**Call for action: ending child labour in agriculture with the help of agricultural stakeholders**

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Description automatically generated**Agricultural stakeholders play a decisive role in the elimination of child labour in agriculture. This Call for Action provides an opportunity to **raise your voice** and express your concerns, commitments, and actions towards the elimination of child labour in agriculture, and to highlight the situation and reality of rural communities and the agricultural sector.

SDG 8.7 sets a target to **eliminate all forms of child labour by 2025**, however, this is an incredibly challenging target to achieve, and all stakeholders must upscale action to progress in the elimination of child labour. Given that 71% of all child labour is found in agriculture, it will not be possible to achieve target 8.7 without a breakthrough in the sector. Therefore, agricultural stakeholders are essential to upscale and mobilize action.

Please present **concrete and realistic actions** that you or your organization can or could take to reduce child labour in agriculture and **provide recommendations** to agricultural and other stakeholders.

**Guidance for contributions:**

The summary of the FSN Forum consultation held in 2020 is available online in [Arabic](http://www.fao.org/3/cb0644ar/cb0644ar.pdf), [Chinese](http://www.fao.org/3/cb0644zh/cb0644zh.pdf), [English](http://www.fao.org/3/cb0644en/cb0644en.pdf), [French](http://www.fao.org/3/cb0644fr/cb0644fr.pdf), [Russian](http://www.fao.org/3/cb0644ru/cb0644ru.pdf) and [Spanish](http://www.fao.org/3/cb0644es/cb0644es.pdf).

**Child labour** is commonly **defined as work that is inappropriate for a child’s age, affects children’s education, or is likely to harm their health, safety or morals. It is work that impairs children’s well-being or hinders their education, development and future livelihoods. When identifying or raising issues related to child labour in agriculture, take into account: i) age, as** not all tasks undertaken by children in agriculture are considered child labour, ii) gender, as girls and boys can engage in different labour activities and face different hazards and challenges, and iii) agricultural sub-sectors, as children are found in farming, fisheries and aquaculture, livestock, and forestry.

**We invite you to take the following key themes into account for your contribution to this Call for Action:**

* **Hunger and malnutrition**, as in some circumstances, children work to meet their food needs.
* **Climate change and environmental degradation** can make agricultural work more intensive and income less predictable, increasing the engagement of children to meet labour demand and support vulnerabilities of their families.
* **Agricultural investment programmes**: by integrating child labour prevention and risk mitigation measures in their investment designs, development partners and financial intermediaries, such as development banks and private sector investors, can become game changers in the creation of employment and livelihood opportunities to reduce family dependency on child labour. They can provide opportunities for adolescents and youth for decent rural employment, and reduce rural poverty that creates child labour in agriculture.
* **Family farming** relies on generational renewal as the main precondition of keeping agriculture viable and sustainable. This process implies the transmission of knowledges, skills, and capacities from the older generation, which also contributes to enhancing children’s sense of community belonging. However, low family incomes, household poverty, few livelihood alternatives, and inadequate access to education can lead to assigning children tasks that are age-inappropriate, hazardous and/or interfere with schooling. Exposing girls and boys to child labour not only puts their well-being at risk but also prevents them from acquiring the skills that would allow innovations in the agricultural sector, break the inter-generational cycle of poverty, and bring improvements to the households’ and communities’ livelihoods.
* **Humanitarian contexts** because child labour increases during conflict, food system crises, and when climate and natural disasters unfold.
* **Occupational safety and health (OSH) and pesticide exposure,** as children have special characteristics in terms of physical, cognitive, behavioural and emotional growth that make them more vulnerable to hazardous work and expose them to additional risks (i.e. long working hours, exposure to pesticides, dangerous equipment and tools, or abuse).
* **Decent youth employment (14/15-17):** children belonging to this age cohort are still children (below 18) but within the national working age. Therefore, they can be in situations of child labour or decent youth employment depending on the danger of the tasks that they are carrying out. Hence, by addressing the hazardous nature of agriculture tasks we can turn situations of child labour into situations of decent youth employment.
* **Digital innovation and blockchains**: scaling up traceability, transparency and sustainability along agricultural value chains, they provide a possible way to monitor farmers’ vulnerabilities in agri-food systems and allow for targeted remediation interventions for addressing the drivers of child labour.
* **Multi-sectoral approach:** social protection programmes that support livelihoods of vulnerable households and efforts to increase access to affordable and quality education can prevent child labour in agriculture.

