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## THE UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S WORK (UCW) PROJECT

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A joint initiative of the  
International Labour Organisation,  
UNICEF and the World Bank

### Origins of the UCW project

As part of broader efforts to develop effective and long-term solutions to combat child labour, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNICEF and the World Bank initiated the joint interagency research program 'Understanding Children's Work and its Impact', the UCW Project, in December 2000.

Financed by the governments of Norway, Finland, and Sweden, the UCW Project is based at the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) in Florence, Italy.

The Project is guided by the Oslo Agenda for Action, unanimously adopted at the 1997 International Conference on Child Labour, which laid out key priorities for the international community in the fight against child labour. The Agenda specifically identified the crucial need to improve data collection, research capacity and monitoring systems related to child labour, and called for stronger co-operation amongst international agencies involved in addressing child labour.

### The objectives of the project

Through a variety of data collection and analysis, research and assessment activities, the UCW project seeks to increase global- and local-level understanding of child labour, its causes and effects, how it can be best measured, and how it can be effectively addressed.

The project also seeks to improve synergies and collaboration between the three partner agencies, to

increase the effectiveness of their current and future efforts in addressing child labour.

### Implementation

Project implementation is taking place in three broad stages over a two-year period. The first phase is directed towards taking stock of existing information on child labour (i.e., survey datasets, documentation on project interventions, and research publications).

Building on this, the second phase is aimed at analysing and extending current information on child labour. It involves analyses of current survey instruments and project interventions, as well as original research in areas where gaps prevail in current knowledge.

Taken together, the first two phases of the project provide a depository of global- and national-level information on the child labour phenomenon, and measurement and policy issues relating to it. This information is posted on the UCW website ([www.ucw-project.org](http://www.ucw-project.org)), where it can be drawn on by researchers and policymakers alike in the search for effective and durable solutions to combat child labour.

### Country level activities

The third phase of the UCW project involves activities at the country level. It aims at building national and local capacity to collect and analyse information on child labour, and, ultimately, at promoting effective policies at the country level to prevent and combat child labour. As such, it represents a link between the global-level information efforts pursued in the first two stages, on the one hand, and actions that

directly impact upon the lives of working children in countries where they are prominent, on the other.

At the country level, analyses of the current child labour situation and critical reviews of current policies and programmes relating to child labour are being conducted, leading to an enlarged knowledge base on the nature, causes and consequences of child labour.

#### Project outputs

A number of specific outputs are envisaged, all contributing to the overall goals of improving understanding of, and stimulating action on, the child labour phenomenon.

These include outputs designed to improve the availability and accessibility of current child labour-related information:

- **Survey and statistical information base**, presenting in an ordered and cohesive manner the spectrum of information currently available on child labour.
- **Activity and project database**, presenting the range of child labour-related activities supported by the three partner agencies, classified according to approach, target groups and other basic selection criteria.

Outputs designed to strengthen data collection and analysis capabilities:

- **New child labour survey instrument**, extending and standardising the data on child labour generated by existing survey tools.

- **Capacity building materials**, for use in the training of child labour researchers and policymakers.

And outputs designed to extend current knowledge about child labour and policies addressing it:

- **Findings of pilot research and analyses**, filling gaps in current knowledge relating to child labour determinants and consequences.
- **Findings and lessons learned from country-level impact assessments**, promoting improved understanding of the impact of specific interventions against child labour, and helping to identify effective policy approaches.

Persons interested in further information on the project may consult the project website ([www.ucw-project.org](http://www.ucw-project.org)) or contact the Project Co-ordinator, Dr. Furio Rosati, at the UCW Project Secretariat in Florence at [florence.ucw@unicef.org](mailto:florence.ucw@unicef.org).