



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

UNESCO Bangkok  
Asia-Pacific Programme of  
Education for All



# Getting Girls Out of Work and Into School



Policy Brief

# Getting Girls Out of Work and Into School

**Getting girls out of work and into school: policy brief.** Bangkok: UNESCO  
Bangkok, 2006.

24 pp.

1. Girls education.
2. Child labour.
3. Education policy.
4. Asia Pacific

ISBN 92-9223-089-1

Photo credits:

1. © ILO / P. Lissac
2. © ILO / P. Deloche
3. © UNESCO / M. Hayashikawa
4. © UNESCO / O. Sandkull

© UNESCO 2006

Published by the

UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

920 Sukhumvit Rd., Prakanong

Bangkok 10110, Thailand

Printed in Thailand

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

APL/06/OP/24-550

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This brief, prepared for UNESCO Bangkok by Nancy Spence, has benefited from the review and comments of the Advisory Committee for Advocacy and Policy Briefs and the Regional United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) for East Asia and the Pacific. In particular, technical inputs from Urmila Sarkar, Child Labour and Education Specialist of the International Labour Organization's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, enriched this brief.

The Advisory Committee consists of the following experts: Sheldon Shaeffer, Shirley Miske, Linda Pennells, Florence Migeon and Lydia Ruprecht.

## CONTENTS

OVERVIEW.....	1
DEFINITIONS.....	1
1. GIRLS' LABOUR IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION.....	2
Instruments: Child Labour Conventions.....	4
2. THE NATURE OF GIRLS' WORK IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC.....	5
Children at Considerable Risk - A Gender Double Jeopardy.....	5
3. HOW GIRLS' LABOUR REPRESENTS A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO EFA.....	6
Specific Barriers to Girls' Education.....	7
4. SNAPSHOTS OF INNOVATIVE PRACTICES IN GETTING GIRLS OUT OF WORK AND INTO SCHOOL .....	8
Preventing and Combating the Trafficking of Ethnic Minority Girls Through Education in Yunnan Province, China.....	8
Educating and Mobilizing Communities: The Girl Child Programme, Ranga Reddy District, Andhra Pradesh, India.....	10
Linking Education with Social Protection: A Must, Philippines.....	11
5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	12
Research and Data Collection .....	12
Inter-sectoral Planning and Joint Development of Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation.....	12
Access, Quality and Learning Achievement for the Girl Child Labourer .....	13
Status and Working Conditions of Teachers.....	13
Vocational and Skills Training.....	13
Knowledge Management: Good and Bad Practices.....	13
Integrate the Concerns of Working Girls into the Agenda for EFA and Inclusive Education.....	14
Mainstream Working Girls' Concerns into Advocacy Efforts .....	14

Taking a Holistic Approach.....	14
Political Will: A Prerequisite.....	14
LIST OF SOURCES.....	15
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	16
Useful Websites .....	16
Papers and Publications .....	17



## OVERVIEW

While some areas of the Asia-Pacific region have had a strong record of girls in school, others still lag behind. This poses a serious challenge for the region to achieve Education for All (EFA) by 2015 as it has already missed the 2005 gender parity target in education. The Asia-Pacific region is also home to the largest numbers of working children. This brief summarizes the causes and consequences of girls' child labour on their educational opportunities and describes some of the instruments and strategies in place to reduce girls' labour. It also provides insights into current good practice, assisting policy-makers and practitioners to better understand and address the issues for getting girls out of work and into school.

## DEFINITIONS

Child labour slated for abolition falls into the following categories:

**Child labour** that is performed under the minimum working age and is likely to impede the child's education and full development. Child labour refers to work that is:

- mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and
- interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; by obliging them to leave school prematurely; or by requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. (*Source 1*)

**The ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)** The minimum working age fixed by ratifying Members States varies according to the level of development and according to the type of employment or work. In general this is not less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling or the age of 15 (14 for developing countries).

**The ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (WFCL), 1999 (No. 182)** covers children up to 18 years of age and requires ratifying Member States to take immediate and effective measures to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency. It is divided into two groups:

1. **Hazardous labour** that jeopardizes the physical, mental or moral well-being of a child due to its nature or the conditions. Domestic work for girls can be considered WFCL if conditions are hazardous or involve trafficking or physical and sexual abuse.
2. **The Unconditional Worst Forms of Child Labour** which are internationally defined as slavery, trafficking, debt bondage and other forms of forced labour, forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict, prostitution and pornography, and illicit activities.

**Child labour** does not include light work which does not affect children's health and personal development or interfere with their schooling, i.e. helping out after school is over and school work has been done, with light household or gardening chores or child care and earning pocket money during school holidays.

## 1. GIRLS' LABOUR IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

According to the latest estimates of the International Labour Organization (ILO), there were 317 million economically active children<sup>1</sup>, ages 5-17 years, in 2004 around the world, of which 218 million were child labourers. Of these child labourers, 126 million were engaged in hazardous work. The corresponding figures for those 5-14 years of age are 191 million economically active children, of which 166 million were child labourers, of which 74 million children were engaged in hazardous

---

1 "Labour statistics produced by governments, which forms the basis of ILO child labour statistics, counts persons who are considered economically active." "Economic activity" is a statistical concept that encompasses most productive activities undertaken by children, whether for the market or not, paid or unpaid, for a few hours or full time, on a casual or regular basis, legal or illegal; it excludes chores undertaken in the child's own household. To be economically active, a child must have worked for at least one hour on any day during a seven-day reference period."

work. This suggests a fall in child labour of 11% from 2000 to 2004, but an even greater decline of children (26% for those 5-17 years of age and 33% for those in the 5-14 age group) involved in hazardous work. The global picture that emerges is that child work is declining, and the more harmful the work and the more vulnerable the children involved, the faster this decline. However, the proportion of girls working has remained steady throughout. While there has been a reduction in the number of economically active children in the 5-14 age group from 127 million (2000) to 122 million (2004) in Asia and the Pacific, the region still harbours the largest number of working children. (*Source 2*)

As to the nature of child labour in the Asia-Pacific region, in the 5-14 age group, there is not much difference between the number of boys and girls in child labour at an early age, although the proportion of boys in hazardous work increases with age. (*Source 3*) This, however, must take into consideration the fact that girls' work is often hidden, unvalued and uncounted. Their work – in the form of household chores, domestic servitude, agricultural work and home-based work – can leave girls vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Other clandestine forms, such as trafficking into labour and commercial sexual exploitation, are not sufficiently captured by available statistics.

Girls' labour, official and unofficial, continues to constitute a major obstacle to accelerating progress towards achieving gender parity and equality in primary and secondary education by 2015. Despite impressive gains to increase gender parity in primary school enrolment in East Asia and the Pacific, the South and West Asian sub-region still has major gender disparities, along with Africa and the Arab states. While the situation has improved in South and West Asia since 1998, an estimated 58% (2002 data) of the out-of-primary-school children are girls. (*Source 4*) Since the majority of out-of-school girls are likely to be working, efforts to increase girls' education must go hand-in-hand with efforts to progressively eliminate child labour.

Gender disparities are still to the disadvantage of girls in many countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Often, when faced with limited resources and competing financial demands, parents prefer to invest in the education of their sons and not lose their daughters' vital contribution to the household through domestic labour. Parents often view their daughters' education as not "cost effective" in those countries where early marriages prevail and daughters join another household.

But poverty is not the only factor at play for the girl child. Lack of access to good quality education is a major determinant. So are tradition and culture, in which women's generally low status in society and the limited expectations or opportunities of securing decent paid work as adults play pivotal roles. Moreover, this view is compounded in the parents' eyes if the quality of education is poor, grades low, or the curriculum deemed irrelevant to girls' futures. Trafficking, particularly of young indigenous girls, is lucrative and continues in some countries despite legal sanctions. Whatever the reason, in the end, a girl child trapped in child labour contributes to a vicious cycle, eventually preventing her from giving her own family a good start in life and slowing economic growth and social development of the country as a whole.

## Instruments: Child Labour Conventions

The international community has developed a number of agreements and standards to address child labour. These include:

### **The ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)**

**The ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (WFCL), 1999 (No. 182)** Convention 182 is enjoying the fastest pace of ratification in ILO's history: 161 Member States since its adoption in 1999. This is in tandem with a surge in ratifications for Convention 138 by 145 Member States, demonstrating the growing international support for the abolition of child labour. (*Source 5*)

### **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989**

- **Article 7** includes protection from economic exploitation and labour as a fundamental right of all children.
- **Article 32**, reiterated in the outcome document called **A World Fit for Children**, underlines the vital role of education in mitigating child labour.
- **Two Optional Protocols to the CRC, 2002** – one focusing world attention on the commercial exploitation of children in prostitution and pornography, and the other reinforcing commitments to end the use of children in armed conflicts.

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Education, 1948** stipulates that everyone has the right to education.

## 2. THE NATURE OF GIRLS' WORK IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The vast majority of children (69%) work in the agricultural sector. This is followed by 22% of children found in services and 9% in industry. (Source 6) At an early age, there is not much difference between the number of boys and girls in child labour, but the proportion of boys in hazardous work increases with age. However, girls' work tends to be hidden and unvalued – in the form of household chores, domestic servitude, agricultural work and home-based work – and is not always captured in official statistics. Trafficking for labour and commercial sex specifically targets vulnerable indigenous and minority girls. The clandestine nature of child labour, particularly in its worst forms, makes it difficult to arrive at a proper estimation of the problem.

### Children at Considerable Risk - A Gender Double Jeopardy

Many groups of children engaged in or “at risk” of child labour are actively excluded from education systems. While all children without access to full-time formal education are at risk, this is especially true for those from low income families. But there are some groups of children considered at greater risk for a variety of other reasons, including geographic location, religion, ethnicity and their own situations. These groups include:

**Minority populations**, such as indigenous and tribal peoples and pastoral communities in extremely remote areas.

**Children affected or infected by HIV/AIDS**, particularly HIV/AIDS orphans with responsibility of heads-of-household following the death of parents.

**Children of migrant families**, who are highly mobile in their search for work. Reaching such children brings with it significant challenges.

**Street children**, who are vulnerable to a wide range of sexual abuse and are coerced into taking part in illegal activities.

**Children who are trafficked for purposes of labour or commercial sexual exploitation and child domestic workers**. They may have been kidnapped or sold into bonded labour by parents and relatives.

**Children who have been withdrawn from involvement in armed conflict**.

(Source 7)

Gender is seen as cross-cutting in all, creating a double jeopardy for girls. Not only do they face the challenges that each of these categories brings, they also face all the issues of gender discrimination by being girls.

### 3. HOW GIRLS' LABOUR REPRESENTS A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO EFA

It has been noted that gender equality is a prerequisite for overcoming hunger, poverty and disease, as reflected in many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Girls' education has been proven to be crucial to eradicating poverty, increasing family health, lowering birth rates, and contributing to a more educated and valuable human resource base for greater social and economic development. (*Source 8*) In recent years, there has been some progress in making the critical linkage between the global campaigns for EFA and the MDGs with the global campaigns against child labour. However, the following factors act as obstacles to full school enrollment:

#### **Accessibility:**

- Physical and social (e.g. girls' restricted freedom of movement), distance to school.
- Discrimination (e.g. based on sex, race, ethnicity, religion, caste, class).
- Burden of household chores on girls in the family home.
- Burden faced by children combining work and school.

#### **Affordability:**

- Direct costs (e.g. school fees, other compulsory fees).
- Indirect costs (e.g. uniforms, textbooks, transportation).
- Opportunity cost (i.e. income/wage lost to family from child leaving work to go to school).

#### **Quality:**

- Lack of infrastructure, facilities, materials and support systems for children.
- Inadequate conditions of work for teachers (e.g. heavy workloads, low pay and status of teachers).

- Lack of adequate training, aids and materials for teachers.
- Lack of sensitivity of education authorities and teachers to the needs of children at risk.

**Relevance:**

- Curriculum detached from local needs, values and the aspirations of children at risk.
- Curriculum inadequate to prepare students for gainful skilled employment.

*(Source 9)*

### Specific Barriers to Girls' Education

For girls, however, these barriers can determine whether they attend school or not. In many parts of Asia, it is not considered appropriate for girls to be seen in public or walking to school due to the distance or fear of assault. Traditional thinking, based on caste, religion or culture, may prevent girls from attending school because their labour has always been seen as necessary and respectable on the home front. In some cases, parents may view education as promoting behaviour considered unfavourable to girls' future marital prospects.

Costs can become a gender issue. Although parents may see some merit in girls' education, if additional fees are required for uniforms or supplies, this can add substantially to the household budget. Parents then scrutinize the benefits of sending girls to school. "Where parents are ambivalent about educating girls, improvements in education quality may be particularly important to tip their decision to educate daughters as well as sons". *(Source 10)*

If the quality of education is not satisfactory, the curriculum not relevant, nor the rewards substantial, parents will be disinclined to send their daughters to school. Making schools more "girl-friendly" is the first step to increasing girls' enrollment. But keeping girls at school requires a combination of comprehensive measures. These include: improving the physical infrastructure, such as separate toilets; ensuring girls' privacy and safety in accordance with cultural requirements; teaching in ways that discourage gender stereotypes and encourage girls to learn; providing trained female teachers to act as role models, especially for older girls; and including the community in the management of schools. *(Source 11)*

Gender disparities in primary school enrolment remain an issue at the heart of the MDGs and the Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All (EFA). Gender equality means equality at all levels of education and through education into all areas of work, promoting equality over resources and equal representation in public and political life. Achieving equality in education – in primary school and beyond – is critical if women are to engage fully in society and the global economy. In some parts of the Asia-Pacific region, such as in East and South East Asia, educational investment in boys and in girls has resulted in high growth and an increasingly skilled workforce. But in South and West Asia, girls represent approximately 58% of children not-in-primary-school. (*Source 12*) Girls' labour dramatically influences the non-achievement of gender parity and gender equality goals. It is evident now more than ever that efforts need to be concentrated on addressing the special needs of girls in the related contexts of education and girl child labour.

#### **4. SNAPSHOTS OF INNOVATIVE PRACTICES IN GETTING GIRLS OUT OF WORK AND INTO SCHOOL**

There have been some notable success stories in using education to both prevent girl child labour and address the “special considerations” required in getting girls out of work and into school.

##### **Preventing and Combating the Trafficking of Ethnic Minority Girls Through Education in Yunnan Province, China**

In 2004, Jiangcheng, Menghai, Menglian and Yuanyang counties began to address the many issues that prompted minority girls to drop out of school leaving them vulnerable to being trafficked into labour and commercial sexual exploitation. This was done within the framework of the ILO's Mekong Sub-Regional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women, working with the Education Bureaux of the said counties, and in coordination with the All China Women's Federation.

All the visual barriers to girls' education were there: lack of middle (lower secondary) schools and qualified teachers in the remote areas where many ethnic minority groups reside; school environments very different from the local language and culture; and curricula not relevant to local labour needs. After completing primary education or during the first

year of lower secondary education, many of these girls dropped out and performed work in their village homes. With middle schools only available in the townships, many parents could not afford the cost of boarding, transport or other school fees. As in many parts of the world, parents also expected that their daughters contribute to the household economy.

After a few years working at home, these girls left their villages in search of a more prosperous life in the cities or neighbouring countries, unaware of the potential dangers of being trafficked into the worst forms of child labour. There have been cases of teenaged mothers who migrated to earn remittances to send back home to support their babies. Sadly, they became a target of traffickers and only had enough money to support themselves. (*Source 13*)

The project worked on two aspects critical to these girls: increasing access and promoting quality education. To address issues of access, the project offered direct assistance to ethnic minority girls in the four counties to cover costs for transportation and boarding or other school fees in lower secondary schools. These students were encouraged to return to their villages and promote awareness about the importance of education and the dangers of trafficking. The aim has been to show the impact of such an investment in the education of girls on their families and their future in the remote mountainous areas.

To enhance capacity to deliver quality education, educators needed to understand the issues faced by girls. The project took innovative steps to integrate information about trafficking, gender equality, HIV/AIDS, public health, and life skills within the curriculum. This not only alerted vulnerable girls to hazards, but also offered more diverse skills training, including livelihood training. It developed “child-friendly/girl-friendly” participatory learning environments. It targeted teachers, principals and headmasters to be more sensitised to the needs of ethnic minority girls and trained them to address such needs. It promoted the value of continued education from the primary education level, particularly among the most disadvantaged ethnic minorities.

Results show that all the ethnic minority girls targeted by the project have been reached and their families have shown a greater appreciation for their daughters' continued education. The Education Bureaux of Jiangcheng and Menghai counties have enacted a new regulation that makes trafficking prevention and relevant laws a compulsory subject in all primary and secondary schools. This has proven to be a cost effective way of outreach through educators to students, and then to the whole community, with over 14,000 students receiving the training. Participatory approaches introduced by the project have been so popularly received that they are being considered for integration into the curriculum province-wide. Building on this model, future action can include increasing the number of qualified teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds in these areas and providing the opportunity for the government to consider adding on middle school classes to primary schools or exploring mobile approaches to education. There are plans to replicate aspects of the model in other parts of China and thus link strongly to the government's efforts to achieve nine years of compulsory education. (Source 13)

### **Educating and Mobilizing Communities: The Girl Child Programme, Ranga Reddy District, Andhra Pradesh, India**

The MV Foundation in India has developed a unique approach to girl child labour: mobilizing communities and governments around the principle of the immorality of bonded and child labour. The Girl Child Programme has produced several innovative good practices in reaching girls trapped in domestic or bonded labour and returning them to school. It has challenged traditional thinking and social norms in the communities. By educating critical stakeholders on the right of girls to education, it explored relevant ways of confronting access and retention issues. It strengthened the capacity of the community to better understand and respond in more girl-friendly ways to the issue of getting girls out of work and into school.

