



## COVID-19 AND CHILD LABOUR IN AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS

Child labour endangers the health and education of children and represents an obstacle to sustainable agricultural development and food security. Child labourers are likely to remain poor, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and hunger, and, in turn, hindering agricultural and rural development. Over recent decades, progress has been made, in particular in the sectors of industry and services. However, this progress has been significantly threatened by the COVID-19 crisis, particularly in the agriculture sector, which remained the one sector to have seen an increase in child labour. At their release, ILO-UNICEF 2020 global estimates on child labour indicated that, without mitigation measures, the number of children in child labour could rise by the end of 2022 to 168.9 million. Although most child labour is found in the agriculture sector, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child labour in agrifood systems had yet to be adequately explored. It was therefore critical to document more precisely the characteristics and dynamics of the impact of the pandemic on child labour per region, with attention to the different subsectors of agriculture. The objective of the project was thus to inform future actions to end child labour in agrifood systems, assessing the similarities of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with other crises.



### WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project strove to generate knowledge on the impact of COVID-19 on child labour by developing two publications: *The COVID-19 consequences on child labour in agrifood systems* and *A global review of COVID-19 policy and programmes responses to child labour in agrifood systems*. In accordance with the Durban Call to Action of the Fifth Global Conference on Child Labour, the two publications were aimed at “improving data collection and knowledge generation on child labour in agriculture, (...) in order to inform tailored responses.” While evidence on child labour is traditionally collected by occupational sectors, and is thus focused on agriculture, these two publications look beyond agricultural production and into agrifood systems in order to encompass more situations in which children engage to help secure families’ livelihoods.

The papers were translated into Spanish and French and disseminated through three regional virtual events in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific. Through these events, over 400 participants were involved, representing a wide outreach to a diverse range of stakeholders.

### KEY FACTS

**Latest Approved Budget**

USD 298 329

**Duration**

July 2021 – May 2022

**Resource Partners**

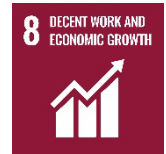
Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

**Beneficiaries**

Decision-makers in ministries of agriculture, labour, education and vocational training, environment and youth, regional organizations and financial institutions, agricultural producers’, workers’ and employers’ organizations, and community-based organizations. Final beneficiaries include poor, vulnerable rural children and their families, including unskilled younger rural youth.

# IMPACT

Thanks to the production of the papers and the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in each region, greater policy dialogue and coordination among key stakeholders have been fostered, accelerating engagement in ending child labour in agrifood systems in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

# ACTIVITIES

- Qualitative and quantitative information compiled and analysed through collaboration with FAO partners and seven case studies produced and presented.
- A plan to collect data/case studies designed and case studies on COVID-19 and child labour collected.
- Global review produced on socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and related containment measures.
- Three regional events organized in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, respectively, for more than 400 stakeholders from over 50 countries.



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## Partners

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Cocoa Initiative, Columbia University, (Thomson Reuters Foundation), World Vision UK, Partnership Against Child Exploitation Consortium, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Institute of Development Studies

## Project Title

The COVID-19 Impact on Child Labour in Agrifood Systems

## Project Code

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