**Proponent** (name/gender/institution)

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| **Lindita Boshtrakaj/F/ ILO MAP ‘16** |

**Title of your contribution**

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| **Mobilization of agriculture institutions and Executing Agencies to take action in prevention, identification and referral of children in HCL in agriculture.** |

**Mark your category of agricultural stakeholder/actor**

* Government official (/agricultural-line ministries)
* Employer organization
* Academia/research institution
* Private sector
* Farmer organization / cooperative / producer organization
* Worker’s organization or Union
* Civil society or NGO
* **International Organization** (UN, IUF, IFPRI, etc.)
* Development Bank

**If none of the above applies, please indicate which category of actor or sector you belong to (for example, labour, education, or social)**

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**Region/Country/Location**

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| **Kosovo [in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)].** |

**Agricultural sub-sector** (farming, fisheries and aquaculture, livestock, or forestry)

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| **Farming and forestry** |

1. Please provide some **background** context to your contribution and proposal:
   * What is the issue of child labour in agriculture that concerns you? What are the main causes? And consequences? What direct/indirect or intended/unintended impact do you think your work is having on child labour in agriculture?
   * Has COVID-19 had an (in)direct impact on child labour in the agri-food system in your country?
   * If applicable, please describe activities and projects, previously implemented or ongoing, to address child labour in agriculture, as well as their impact/results:

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| **Low family incomes, household poverty and few livelihood alternatives lead to assigning children tasks that are age-inappropriate and hazardous. Moreover, child labour undermines the efforts to promote decent youth employment, which is a key element in revitalizing agriculture.**  **Despite the fact that specific activities in agriculture and forestry are included in the Administrative Instruction for Prevention and Immediate Prohibition of HCL, child labor in agriculture and forestry is not seen as detrimental to child development but as a copying mechanism against poverty. As a result, the response of law enforcement agencies in prevention of HCL is not sufficient and the level of referral of children involved in HCL in agriculture and forestry is very limited.** |

1. **Please describe the action** you or your organization can or could take to address or increase efforts towards the elimination of child labour in agriculture. If this is not applicable, please explain in the next sections the challenges you or your organization face in addressing child labour in agriculture and present recommendations for agricultural and other stakeholders to upscale action.

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| **Given the complex nature of child labor, there is a multitude of actors that have to play their respective parts in a coordinated fashion. Integration of child labor concerns into the efforts of other ministries and executing agencies (including the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development-MAFRD) is a prerequisite for successful implementation of policies, programs and plans aimed at the elimination of child labor.** |

1. **Challenges:** What are the main obstacles you, or agricultural stakeholders in general, face in addressing child labour in agriculture? How could these challenges be overcome or addressed (for example, through policy, legislation, capacity building, etc.)?

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| **Low family incomes and poverty, the lack of regulations and enforcement, and ingrained attitudes and perceptions about the roles of children in rural areas are only some of the numerous factors which make child labour in agriculture particularly difficult to tackle.** |

1. **Recommendations for agricultural stakeholders:** What recommendations would you give to agricultural stakeholders to address the issue of child labour in agriculture you presented?

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| **To address child labour in agriculture, there is a need for:**   * **mainstreaming CL concerns in the legal and policy framework on forestry and agriculture development (primarily in the Law on Forestry and in the Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development, both being under amendment/development this year);** * **introduction of prevention measures in the contractual relations of the Forestry Agency and of the Agency for Agriculture Development with economic operators and farmers, for prohibition of CL in hazardous activities in forestry and agriculture;** * **clear definition of the role of Forestry and Agriculture Inspectors for referral of children identified in HCL to the Centers for Social Work, as well as for tracking the whereabouts of children referred for protection as part of their regular inspections;** * **awareness-raising of farmers on the harmful effects of child labour and stimulating the debate about the topic among children and their communities;** * **mainstreaming child labour concerns in the measures aimed at improving rural livelihoods, creating alternative income-generating activities, as well a promotion of decent work for rural youth.** |

1. **Recommendations for other stakeholders:** What would you recommend to other stakeholders addressing the issue of child labour in agriculture (labour, education, child protection, or social sector stakeholders, including ministries of labour, inspectors, educators, social services practitioners, etc.)?

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| **The attitude of parents, service providers, policy makers, law enforcement agencies and of society at large towards the importance for protection of children from HCL is a decisive factor that may foster or limit the response to child labour, therefore awareness-raising on the harmful effects of child labour need to be accelerated.**    **A coordinated multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach through a national and local framework is needed, involving key institutions that work in partnership for:**   * **joint identification of child labourers and children at risk of entering child labour;** * **assessment of the hazards and risks they are exposed to;** * **referral to relevant services or viable alternatives;** * **verification that children have been withdrawn from work; and** * **tracking and fact-based policy making to make sure that the root causes of child labour are gradually eliminated.** |