclusive education means ensuring that these barriers to participation and learning are removed and that teaching methodologies and curricula are accessible and appropriate for

students with disabilities. All individuals are welcomed and supported to make progress, and their individual requirements are addressed.
(INEE 2010)

QUALITY EDUCATION

Quality education is affordable, accessible, gender-sensitive and responds to diversity. It includes 1) a safe and inclusive learner friendly environment; 2) competent and well-trained teachers who are knowledgeable in the subject matter and pedagogy; 3) an appropriate context-specific curriculum that is comprehensible and culturally, linguistically and socially relevant for the learners; 4) adequate and relevant materials for teaching and learning; 5) participatory methods of instruction and learning processes that respect the dignity of the learner; 6) appropriate class sizes and teacher-student ratios; and 7) an emphasis on recreation, play, sport and creative activities in addition to areas such as literacy, numeracy and life skills.
(INEE 2010)

REMEDIAL PROGRAMME

Additional targeted support, concurrent with regular classes, for students who require short-term content or skill support to succeed in regular formal programming.
(<https://inee.org/resources/accelerated-education-definitions>)

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is understood as comprising education, training and skills development relating to a wide range of occupational fields, production, services and livelihoods. TVET, as part of lifelong learning, can take place at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels and includes work-based learning and continuing training and professional development which may lead to qualifications. TVET also includes a wide range of skills development opportunities attuned to national and local contexts. Learning to learn, the development of literacy and numeracy skills, transversal skills and citizenship skills are integral components of TVET.
(<https://unevoc.unesco.org/home/TVETipedia+Glossary/filt=all/id=474>)



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THE ALLIANCE
FOR CHILD PROTECTION
IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION