

JOURNAL of MODERN SLAVERY

A Multidisciplinary Exploration of Human Trafficking Solutions

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Child Labour edition

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All member States of the United Nations have committed in the SDGs to Target 8.7 which requires them to take *“immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including the recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 to end child labour in all its forms”*.

In line with this universal commitment, the United Nations has declared 2021 the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, calling on the governments of the world to take real and urgent action to fulfil this promise to children. This call to action is necessary because, despite children’s right to protection from exploitation enshrined in International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 182, which has achieved universal ratification, and the ILO minimum working age Convention 138 being short of some 14 ratifications, child labour and its worst forms remains a persistent social and economic problem globally. Global multi-stakeholder partnerships such as Alliance 8.7 have been formed to bring stakeholders together to accelerate progress and share promising practices in what works to end child labour.

And yet, although more than 100 million children have been removed from child labour in the last two decades, 152 million children are still in child labour around the world. They can be found in the formal and informal sector; in agriculture, artisanal mining, manufacturing and in services such as domestic work; and in the supply chains of transnational enterprises. The Covid 19 pandemic has decimated human rights, destroyed jobs and forced many already vulnerable people into further debt and poverty. It has also resulted in an increase in child labour and its worst forms for the first time in 20 years. Many families have been forced to resort to child labour to meet their economic needs, and children locked out of school have had to take on additional burdens as well as being vulnerable to increasingly new forms of exploitation through online platforms and apps.

Children that are subject to the worst forms of child labour are harmed in ways that impede their physical, mental and emotional development, which affects their prospects for a decent life. They may fall victim to slavery and slavery-like practices as a result of

human trafficking or other forms of coercion into forced labour or sexual exploitation by those willing and able to abuse their vulnerability. Child labour also results in children being denied access to accessible and quality health care, schooling and other their fundamental rights and freedoms. Some children are also forced into servile marriages in order to support their families or based on discriminatory laws, norms and practices.

However, children above the minimum age of employment can and should be able to work, provided this does not detrimentally affect their education or harm their health and development. Their agency to exercise this right is important and is recognised in international law, and the types of work they are permitted to carry out should be proscribed in national laws designed to protect their health and development.

Given this context, this edition seeks to explore the degree of progress and success there has been in tackling systemic and complex issues of child labour. Child labour – especially in its worst forms – is most often evident at the intersection between high levels of poverty, discrimination & exclusion, lack of social protection, lack of access to affordable, quality education, failures in labour rights protection & monitoring by states, impunity & lack of accountability of the private sector and high degrees of labour market flexibility. It often affects those working in the informal economy, doing work that is often invisible to public scrutiny and outside of the scope of labour protections. As such, the strategies and solutions to child labour necessarily involve multiple interventions and resources by multiple actors operating at the level of work sites, across whole sectors, at national levels and also across borders – where migration and displacement is involved.

SCOPE

This edition is concerned with long-term solutions and prevention of child labour – tackling root causes and drivers, as well as enablers of long-term solutions that demonstrate progress and promise towards eliminating child labour in the long term. We are seeking papers that recognise the complexity and multi-dimensionality of tackling child labour, as there is little evidence that short-term ‘projects’ deliver lasting change. We are looking for contributions of theoretical frameworks, interventions and practical examples that demonstrate promise in interrupting the drivers of child labour and offering pathways to long-term progress.

We are seeking papers that go beyond description of the problem of child labour in particular places and sectors, beyond aspirational declarations of what ‘should’ happen. Instead, we are seeking new insights in tackling child labour — lessons and examples from experienced researchers and practitioners that are solution based, reflecting an honest assessment of what hasn’t worked, as well as what has, and why. This will, in a more concrete way, contribute to achieving SDG Target 8.7 in the foreseeable future.

Cross-cutting issues include but are not limited to poverty, gender discrimination, social exclusion and migration – and other factors that may exacerbate vulnerability to exploitation and abuse of children and adults.

Content

The following themes and issues are suggested, but should not limit contributions:

1. **What laws, policies, interventions, and regulatory systems** have been effective, ineffective or harmful for child labourers and why? These may include:
 - laws, policies, and regulations governing child labour, including worst forms
 - Educational interventions
 - Social protection measures (e.g cash transfer programs)
 - Laws, regulations, and labour governance schemes aimed at businesses and employers (e.g. transparency laws, human rights due diligence, self-regulatory schemes)

2. What specific **partnerships and stakeholder initiatives** have demonstrated successes, lessons or failures in tackling child labour? These may include:
 - private sector coalitions – commodity, country or sector
 - multi-stakeholder initiatives
 - international organizations
 - worker-led initiatives
 - civil society / faith-based initiatives
 - critical combinations of actors, processes and approaches

3. What **geographic or area-based initiatives** have succeeded or failed and why? Examples could include, but are not limited to:
 - interventions working with local communities, cities, municipalities, states/ provinces;
 - whole-of-government based initiatives to tackle specific problems in specific places

4. What has been the impact of COVID-19 on child labour? May include, but not limited to:
 - gender impacts
 - domestic violence
 - poverty and unemployment
 - temporary interruptions in education
 - loss of school meals etc.
 - strategies to mitigate these impacts

5. **Rehabilitation and recovery** — social, psychological, health-based initiatives (e.g. to build psycho-social well-being and recovery to mitigate the impacts of child labour on mental, physical, emotional health and development)

6. **Role of technology**

Some of these topics will overlap or weave together.

Final articles should be 4,000-10,000 words, including abstract, footnotes, and author bio.

For full submission guidelines:

<https://journalofmodernslavery.scholasticahq.com/for-authors>

Submissions should be made via our Scholastica platform:

<https://app.scholasticahq.com/submissions/journalofmodernslavery/new>

Review decisions will be made by mid July.

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