Preliminary strategies included community activism to demystify the issue of girl child labour, placing it in the open as a public, and not private, issue. This is typically debated in community meetings. Moreover, School Education Committees have addressed the upgrading of schools to accommodate girls' special needs for sanitation and security. Locally-trained girl child activists, who themselves have had firsthand experience in the struggle to get an education, better identify with problems faced by girls. They conducted intensive house-to-house campaigns to mobilize

girls and their parents. Trained in using non-confrontational tactics, they persisted in promoting education for girl children until parental opposition weakened. Once parents complied, they facilitated the re-entry of younger girls into school and older girls into residential camps. In so doing, they provided parents with practical support in the transition period. They monitored drop-outs and identified further hard-to-reach girl child labourers. Activities helped to motivate and unite girl activists, through sharing experiences and providing peer support to one another. These girls became positive role models to parents and to the community. They even addressed child marriages, an important issue in the village, which tends to keep girls from continuing in school.

Girl activists were trained to use every public occasion to increase awareness of gender issues and advocate for girls' rights. Infrastructure was deliberately kept to a minimum and rooted in the community through a series of committees (Girl Child Rights Protection, Mothers, School Girl, and Girl Youth Committees) – all dedicated to mobilizing community support against girls' labour. Dramas and street plays raised public awareness and understanding.

The impact has been seen in both the prevention and withdrawal of girls from bonded labour, increased enrolment in residential camps and schools, and the postponement or cancellation of many child marriages through negotiation with parents. The MV Foundation has been able to project this model for the abolition of child labour at the national, and even international, level and has been a strong example for others to follow. (*Source 14*)

### **Linking Education with Social Protection: A Must, Philippines**

The Visayan Forum Foundation has taken a holistic approach to the prevention, withdrawal, healing and reintegration of child domestic labourers, many of whom are girls. Domestic work is hidden and, consequently, can be exploitative, often leading to migrant or trafficked labour. This project linked returning to education with a range of social protection measures. It raised public awareness to empower parents to better understand and correct their value systems and build capacity to confront the broader connection to trafficking and migration. It stressed transitional strategies to protect child domestic workers, with a combination of psychosocial services to prevent abuses while improving

working conditions. The organization helped popularize the Magna Carta for Domestic Workers. This is a landmark bill, now widely accepted even if not yet enacted, which seeks to institutionalize and uplift the minimum working parameters and standards for the industry. The Visayan Forum Foundation ensured a special provision for child domestic labourers and mobilized church-led institutions to improve the lives of these children. It developed a community child watch programme and established halfway houses for victims of abuse. In addition, it worked to ensure better access to quality education in a number of concrete ways. All of these efforts have contributed to making the elimination of child domestic labour a core component of the Philippines' National Time-Bound Programme to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour with the support of the ILO. (Source 15)

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **Research and Data Collection**

The hidden and clandestine nature of girl child labour makes data collection difficult, but it is critical to developing more effective policy and programming responses to address the educational barriers girls face. Agencies should collaborate to coordinate data on education and on child labour, including unpaid household chores.

### **Inter-sectoral Planning and Joint Development of Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation**

Progress in girls' education cannot be achieved without a concomitant reduction in girl child labour. In order for this to happen, co-ordinated and multiple responses from many agencies of government, down to the village level, will be needed. Education and social protection agencies need to work closely together in joint planning, decision-making and in the development of joint indicators for monitoring and evaluation. This is important both for effectively using education to prevent child labour and for using education as a key part of the rehabilitation and reintegration process for former child labourers. This is particularly true for trafficked girls or those rescued from conflict scenarios, who may need additional psychosocial services.

## Access, Quality and Learning Achievement for the Girl Child Labourer

Girls' needs must be considered in relation to their roles within the household, taking into account their relations with parents and siblings, who play critical roles in family decisions on whether girls work or attend school. It is also important to address the combination of measures that are known to work for getting and keeping girls in school. These include security and sanitation measures, the adoption of girl-friendly methodologies, and curricula free from gender stereotyping and reflecting a relevance to rural and minority ethnic girls' situations and futures.

