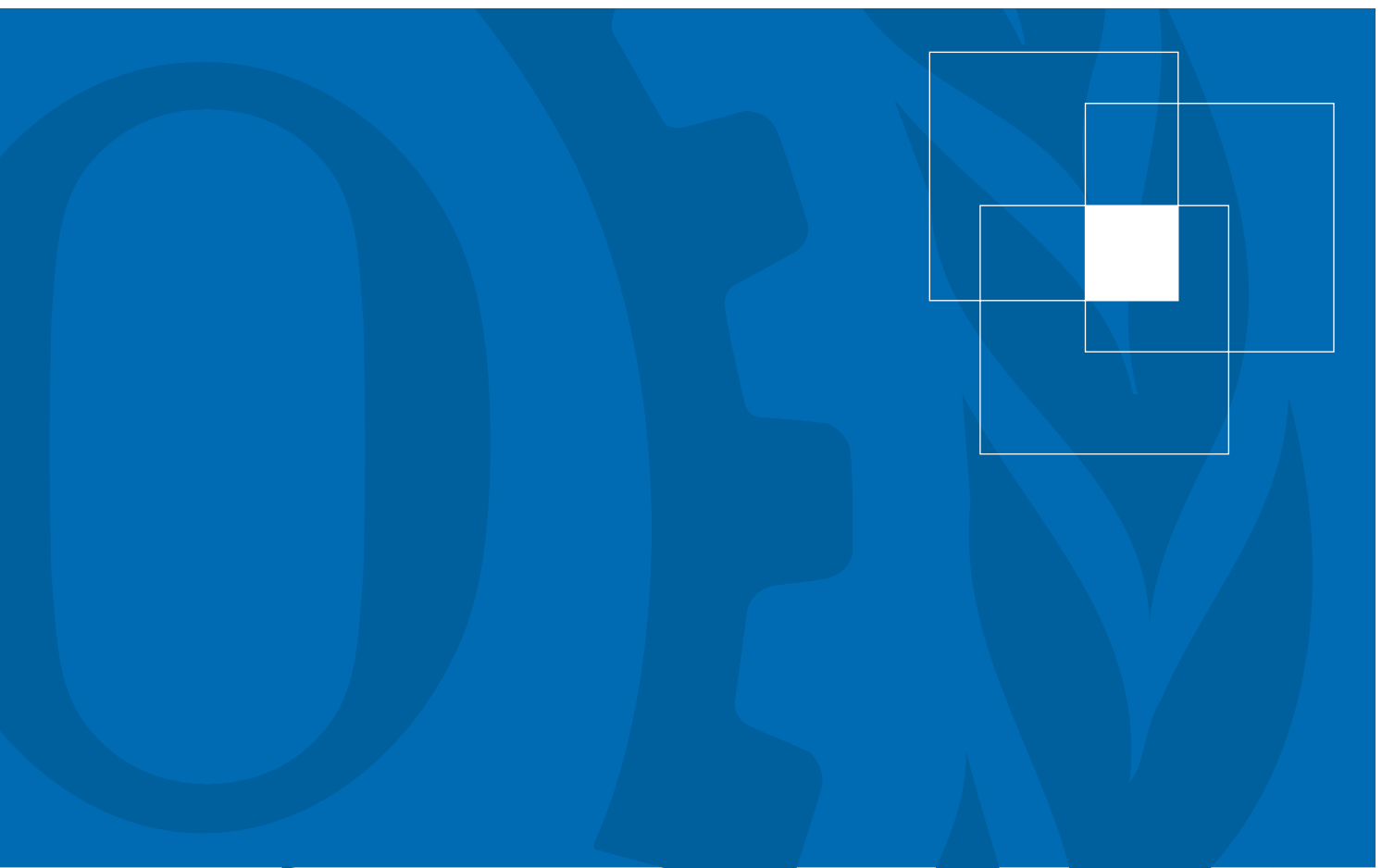




International
Labour
Organization

ILO-IPEC CONTRIBUTIONS TO **ELIMINATE** THE WORST FORMS OF **CHILD LABOUR** IN KYRGYZSTAN



2005-2013

Decent Work
Technical Support
Team and Country
Office for Eastern Europe
and Central Asia

International
Programme on
the Elimination
of Child Labour (IPEC)

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CHILD LABOUR IN KYRGYZSTAN

Kyrgyzstan is among the countries in Central Asia seriously affected by the worst forms of child labour (WFCL). Children mainly work in agriculture (cotton, tobacco, rice and vegetables plantations), in the urban informal sector (including work at marketplaces) and in the provision of various services (car washing, shoe cleaning, transportation of carts, etc.). The prevalence of WFCL has disastrous consequences on the safety, education, health and overall well-being of children.

