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CHILD LABOR IN EGYPT

DINA ISMAIL EL SHAFEL

2002

mwad
Thesis
2002/39

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

CHILD LABOR IN EGYPT

DINA ISMAIL EL SHAFEI

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN
POLITICAL SCIENCE

(June 2002)

2002/39

The American University in Cairo

Child Labor in Egypt

A Thesis Submitted by
Dina Ismail El Shafei

To the Department of Political Science
June 2002

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
The degree of Master of Arts

Has been approved by

Dr. Trevor Parfitt
Thesis Committee Advisor
Affiliation

[Redacted Signature]

AUC

Dr. Sherif ElMusa
Thesis Committee Reader
Affiliation

[Redacted Signature]

Dr. Ibrahim El Nur
Thesis Committee Reader
Affiliation

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Signature]

Department Chair

27/5/02
Date

[Redacted Signature]

Dean
Of HUSS

May 29, 2002
Date

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ABBREVIATIONS

CAPMAS Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

CLM Child Labor Monitoring

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IPEC The International Program on the Eradication of Child Labor

L224 Labor Force Sample Survey

MENA Middle East North Africa

MEV Ministry of Education

MOMM Ministry of Manpower and Migration

MOU Memorandum of Understanding

NCCM National Council for Childhood and Maternity

NCSER National Center for Social and Childological Research

NGO Non Governmental Organization

SIEMPEX The Statistical Information and Monitoring Project

SRC Social Research Center

UN The United Nations

UNICEF United Nations International Children Fund

WTO World Trade Organization

ABBREVIATIONS

CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CLU	Child Labor Unit
CRC	Convention of the Right of the Child
EFI	Egyptian Federation of Industries
EIHS	Egyptian Integrated Household Survey
EMICS	Egypt Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
GATT	General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs
ILO	International Labor Organization
IPEC	The International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor
LFSS	Labor Force Sample Survey
MENA	Middle East North Africa
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOMM	Ministry of Manpower and Migration
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCCM	National Center for Childhood and Maternity
NCSCR	National Center for Social and Criminological Research
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
SIMPOC	The Statistical Information and Monitoring Project
SRC	Social Research Center
UN	The United Nations
UNICEF	United Nation International Children Fund
WTO	World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION

“Perhaps you splurged on a handcrafted carpet, without knowing it was made by a seven-year old from India, where children are chained to looms for twelve hours a day. May be you just bought a soccer ball for your son and daughter, without realizing your gift was produced by five-year old hands inside a dark and silent factory in Pakistan. Even your more mundane purchases – a leather bag, a shirt, a pair of jeans, or produce from the local grocery store – could be the product of child labor.”¹

Child labor is a complex worldwide problem, especially in LDCs where poverty and low educational standards are persistent. A survey of child labor worldwide finds that children are working in considerable numbers throughout many regions of the world. Each region differs in the extent of child labor and the specific sectors where children may be found working. However, the main reasons behind the work of children namely poverty and education, were common in all areas.

Egypt represents a typical case where child labor exists in most of its forms, except for prostitution, trafficking and child bondage, and is mainly caused by poverty. Determining the magnitude of child labor in Egypt is very difficult due to the large informal sector, the prevalence of the work of children in domestic chores and with their families in rural areas. Both international agencies and the government are attempting to solve the problem. However, it is still persistent.

¹ United Nations International Children Fund, *UNICEF Calls For An End to Child Labor*; available from <http://www.unicefusa.org/issues97/jan97/labor.html>

A global Problem

Due to its complexity, child labor became a global problem requiring global action on both the national and international levels. At least some children in all nations face homelessness, violence, poverty and work. In Asia children work in factories and workshops, they clean and pack food, weave carpets and sew clothes, motor workshops, domestic service and as prostitutes. In Latin America, children work in plantation, workshops, mines, and homes. In Africa, they sell and trade food on the street, wash cars, perform domestic chores and work in commercial plantations and family farms.²

Poverty

Poverty remains a global problem and its alleviation is an important political challenge. Due to uncertainties about the future of the welfare state accompanied with the fall of communism, there has been a slow down in the rate of growth of public expenditure for children and a deterioration in social safety nets, in addition to the technological changes that reduced demand for less skilled labor and increased economic hardships.³ According to the World Bank statistics, more than 1.3 billion people live on less than one dollar a day. A further two billion are only marginally better off. UNICEF estimates that children account for at least fifty percent of the poor. An estimated 650 million children are living in extreme poverty, and their

² U.S. Department of Labor, *By the Sweat and Toil of Children*, Vol. 5 (1998); available from <http://www.dol/ilab/public/media/reports/iclp/sweat/overview.html>

³ Giovanni Andrea Cornia and Sheldon Danziger, *Child Poverty, The Labor Market and the Welfare State in the Industrialized Countries* (University of Michigan, School of Social Work, 1997); available from <http://www.ssw.umich.edu/poverty/sdchildp.html>

number is rising.⁴ Eight out of every 100 infants do not live to their fifth birthday. Nine of every 100 boys and fourteen of every 100 girls who reach school age do not attend school.