## Status and Working Conditions of Teachers<sup>2</sup>

Girls at risk can often be in rural and remote communities or in urban slums. Security and incentives are needed, particularly for female teachers to consider working in these areas. Women teachers, considered important role models to girls, are often poorly trained and paid, lack the status of full-fledged teachers, and are insufficiently targeted for training opportunities or staff promotions. In addition, male teachers need to be trained in girl-friendly pedagogical approaches.

## Vocational and Skills Training

Vocational and skills training should offer a mix of practical skills along with important life skills training vital to girls' empowerment. Transitional training should be viewed as facilitating entry into further formal or vocational training. Special attention needs to be given to facilitate the access of girls to vocational training to ensure that education programmes do not inadvertently reinforce existing gender inequalities. (*Source 16*)

## Knowledge Management: Good and Bad Practices

There is an emerging collection of good practice at both the policy and programming level. Gaps need to be better identified and good examples tested for their feasibility for scaling up.

---

<sup>2</sup> The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers was adopted on 5 October 1966 and the Joint ILO-UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (CEART) was established to ensure the implementation of the Recommendation.

## **Integrate the Concerns of Working Girls into the Agenda for EFA and Inclusive Education**

The concerns of working girls should be more systematically mainstreamed into the EFA agendas at community, national, regional and global levels. Greater collaboration between UN agencies, governments (including Ministries of Education, Youth, Women's Affairs, and Health and other relevant government agencies), teachers' unions, employers, and non-governmental organizations, can make schools more accessible, girl/child-friendly, child-centered and relevant to girls.

## **Mainstream Working Girls' Concerns into Advocacy Efforts**

Girl activists, by exerting community pressure, can change longstanding cultural views and attitudes, as well as behaviour and decision-making patterns, of parents. Community mobilization efforts have proven to be effective in removing girls from hazardous work into education and in convincing parents that the value of education is sufficient to warrant the opportunity costs.

## **Taking a Holistic Approach**

For those families mired in poverty, it is important to take a holistic approach and pursue livelihood strategies for parents alongside measures to combat girls' child labour. While the small wages earned by girls can be critical to household income, over the long term they cannot ensure the kind of opportunities that education can afford. This will always keep the household on the margins of survival and continue the vicious cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. It is equally important that there be no direct or indirect costs to education and that girls and boys have equal opportunities for schooling.

## **Political Will: A Prerequisite**

In the end, it is political will that is required to recognize that progress in girls' education will not be made without eliminating child labour. Strong leadership and the value placed upon effective and accountable investments made in girls' education are a prerequisite for getting girls out of work and into school.

## LIST OF SOURCES

1. ILO and Inter-Parliamentary Union, Eliminating the Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Practical Guide to ILO Convention No. 182. 2002. (Handbook for Parliamentarians).
2. The End of Child Labour: Within Reach. 2006. ILO, p.7.
3. Making Decent Work an Asian Goal: Combating Child Labour in Asia and the Pacific, Progress and Challenges. 2005. ILO, p.9.
4. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2006. UNESCO, p. 46–47.
5. ILO, ILOLEX, Database of International Labour Standards. 18 June 2006.
6. The End of Child Labour: Within Reach. 2006. ILO, p.8.
7. Emerging Best Practice in the Elimination of Child Labour and the Achievement of Education for All. Working Paper, Interagency Working Group on Child Labour and Education, 2005. p.16.
8. Herz, Barbara and Sperling, G. What Works in Girls' Education: Evidence and Policies from the Developing World. 2004. Council on Foreign Relations, p. 21.
9. U. Sarkar. Combating Child Labour through Education. 2004. ILO, p. 12.
10. Herz, Barbara and Sperling, G. What Works in Girls' Education: Evidence and Policies from the Developing World. 2004. Council on Foreign Relations, p.12.
11. Ibid p. 11.
12. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2006. UNESCO, p. 46–47.
13. Good Practices in Girls' Education - submitted by ILO/IPEC office Yunnan Province, China. Nominated for the Regional UNGEI in East Asia and the Pacific as good practice.
14. The MV Foundation UNDP series of 51 brochures. Report by Rekha Wazir, Getting Children out of Work and into School: Focus on the Girl Child. (series 32 to 39). [www.undp.org.in/childrenandpoverty/default.htm](http://www.undp.org.in/childrenandpoverty/default.htm), click on references and resources.

