Child Labor Exploitation:
Addressing the most vulnerable children

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http://www.ilo.org
- **Agriculture, fishing – 72%**
  - 132 million boys and girls between 5 and 14.
  - Many injuries, illnesses and fatalities.

- **Domestic work – 6%**, 
  - 95% girls;
  - many abused and victims of violence.

- **Street commerce - 9%**, 
  - Construction and mining.
  - Home-based outsourced work.
• 95% of working children are in the informal economy,
• 1.2 m. <18 y.o. were trafficked (2000).
  – **GIRLS**: mainly commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC), child domestic labor (CDL)
  – **BOYS**: mainly agriculture, plantations, mining, armed conflict

(Incidence of child labor by region)
Regional trends in the proportion of working children in the age group 5 – 14 years (%)

Fastest progress in *Latin America and the Caribbean*. Marginal progress in Asia. Least progress in Africa, particularly *sub-Saharan Africa*.
Poverty: Improving (to 2007) and faster in Asia and Africa than LAC, and YET with lower impact on CL!
Irreversible changes shaping action

- Normative changes
- Policy changes <-> Civil Action
- Conceptual changes
Normative changes

Min. floor of universal standards...guiding globalization

- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).
- ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998)
  - 8 Conventions on Freedom of Association and right to bargain, child labor, forced labor, and discrimination.
  - UN Global Compact (2001)

Child Labor standards

- ILO Conv. 138, Min. Age - 150 ratif, no US
- ILO Conv. 182, Worst Forms - 165 ratif, yes US
  - 1. Optional Protocol ...on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

Discrimination standards

- ILO Conv. 100 - 164 ratif, no US
- ILO Conv. 111 - 166 ratif, no US
- UN Conv. Elimination of All forms of Discrimination - 185 ratif, US signed it but did not ratify it.

Upper floors of standards

- ILO’s Declaration on MNEs and Social Policy; OECD Guidelines on MNEs
- CSR codes of conduct
- SAI’s certification (SA 8000)
- FSC’s certification
- (ISO 26000), etc
- UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
What is CL to be abolished?

- Work by children below the minimum working age(s)
  - Usually 15, some 16, but may be transitionally 14+ in low income countries...

- Hazardous work + other worst forms of child labor under 18: forced and bonded labor, armed forces, prostitution and pornography, and (other) illicit activities.
Child labour to be abolished

Shaded areas = child labour for abolition

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Children between min age + 18</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children between 12/13 + min age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children below 12/13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work excluded from min. age legislation</td>
<td>Light work</td>
<td>Non-hazardous, non-light work</td>
<td>Hazardous work + other worst forms of child labour</td>
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Policy changes (in international agencies, governments, NGOs, donors, creditors)

for sustainable progress in CL eradication and prevention

* Essential tripod of integrated action
  - Education: More and better schools: integrated with other CL eradication efforts
  - Income: Assistance conditioned to school attendance (e.g. cash transfers),

* Essential complementary action
  - Support from government and community - employers’ and workers’ organizations and other NGOs, including HR Advocacy Groups, Churches and other faith-based orgs, etc.
  - Support from inter-gov multilateral agencies: ILO, UNHCHR, UNICEF, UNESCO, HR NGOs, dev’t banks, etc.
  - Support from consumer groups and instruments.
Countries cannot rely on economic progress alone to bring about the end of child labor.

Countries that combine economic growth with the right policy mix make more rapid and more sustainable progress.
Child Labor Eradication: Integrated actions for sustainable outcomes

More and better schools
(with attendance and performance monitoring linked to cash transfers and labor administration)

Donors
Creditors
Consumers
S.R Media

Legal institutions + law enforcement

Labor stats + administration
Gov: Inspection + courts
Time-Bound Programs linked to PRSPs/CASs
Private codes: self-inspection and/or union community watch;

Community Support Structures
Local Gov, Employers' and Workers' org's + other NGOs

Role models
Academia

Income
cash transfers to mothers conditioned to school attendance
(as part of PRSPs> UNDAF/DWCPs...CAS)

Market:
production and distribution structures, competition, etc.
Gaps: The elimination of all worst forms of child labour by 2016…

- …would have required all countries to design and put in place appropriate time-bound measures by 2008.
- *We’re short of the time bound targets.*
- *Will the neglected children forgive us?*
- *What can you do about it?*
Gaps: The elimination of all worst forms of child labour by 2016...

...requires greater integration and consolidation of efforts

- Many important action projects...
- not adding up enough;
- short of policy impact;
- too much information, but too little learning.
Conceptual changes

CL facts and stats + (un,under)employment + ethics shaping culture + long term social costs/benefits of CL.

Causes of CL: from “poverty” to greed, deregulation, IMPUNITY, denial of opportunity, discrimination, neglect.

CL as a circular CAUSE of poverty (poverty as a facilitator).

• CAN’T BLAME POVERTY FOR CL in HIRING AND CONSUMER PRACTICES,
Interdisciplinary approaches to problem-solution diagnosis is ESSENTIAL

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<tr>
<th>CAUSE VS. FACILITATING FACTOR?</th>
<th>Correct Diagnosis?</th>
<th>ACTORS, INSTITUTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Greed</td>
<td>What is the real Problem?</td>
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<td>Deregulation</td>
<td>Profile</td>
<td>Options</td>
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<td>Impunity, Discrimination</td>
<td>Elena, Isabel</td>
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<td>Neglect vs. POVERTY ?? ...&gt;</td>
<td>Emmanuel</td>
<td>Ethics case for business</td>
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<td>SOLUTIONS VS. REMEDIATION</td>
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<td>ACTORS, INSTITUTIONS POLICY &lt;-&gt;</td>
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<td>&lt;-&gt;CIVIL ACTION</td>
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• revitalization of worldwide movement,
• *greater national ownership with integrated efforts by key social actors*,
• stepped up efforts to *mainstream* CL eradication into development and HR frameworks (MDGs and poverty reduction strategies, education for all),
• policy coherence among UN agencies and BWIs:
  — common endorsement of universally acceptable minimum ILS floor (not divergent priorities and focus).
  — education investments integrated with overall CL eradication effort
Many countries are ready to set time bound targets to eradicate the worst forms of CL and reduce other forms of CL, but *international financial support must increase*.

CL eradication must be a central focus of the international development agenda, particularly for Sub-Saharan Africa.

Impact of *HIV/AIDS* on CL needs more focus.

CL eradication should be linked with *youth employment* efforts.

Reducing CL in the *informal economy requires focus on production/distribution chains* and not just on local work environment.