Eradicating poverty became one of the main objectives of the international community. World leaders at the United Nations Millennium Summit endorsed the target of reducing the incidence of poverty in developing countries from 30 percent to 15 percent between 1990 and 2015.⁵ However, the target was missed by a wide margin since one fifth of the world's population are still living in poverty. Progress in meeting international development goals has been slow and uneven across regions, the global community needs to address the causes of poverty more effectively at country and global levels.

While poverty is the main reason for the work of children, child labor also perpetuates poverty, since children who must begin work at an early age often compromise their future earnings potential. Accordingly, Global action through international organisations is needed to complement national and local efforts to achieve maximum benefit for poor people around the world, particularly targeting women and children.

Globalization & Trade Liberalisation

It is difficult to determine the impact of globalization on developing countries. While advocates of globalization argue that trade liberalisation creates opportunities for new jobs and investment, and provide consumers with access to a wider range of

⁴ International Labour Office, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, "Strategies for Eliminating Child Labour: Prevention, Removal and Rehabilitation." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Child Labor in Oslo, October 27-30, 1997*, 7.

⁵ Giovanni Andrea Cornia and Julius Court, *Inequality, Growth and Poverty in the Era of Liberalization and Globalization*, (United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research); available from <http://www.wider.unu.edu/> accessed on 28.04.02

better-quality goods at lower prices, detractors debate that openness to a global economy increases risks and exposure to economic and financial shocks such as exchange rate crises. Exchange rate devaluations result in making imports more expensive in domestic currency terms, while exports appear cheap to trading partners. The impact of liberalisation on the poor differs from rural to urban communities. The urban poor would be negatively affected due to the rise in prices of food, unemployment and real wage declines. As for the rural poor, the higher prices of what they produce would help balance against the higher prices of what they consume.

Although some efforts have been made to determine the link between poverty and globalization, the answer remains ambiguous. Globalization may help the poor in some countries and harm those in other countries. It may help the poor in rural areas and harm those in urban areas. It all depends on production, and consumption patterns, outsourcing opportunities and world prices.⁶ Further research is needed to address the issue extensively. More data need to be collected and analyzed in order to judge the impact of globalization on the poor.

Furthermore, it is uncertain what the impact of globalization and trade liberalisation has been on child labor. There is reason to fear that children may be among the victims of this process. As firms and countries attempt to cut production costs in export industries, they tend to employ children in order to maintain a competitive advantage in the world market. The available statistics that measure the extent of child labor in export industries on a worldwide basis do not provide enough empirical evidence to support this argument. It is estimated that children employed in export industries represent only a small fraction of the total problem of child labor in

⁶ James Levinsohn, *Globalization and Poverty* (Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan, National Bureau of Economic Research, August 2000)

the world (less than 5 per cent).⁷ As the percentage of children working in the export sector is small, efforts in this area would not have a substantial impact on the work of children.

A Political Problem

Child labor is about the exploitation of the poor, inequality and social exclusion. The majority of working children come from the most exploited groups such as refugees, unregistered migrants, ethnic minorities and the poorest of the poor who usually lack political power and voice. Furthermore, the reasons why children are preferred to adult workers are often embedded in the fact that children are less aware of their rights, they cannot form unions, accept dangerous work and are more obedient. Accordingly child labor is a violation of human rights.

On the national level, the child labor problem is dealt with politically through legal, political, and economic state policies. Laws regarding education, health, personal status, and labor have a direct bearing on child labor. Gaps in law enforcement and implementation may have negative consequences.⁸ For example lack of enforcement of the minimum legal age of work leads to early entry into the labor market and in certain cases health hazards and danger to the working child. Existing laws in many countries are not well enforced because political will and enforcement mechanisms are lacking.

Macroeconomic policies, play an important role in shaping the problem of child labor. For example the rate of economic growth has an impact on inflation rates, which determine the cost of living and hence the standard of living. Growth that fails

⁷ This estimate was derived from a UNICEF publication.

⁸ Hala E., Shafey, *Adolescence and State Policy in Egypt*. (New York: Population Council, 1998), 6

to increase the income of the poor is unlikely to prevent children from joining the labor force. Policies that affect household income can also be critical. Fiscal policies such as tax revenues, business profits, foreign trade, government spending to subsidize food, services and utilities affect the costs incurred by families and their income and hence the welfare of children.⁹ Analysis shows that the proportion of children in the total labor force decline with rising percapita income, especially when the income of the poor, and women in particular, increases.¹⁰

Political support of governments through their relationships with other national actors such as NGOs, the private sector, political opposition, media, universities and the external world can play an important role in solving the problem of child labor. By determining the general policies under which those entities operate, the state affects the quality and quantity of services provided by those institutions. For instance, incentives provided by the state to the private sector and NGOs may encourage vocational training, educational and health projects for children.¹¹ The political role of the state in sustaining the delivery of basic social services such as education, health care, nutrition programmes and food subsidies for the poor is critical. Increasing expenditures on such categories of services may require governments to reallocate their expenditures while maintaining a stable macroeconomic environment.¹²

The Research Problem

During the past decade international organizations and governments have attempted to combat child labor in LDCs. However the problem is still persistent.