15. Good Practice in Girls' Education - submitted by the Visayan Forum Foundation, Manila, Philippines. Nominated for the Regional UNGEI in East Asia and the Pacific as good practice.

16. Sarkar, U. Combating Child Labour through Education. 2004, ILO, p.8.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Useful Websites:**

The ILO Gender Equality Tool Website at: [www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/gender.home](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/gender.home).

The ILO Training Centre in Turin - a distance learning course on mainstreaming gender equality in the world of work at: [www.itcilo.it/english/bureau/turin/gender/learning.htm](http://www.itcilo.it/english/bureau/turin/gender/learning.htm)

The Gender Promotion Programme of the ILO outlines its programme at: [www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/index.htm)

The ILO Gender, Poverty and Employment (GPE) Programme and training kit at: [www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/genderresources.details?p\\_lang=en&p\\_category=NEW&p\\_resource\\_id=138](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/genderresources.details?p_lang=en&p_category=NEW&p_resource_id=138)

ILO-IPEC education website with publications and resources at: <http://ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/publ/education/> Also includes related weblinks to UNGEI partners

Other IPEC publications on gender, such as a practical guide for organizations at: [www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/publ/gender/](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/publ/gender/)

The UNESCO Bangkok Gender in Education website with information, publications and resources on promoting gender equality in education and on the Gender in Education Network in Asia (GENIA) at: [www.unescobkk.org/gender](http://www.unescobkk.org/gender)

UNESCO Bangkok's Regional EFA website providing EFA-related history, data and resources from across the region, with a section on EFA Flagships, including UNGEI at: [www.unescobkk.org/index:php](http://www.unescobkk.org/index:php)

“A study on child labour in Viet Nam 1992-1998”. Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs, Child Labour Studies Cluster - University of Wollongong, UNICEF Viet Nam at: [www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index\\_14360.html](http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_14360.html)

The State of the World’s Children 1997, UNICEF, which focused on the issue of child labour at: [www.unicef.org/sowc97](http://www.unicef.org/sowc97)

Global UNGEI website providing information and resources on girls’ education from across the world including regional and national UNGEI updates and UNGEI partners’ activities at: [www.ungei.org](http://www.ungei.org)

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre website with resources on child labour, basic education and gender equality, child rights and many other topics at: [www.unicef-icdc.org](http://www.unicef-icdc.org)

## **Papers and Publications:**

A Future without Child Labour: Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Geneva, ILO, 2002.

Amorim, A.; Murray, U.; Rai, P. A selected annotated bibliography on girl child labour: a gender perspective. Volume 4. Geneva, ILO, 2004.

Burra, N. Cultural Stereotypes and Household Behaviour: Girl Child Labour in India. The Economic and Political Weekly (New Delhi), vol.36 (pgs 5-6) 2001.

Chaniago, C.R. Girl Workers in the Fisheries Sector. Child Workers in Asia, vol. 28, no. 2, May-August 2000, p. 12-13. Combating Child Labour through Education. IPEC, ILO, 2004.

Del Rosario, R. Girl Child Workers Carrying the Burden of the World: Women Reflecting on the Effects of the Crisis on Women and Girls. A paper discussed during the Roundtable Discussion (RTD) conducted by the Centre for Integrative and Development Studies, Diliman, Quezon City, 1998.

Emerging Best Practice in the Elimination of Child Labour and the Achievement of Education For All. Working Paper, Interagency Working Group on Child Labour and Education, 2005.

Friedman, S. A.; Dottridge, M. (1996). Considering Girls' Invisible Labour in the Development of the New ILO Convention : Targeting the Most Intolerable Forms of Child Labour. Paper presented at the ILO Roundtable Discussion, Geneva, 9 June 1996, on behalf of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Working Group on Girls and the NGO Working Group on Child Rights.

Haspels, N.; Suriyasarn, B. (2003). Promotion of Gender Equality in Action against Child Labour and Trafficking: A Practical Guide for Organizations. ILO, Bangkok. ILO/IPEC Regional Office Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) Subregional Office for East Asia (SRO-Bangkok).

Herz, B and Sperling, G. What Works in Girls' Education, Evidence and Policies from the Developing World. USA, Council on Foreign Relations, 2004.

Jensen, R. Mainstreaming Gender into the International Programme on Child Labor. Geneva, ILO/IPEC, 2001.

Investing in Every Child: An Economic Study of the Costs and Benefits of Eliminating Child Labour. Geneva, ILO/IPEC, December 2003.

IPEC Action against Child Labour: Highlights of 2004. Geneva, ILO/IPEC, February 2005.