According to the first National Child labour Survey in Kyrgyzstan conducted by the National Statistical Committee in 2007 with ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) technical and financial assistance, 592,000 children out of an estimated 672,000 children in employment are involved in work unsuitable for children. Thus, child labourers account for 88.1% of children in employment and 40.3% of all children aged 5 to 17. In line with the higher prevalence of work among boys than girls, boys account for 57.9% of child labourers. The overwhelming majority of child labourers are employed as unpaid family workers (95%) and are mostly involved in the sector of home production (76.4%), which usually involves agricultural work. Children mainly work together with other household members to sustain the household. An analysis of the working conditions found that 21.3% of children in employment are exposed to different hazards at workplaces, with most of them (74.6%) being exposed to dust/fumes, 35.7% to extreme heat or cold and 15% to gas or open flames. Children were also found to be working with dangerous tools, carrying heavy loads, operating machinery or heavy equipment, etc.

A Rapid Assessment Survey "Child Labour in agriculture and trade in Kyrgyzstan" (2006) identified less children involved in trade, services, housework, informal mining and construction than in agriculture. Children are often employed to transport goods, load and unload goods and baggage, sell small items from portable stands, and collect bottles and empty boxes. Other children who perform household duties are in effect servants, carrying out such tasks as washing and cleaning, serving at the table, stocking up on firewood and working in the garden. The specific feature of child domestic work is that the relationships of employer and employee overlap with family relationships. Parents often hire their children out to relatives who live in urban areas, in order to protect them from the harsh living conditions encountered in the rural areas. These children are not paid, but as servants and baby-sitters they are provided with food, clothing and money for school. Children are also found to be working in repair shops, bakeries, cafés and restaurants.



Five years old boy in the cotton in Osh region.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON CHILD LABOUR

By ratifying ILO Conventions related to child labour along with a number of international instruments, the Government of Kyrgyzstan has made a commitment to take all necessary measures to address child labour at the national level, including legislative and policy measures. The relevant conventions, international instruments ratified by the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and national legislation are presented below.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS	DATE OF RATIFICATION
ILO Convention No. 138 on the minimum age for admission to employment, 1973	31 March 1992
ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour, 1999	10 May 2004
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	6 November 1994
Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000	12 March 2003
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000	2 October 2003

NATIONAL LEGISLATION	
2007 Penal Code	It introduces clear sanctions for those who perpetrate different types of abuse against children including trafficking, involvement of children in illicit activities, pornography, and prostitution.
2004 Labour Code	It prohibits employment for persons under 16 years of age. Chapter 23 provides that young persons under 18 cannot be employed for work that is likely to jeopardise their health, safety or morals.
2003 Law on Labour Protection	It contains an article prohibiting the involvement of women and children under the age of 18 years in hard work and work in harmful and hazardous conditions.
2000 Law of Fundamentals of State Youth Policy	It contains articles on legal employment of young people.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ON CHILD LABOUR

The following institutional framework on child labour is in place in Kyrgyzstan:

- **Coordination Council on Child Labour Issues**, established in 2004 by the Government to “stir-up” and coordinate the activities of the executive authorities, local governments, representatives of non-governmental organizations, worker’s and employer’s organizations to take measures to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour.
- **National Information and Resource Center**, set up in 2007 within the Ministry of Labour to act as the national focal point for child labour issues and as secretariat for the Coordination Council.
- **Child Labour Units**, set up in 2011 within the Federation of Trade Unions (FTU) and the National Confederation of the Employers of Kyrgyzstan (NCEK). The two CLUs are located in the premises of FTU and NCEK, each including one CLU Specialist. The Child Labour Units act as national focal points on child labour for the trade unions/employers, by coordinating and monitoring the national response of trade unions/employers for the elimination of child labour in Kyrgyzstan. The CLU Specialists have established documentation points on the child labour issue within FTU and NCEK based on the relevant ILO-IPEC materials and other publications and brochures on child labour.
- **Local Action Committees**, set up in 2011, as per Ordinance No. 147-1286 issued on August 11, 2011, by the Aksuiskiy rayon administration/ Issykkul region; Ordinance No. 741-P issued on September 4, 2011, by Sokulukskiy rayon administration/Chui region; and Ordinance No. 190AP issued on September 1, 2011, by Sverdlovskiy rayon administration/Bishkek to supervise and provide technical guidance on establishing and piloting a Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) at rayon level.
- **Child Protection Department**, under the Ministry of Social Development, is the government authority responsible for child protection issues.



SPIF workshop, Bishkek, November 2005.

ILO-IPEC STRATEGY IN KYRGYZSTAN

ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has been operating in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan since 2005 in order to provide technical assistance on the implementation of the ILO Convention No. 138 on the minimum age for admission to employment, 1973, and the ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour, 1999. ILO-IPEC activities in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan have been funded by the Department of Labor of the United States (USDOL) and the Federal Republic of Germany, according to the regional project "Combat Child Labour in Central Asia: Commitment becomes Action" (PROACT- CAR), which also includes Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

ILO-IPEC strategy has been a combination of policy-related **upstream** interventions to create a conducive environment with **downstream** service-oriented activities at the community level for working children. ILO-IPEC priorities in the country continue to be guided by the framework provided by the ILO Global Action Plan (adopted by the ILO's Governing Body in 2006) which sets the internationally agreed goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016; the Hague Roadmap¹ and the Decent Work Country Programme for Kyrgyzstan.

ILO-IPEC main pillars of intervention

1. Mainstreaming child labour into national development policy frameworks.
2. Increasing the knowledge base on the worst forms of child labour.
3. Enhancing the capacity of Government officials, employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs on child labour issues.
4. Advocacy and awareness-raising on child labour.
5. Direct services provided to working children and children at risk, including the implementation of the Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) and promotion of youth employment.



Meeting of the Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Parliament with ILO-IPEC participation, April 16, 2013.

¹ The Hague Global Child Labour Conference (May 2010), adopted the Roadmap for achieving the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016.

MAINSTREAMING CHILD LABOUR INTO NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

As a result of ILO-IPEC activities in Kyrgyzstan, child labour has been mainstreamed into legislation, policies, and national programmes, as follows:

- **Social Protection Development Strategy for 2012-2014** and its **National Action Plan for 2012-2014**, approved by the Government on 26 December 2011, include child labourers in the target group “children living in difficult conditions”.
- **Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic**, approved on 27 June 2010, includes a provision on the prohibition to use child labour (Article 20).
- **Country Development Strategy for 2007-2010**, development of a State Programme to eliminate WFCL was among the key actions to achieve the Strategy’s Labour and Social protection goals.
- **State Programme of Actions by Social Partners on the Elimination of the WFCL for 2008-2011**, approved on 22 January 2008. Its objective was to create interactions between social partners aimed at eliminating the WFCL by: (a) preventing children’s involvement in the WFCL; (b) undertaking measures to reduce the number of children working in hazardous conditions; (c) reducing the prevalence of child labour in general; and (d) providing direct services to working children aimed at their withdrawal, rehabilitation and social integration.

The implementation of the State Programme was guided by the ILO Global Action Plan and the Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016 adopted at the Hague Global Child Labour Conference (2010).

- **National Employment Policy for 2007-2010**: approved on 2 February 2007, includes an article on combating child labour.
- **Code on Children**: new version of the Code with mainstreamed child labour provisions was approved on July 11, 2012. The Code prohibits the use of the worst forms of child labour and sets forth regulations enshrining children’s rights and making legitimate the interests of children in the areas of career guidance, training and employment, and the use of child labour.
- **Family Code**: mainstreamed provisions on child labour were approved on May 17, 2012. The Code deprives parents (or relevant guardian(s)) of their parental rights for involving children in the worst forms of child labour.

