**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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| **Nusaned** |

**Title of your contribution**

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| **Food Security through family farming in the current humanitarian context** |

**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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| **Lebanon** |

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

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| **Farming** |

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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| Most recent surveys concerning child labour in agriculture in Lebanon were held in 2019 before the current economic crisis, focusing on Bekaa and targeting Syrian refugees who are mostly located in Bekaa and North of Lebanon. The massive influx of refugees, political and economic crisis and Covid 19 have had substantial repercussions on Lebanon’s economic, social and political landscape. There is currently an increase of school drop out and poverty rates are increasing incredibly related to Lebanese citizens. Lebanese child labor is increasing and Lebanese are relying more and more on agriculture to ensure food security.  Before the economic crisis, farmers were relying on Syrian workers to work on their farm, but currently a great number of Syrian workers stopped working in agriculture because of payment issues in fresh dollars and they are receiving money and food assistance from humanitarian organizations, as well as some dollars are transferred to them from their relatives from abroad. Consequently, many Lebanese farmers are relying now on their children to work with them in agriculture.  Furthermore, due to the pandemic and the economic crisis, many schools have closed, especially public schools in rural areas, some other schools are expensive and as well the poor infrastructure of schools in term of technology, no electricity, no good connection, has pushed children to withdraw from schools and start working to support their families, ensure their living and to ensure their basic needs.  Therefore, Nusaned insists on having an urgent survey concerning agriculture and child labor in agriculture to know more about the current needs and challenges in order to contribute and enhance economic empowerment specifically in agriculture and prevent school drop outs. Moreover, youth who cannot return to school should be provided with necessary trainings in farming and be more aware about safety and security issues towards working on the field.  In order to protect children and youth from unsecure labour, we need to support and empower farmers to become economically independent, in order to prevent their children from school dropout, and provide youth with necessary farming trainings and security and safety measures awareness. |

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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| Nusaned is aiming at improving Lebanese farmers production in order to provide economic stability and prevent children drop out and youth unsecure and unsafe labor. Therefore, the following actions are immediately needed:   1. Needs Assessment targeting Lebanese child labor in agriculture after 2019 crisis 2. Support farmers by providing necessary crops, poultry and bees to ensure their economic stability 3. Ensure Children below 16 in a farmers born family to be enrolled in the educational system and prevent school dropout instead of supporting their families in farming 4. Provide necessary trainings for youth above 16 on modern farming and raise awareness about farming security and safety measures   Nusaned is encouraging vulnerable families, all over Lebanon, and specifically in most underserved communities (Akkar, North and South of Lebanon, Bekaa, …) plant their backyard and to rear some livestock and poultry, also Nusaned is targeting small scale farmers who are relying on agriculture through supporting them in improving different value chains. |

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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| The economic and financial situation in Lebanon is causing an unstable pricing of farming supplies that will affect the selling of the products.  Therefore, Nusaned has to interfere to provide the needed supplies and ensure a marketing and selling system. Nusaned is aiming to establish a bee productive center in order to distribute bees and beehives to farmers who can increase their profits, in addition to providing poultry and crops that yield to families who are relying on agriculture for living, and reduce their expenses.  Moreover, Lebanese child labor is increasing due to the current situation, where Nusaned will give more attention and prevent child labor by empowering and supporting Lebanese farmers and ensuring the enrollment of their children at school.  Youth are subject to unsafe working in agriculture to assist their families. Nusaned will provide necessary vocational trainings, capacity building and awareness sessions to ensure their safety. |

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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| 1. To be aware of international standards of agriculture and apply Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) 2. To be aware of security and safety measures when employing youth 3. To provide basic rights of employed youth in agriculture |

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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| 1. To give more consideration to Lebanese farmers and child labour in the current situation in Lebanon 2. To provide necessary support for children and schools to prevent school dropout and child labor. 3. To enhance vocational trainings and capacity building for youth who cannot be enrolled at schools anymore |