Kane, J. Helping Hands or Shackled Lives? Understanding Child Domestic Labour and Responses to it. Geneva, ILO/IPEC, 2004.

Larsen, P.B. Indigenous and Tribal Children: Assessing Child Labour and Education Challenges. A joint IPEC & INDISCO-Coop Publication, 2003.

Kolomiyets, T. Global Child Labour Data Review: A Gender Perspective. Geneva, ILO/IPEC, 2004. (Girl Child Labour Paper, no. 2).

Making Decent Work an Asian Goal: Combating Child Labour in Asia and the Pacific, Progress and Challenges. Bangkok, ILO, 2005.

Murray, U.; Amorim, A.; and Piprell, C. Good Practices: Gender Mainstreaming in Actions against Child Labour. Geneva, ILO/IPEC, 2003.

Report on the East Asia and Pacific Regional Consultation on Violence against Children, Contribution Document for the United Nations Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children. Bangkok, UNICEF EAPRO, 2005. (Contains a set of recommendations and case studies on child work/labour).

The End of Child Labour: Within Reach. Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Report to the 95<sup>th</sup> session of the ILO, Geneva, 2006.

The UNGEI 2005 GAP. Gender Achievement and Prospects in Education Report. New York, UNICEF, 2005. (Part 1).

## AUTHOR

*Nancy Spence* began as an educator in Africa and Canada before moving into development work. She has spent the last twenty years working on gender issues. This has included ten years working with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in South-East Asia in support of regional efforts towards the Beijing Platform for Action and six years as a Director at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London promoting gender mainstreaming in the 53 countries of the Commonwealth. More recently, she has worked as a freelance consultant to various UN agencies in gender and education.

## **Also available are the following advocacy briefs:**

- Role of Men and Boys in Promoting Gender Equality
- Impact of Incentives to Increase Girls' Access to and Retention in Basic Education
- Providing Education to Girls from Remote and Rural Areas
- Mother Tongue-based Teaching and Education for Girls
- Impact of Women Teachers on Girls' Education
- A Scorecard on Gender Equality and Girls' Education in Asia, 1990-2000

For more information, please visit UNESCO Bangkok's Gender in Education website at [www.unescobkk.org/gender](http://www.unescobkk.org/gender) or write to [gender@unescobkk.org](mailto:gender@unescobkk.org)

## **About UNESCO Bangkok's Gender in Education Programme**

The Gender in Education Network in Asia (GENIA) is a network of Gender Focal Points (GFPs) appointed within Ministries of Education in the region to promote gender equality in education. UNESCO Bangkok facilitated the formation of GENIA in 2001 as part of its Gender in Education programme, which is aimed at strengthening national capacities to implement gender-responsive EFA plans in the Asia-Pacific region. The programme has five main components:

- Training – building capacity at national and provincial levels in understanding gender concepts and processes, and in mainstreaming gender into education plans and policies
  - *A Toolkit for Promoting Gender Equality in Education and Guidelines for Implementing, Monitoring and Evaluation Gender Responsive EFA Plans* have been developed towards this effort
- Research – conducting gender analysis and strengthening capacities in carrying out qualitative research

- A qualitative research manual, *Exploring and Understanding Gender in Education: A Qualitative Research Manual for Education Practitioners and Gender Focal Points*, supports this work
- Advocacy – raising awareness and advocating for the promotion of gender equality in education throughout the region
  - A series of advocacy briefs on key gender issues in the region are under production in order to assist GFPs in their advocacy efforts at the national level
- Institutional analysis/development – looking at ways to create a gender-responsive culture and structures within Ministries of Education to give GFPs and staff the time, space and authority to carry out their work in promoting gender equality in education
- Networking – facilitating and strengthening GENIA
  - Annual regional and sub-regional meetings for members of the Network are organized to facilitate the sharing of experience and information

Please visit the UNESCO Bangkok Gender in Education website for further information on GENIA activities and to access resources at: [www.unescobkk.org/gender](http://www.unescobkk.org/gender).



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

.....  
**UNESCO Bangkok**  
**Asia-Pacific Programme of**  
**Education for All**

.....  
920 Sukhumvit Road  
Prakanong, Bangkok 10110 Thailand  
E-mail: [bangkok@unesco-bkk.org](mailto:bangkok@unesco-bkk.org)  
Website: [www.unesco-bkk.org](http://www.unesco-bkk.org)  
Tel: +66-2-3910577 Fax: +66-2-3910866  
.....