INCREASING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR

ILO-IPEC interventions in Kyrgyzstan have been based on the following research, studies, tools, publications and materials, produced by ILO-IPEC partners in the country as well as existing ILO-IPEC materials, adapted and translated into the Russian and Kyrgyz languages:

- Rapid Assessment Survey on child labour in agriculture and trade in Kyrgyzstan, Research and Consulting “SIAR-Bishkek” company, 2006.
- Hygienic assessment of health status of children working at dumps of Kyrgyz Chemical and Metallurgical Factory, NGO “Positive Help”, 2006.
- Baseline survey on child labour in tourism in Issykkul, Association of NGOs, 2006.
- Hygienic assessment of working conditions and health status of children working in tobacco, rice and cotton plantations, Ministry of Health and NGO “Positive Help”, 2007.
- The worst forms of child labour: Assessment of involvement of children in illicit drug trafficking, NGO “Positive Help”, 2007.
- Situational analysis on youth employment, Galina Voronina, Daud Adilbekov, ILO-IPEC consultants, 2007.
- Review of the national legislation and enforcement mechanisms related to the WFCL in terms of compliance with the ILO Conventions 138 & 182, Centre “Pravo”, 2008.
- Working Children in Kyrgyzstan: Results of the 2007 Child Labour Survey, National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2007-2008.
- Hygiene assessment of the working conditions of child labourers at Osh city market, Kyrgyz State Medical Academy, 2009.
- Training Manual for Teachers on Non-Formal Education in the Russian and Kyrgyz languages, Trade Unions of Education and Science Workers of Kyrgyzstan, 2011.
- ILO-IPEC: *Mainstreaming child labour concerns in education sector plans and programmes*. Geneva, ILO, 2011. Available at: www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_171033/lang--en/index.htm.

This material is available in English, French, Spanish and Russian.

- ILO-IPEC; Federation of Trade Unions of Kyrgyzstan: *A Practical Guide to ILO Convention No.182 for Trade Unions*. Bishkek, ILO, 2012. Available in Russian at: http://ilo.ch/public/russian/region/eurpro/moscow/info/publ/ipec/practical_guide_c182_kyr_ru.pdf.
- “Glossary of basic terms and definitions on child labour”, NGO Childhood institute in close coordination with the Ministry of Social Development, 2012.

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

In order to effectively address child labour in Kyrgyzstan and ensure the sustainability of efforts undertaken, ILO-IPEC contributed to strengthening the technical skills and capacity of the following institutions and groups of professionals during 2005-2012:

- 200 staff members of the Ministry of Social Development and its subordinated entities at national and local level were trained on child labour related issues.
- 345 teachers of secondary schools were trained on combating child labour through education, SCREAM, Non-Formal Education and elements of the Child Labour Monitoring System.
- 149 professionals (social workers, specialists from Social Protection Departments, local administrations and NGOs) were trained on the ways to undertake social work with working children and their families and on the CLMS concept.
- 62 labour inspectors were trained on child labour legislation, identification of working children, risk assessment and referring children to relevant services.
- 22 representatives of line ministries were trained on reporting on ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182.
- 16 regional journalists were trained on the ways to properly cover child labour issues in the media.
- 16 representatives of the Youth labour Exchange were trained on providing life skills counselling and career guidance for working children.
- Chief Labour Inspectors of Kyrgyzstan participated in the Sub-Regional Workshop on Labour Inspection Policies and Child Labour in Turkey (November 2006).
- 34 officials of the Youth Labour Exchange were trained on the Manual for practitioners on life skills development, counselling and career guidance for working children.
- 55 representatives of the mayors' offices, Family and Children Support Departments, local authorities, employers, trade unions, territorial unions, NGOs and media in Osh and Kara-Suu towns were trained on the worst forms of child labour and ways of prevention.
- Nine representatives of the key stakeholders participated in the Training Course on "Combating the worst forms of child labour in Central Asia: planning national actions", held at the ILO International Training Centre, Turin, Italy.
- Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration participated in the Child Labour Monitoring Good Practice Sharing Workshop held in Kiev, Ukraine (September 2010), organized by ILO-IPEC Ukraine.

SOCIAL PARTNERS INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES ADDRESSING CHILD LABOUR

- In cooperation with the ILO's ACTRAV and ACTEM, the capacity of Worker's and Employer's Organizations has been enhanced to play an active role in combating child labour.
- In 2011, The Federation of Trade Unions (FTU) of Kyrgyzstan and the National Confederation of Employers of Kyrgyzstan (NCEK) set up and institutionalized Child Labour Units (CLUs). The CLUs are located in the premises of FTU and NCEK and act as national focal points on child labour for the trade unions and employers, by coordinating and monitoring the national response of trade unions and employers for the elimination of child labour in Kyrgyzstan.
- During 2011-2012, the Trade Unions of Education and Science Workers of Kyrgyzstan (TUESWK) have taken several initiatives to address child labour by implementing the Action Programme "Support for the establishment of a Child Labour Free Zone in Chuy region (Ysykatinskiy and Moskovskiy rayons)", and the Mini-Programme "Enhancing the Capacity of teachers to combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Osh region". A further initiative was the undertaking of a half- day high level Forum on child labour and education with representatives of the Parliament, Government, social partners, civil society, international organizations and media. This was done in close cooperation with the Committee on education, culture, science, information and religion policy of the Parliament.
- In October 2012, a Tripartite General Agreement for 2012-2015 was signed between the Government, the Federation of Trade Unions and the National Confederation of the Employers of Kyrgyzstan, where child labour issues are included.
- Representatives of the Ministry of Labour, as well as Employers' and Workers' Organizations participated in different study tours to the Leningrad region and Tajikistan on sharing experience.



Meeting of the social partners from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan with Vice Speaker of the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan, Ms. Asiya Sasykbaeva, 2013.

ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS-RAISING

World Day against Child Labour – 12 June

At national level, the World Day against Child Labour (WDAKL) provides an opportunity to gain further support of the Government, social partners, civil society, children, parents, media, in the campaign against child labour. The idea of embarking on the World Day as an opportunity to raise the visibility of the child labour problem and to highlight the effort made in combating it, first emerged from the discussions held between ILO-IPEC and the Ministry of Labour and Social Development of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2005.

World Day 2006 was dedicated to the launch of the second Global Child Labour Report *The end of child labour: Within reach*. On 12 June, a concert “Stars of Kyrgyzstan against child labour” was organized in the main “Ala-Too” square of Bishkek with the participation of Government representatives, 13 local popular artists and bands, children and parents.

On the occasion of the World Day 2007, during a ten-day period, from 2 to 12 June, a bus branded with the slogan “Harvest for the future: agriculture without child labour” drove through four Oblasts (regions) of the Kyrgyz Republic visiting nine provinces in the areas where cotton, tobacco, rice and other crops are cultivated and provided information on hazards linked to child labour.

World Day 2008, “Education: the right response to child labour” was marked by the organization of an open doors day for working children in vocational education and training (VET) institutions in Bishkek and a press conference with the participation of the key stakeholders.

On 11-12 June 2009, working children with their parents visited several central and local authorities in order to remind them about the importance of education and the necessity to combat child labour.

The World Day 2011 was marked by distributing WDAKL materials to the general public and undertaking a Children’s Caravan - “Children say YES to education! No to hazardous work!”.

World Day 2012 was marked by organizing and showing artistic performances about children involved in the WFCL at the Square of the Kyrgyz Drama Theatre. Photos of ILO-IPEC activities in Kyrgyzstan were included in the photo exhibition “UN in Kyrgyzstan. United for Peace and Development: 20 Years together” in October 2012.



Street campaign organized on the occasion of the World Day Against Child Labour, June 2011.

DIRECT SERVICES PROVIDED TO WORKING CHILDREN AND CHILDREN AT RISK TO WORK

As a result of ILO-IPEC direct interventions working children, children at risk to work and their families were provided with direct services, such as: non-formal education, nutrition, school supplies, vocational training and skills, medical and legal counseling. As part of the direct services, the Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) has been piloted in Kyrgyzstan in 2011-2013. Its main outcomes are the following:

- The CLMS framework for piloting was set up by the Ministry of Social Development through the issuance of the Ministerial Decision № 3/350 from 02.08.2011 on pilot testing the CLMS in Sverdlovskiy rayon/ Bishkek Municipality, Aksuiskiy rayon/Issykkul region and Sokulukskiy rayon/Chuy region.
- Four Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) of monitors were selected and were trained on the identification and assessment of child labour cases. 152 working children/children at risk were identified during visits to the project sites.
- Three Local Action Committees (LACs) were set up in the Sverdlovskiy rayon/Bishkek Municipality, Aksuiskiy rayon/Issykkul region and Sokulukskiy rayon/Chuy region by issuance of local Ordinances to supervise and provide technical guidance during the monitoring process and make referral decisions for children at risk or those identified as involved in WFCL.
- 75 teachers from the target areas were trained in three three-day workshops on child labour, CLMS, non- formal education and SCREAM.
- 152 parents of working children participated in awareness- raising sessions on child labour and its consequences.
- 340 children received non-formal education and referred to vocational education and training.
- In 2011 National Guidelines on CLMS for Kyrgyzstan were developed and approved by the Ministry of Social Development for piloting.



Sewing courses for working children, 2010.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH UN AGENCIES

Delivering as One Project: ILO-IPEC's role in the One UN Programme

Kyrgyzstan is one of the pilot countries of the One UN Programme. A two year strategy (2010-2011) has been in place to support the Government and to strengthen collaboration among UN organizations to increase coherence, effectiveness and impact of their development assistance. The ILO is an active member of the One UN Programme in the country, specifically contributing to the social services thematic area. Under the Expanded Delivering as One Funding Window – Tier 1 (2011 Allocation) for Kyrgyzstan, ILO-IPEC received funding for the implementation of a child labour and education project. This project will support the implementation of the National Education Strategy (2012-2020), the Education for All Initiative and the State Programme of Action on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Integrating child labour issues into One UN Programmes support the mainstreaming of child labour in national development policies and brings together the comparative advantages of the UN system, maximising potential impact.



Delivering as One Project: Open non-formal lesson for media representatives, Osh city, September 18, 2013.

ILO-IPEC NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Government

- Ministry of Social Development
- Ministry of Labour, Migration and Youth
- Ministry of Education and Science
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Interior
- State Agency on Technical and Ecological Security
- Kyrgyz Academy of Education

Social partners

- National Confederation of Employers
- Federation of Trade Unions of Kyrgyzstan
- Agro-Workers Unions
- Trade Unions of Education and Science Workers of Kyrgyzstan

NGOs

- Positive Help
- Centre for the Protection of Children
- Public Fund “Pravo”
- Bishkek Business Club
- Centre of Primary Vocational Education Support and Development
- Crafts Council of the Kyrgyz Republic
- Public Association “Inter-Cultural Education”
- Association of Public Refugees, Migrants and Ethnic Kyrgyz “Intersheriktesh”
- Association of NGOs
- Childhood Institute
- Forum for educational initiative

International organizations

- UNICEF
- UNDP
- USAID

WAYS FORWARD

Linkages between child labour and youth employment

While child labour is unacceptable and must be eliminated, neglecting the potential of young people is an economic and social waste that economies cannot afford. If not adequately addressed, the impact of the crisis on children and youth can jeopardize countries' human capital and generate long term consequences on economies in our region.

Effective action on child labour and youth employment needs to be based on a full recognition of their linkages. An integrated perspective is therefore required in the development of adequate strategies. As a smooth transition from school to work begins with an adequate preparation for the labour market, strategies to improve young people's chances need to be complemented by efforts to eliminate child labour and to improve adults' employment prospects.

Linkages between child labour and social protection

Alongside broader economic and social development strategies, an important key to addressing poverty is the establishment or strengthening of social protection to provide support to those in need. Focusing social protection more on children's welfare has the potential to benefit not only children, but also their families, communities and national development as a whole.

It is extremely important to better link social protection with policies aimed at child labour elimination, based on the recent UN Social Protection Floor Initiative which aims at ensuring access to essential services and social transfers for poor and vulnerable populations. "Building blocks" for a social protection floor could include measures such as: cash transfer programmes, services and transfers related to childcare, food security programmes, school grants, school feeding programmes, and other social assistance programmes.

The ILO's **International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)** expresses its appreciation to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for its continuous financial support and to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, social and tripartite partners, international organizations and local NGOs for their contribution to the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in the Kyrgyz Republic.

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