⁹ Ibid. , 6-7

¹⁰ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor, 9

¹¹ Shafey, *Adolescence and State Policy in Egypt*, 8

Although their role is significant, the private sector and individuals efforts are still minimal. The contribution of this sector would complement the international and government efforts. They would reach segments of working children that will never be on the international organizations agenda with guaranteed sustainability.

The available literature have defined and analyzed the problem of child labor. All of them have agreed on the causes and characteristics of the problem. Most of them highlighted the important role of international agencies, of the different conventions, enforcement of laws and the political commitment of countries. None of the sources have highlighted the major role that may be contributed by the private sector and individuals to reach the segments of working children that remains undetected by international agencies and their role in solving the problem of sustainability and fund raising. Also, none of the sources attempted to analyze the incentives that should be given to the private sector to encourage them to contribute to social problems in general and to the child labor problem in particular.

In this respect the thesis will attempt to clarify how the private sector and individuals can help to fill the existing gap and to complement the work of international and governmental agencies.

Objectives, Methodology and Organization

Objectives

The thesis has two main objectives. First, it attempts to clarify the main causes of child labor in order to highlight the complexity of the issue and the need for global actions and strong political commitment on both the international and national levels in order to solve the problem. Second, the thesis aims at emphasizing the role of

¹² ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, *Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor*, 9

individuals and the private sector. Their projects may be implemented with little effort, small funds but may have a great impact on the life of some of the working children who are not on the priority list of international organizations. The projects may be as small as a one person initiative; no international organizations, no NGOs, and no government intervention. (See Appendix V for an illustration of a project implemented by individuals)

Methodology

In order to analyze the problem of child labor extensively, I studied the role of international agencies such as the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) who are directly involved in combating child labor. I also widened the scope of the study to include the role of other agencies such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Bank. This is to reflect the need for a global action and to highlight the impact of new worldwide political and social trends such as globalization and poverty alleviation measures that may have a great impact on the child labor problem. I did not consider the role of local NGOs because most of their projects are funded and planned by international agencies. However this does not in any way undermine the importance of their role.

The methodology used in this thesis involves three major aspects. First data is collected through different international and local sources. Second interviews are conducted with key persons in different organizations and governmental agencies as well as working children. Third a project is designed as an illustration to the second objective of the thesis.

Data Collection

The lack of accurate and reliable data on the magnitude of child labor worldwide and in Egypt made the analysis based on empirical evidence difficult. Many Labor Force Surveys (LFS) do not collect data on workers less than fifteen years and almost none for persons less than ten years on the assumption that children are not on the labor force. Another problem arises with the non-inclusion of domestic chores and unpaid work as a form of child labor in legal statistics. Adding to that in the case of Egypt, the discrepancy between the Egyptian governmental sources of data and other institutions such as the ILO and the American University in Cairo (AUC) revealing the importance of further research in this area in order to ensure better quality data.

Interviews

I conducted three different types of interviews as an attempt to cover all the aspects of the problem of child labor. First, interviews with key persons at the ILO, U.S Embassy, the Ministry of Manpower, the National Center for Childhood and Maternity in Egypt and scholars such as Dr. Adel Azer who have contributed major studies on child labor. The interviews aimed at analyzing the perspective of international and local agencies regarding the problem and its solution. Second, interviews with some working children, whereby a questionnaire was designed to reveal their background, reasons of work, understanding of their rights, and their future hopes. Third, one interview was conducted with a carpenter who has managed to start a literacy program to his employees. The interview aimed at highlighting the experience, the reaction of the workers and the problems faced.

Project Design

Finally, a project was designed in an attempt to demonstrate the importance of the role of the private sector and individuals in combating child labor. It also aims at highlighting the significance of such projects in solving the sustainability and fund raising problems that face many projects implemented by international organizations and NGOs. The project includes some fieldwork in the form of interviews with working children based on a questionnaire that covers the different issues related to the work of children and their families as mentioned above. Although the sample used is very small, the interviews asserted many views already discussed in the thesis regarding the causes of child labor.

Primary and Secondary Sources

Primary sources including books, booklets, newsletters, reports and articles published by the different international and local agencies are studied to reflect the different definitions of child labor, as well as the perceived roles and solutions to the problem. The books and articles of scholars such as Dr. Adel Azer, Ragui Asaad, Ola Anwar, Jackline Wahba and Heba Nassar are examined in order to reveal their perspective of the problem and its solution. Secondary sources include articles and reports on related issues such as poverty, education and globalization. Those sources are consulted in order to give more insight on the impact of such global issues on the child labor problem.

Organization

In chapter one, the thesis shows the complexity of child labor by identifying the characteristics of working children and the causes behind their work. The chapter also sheds some light on the efforts of different international organizations towards

the elimination of the problem. The complexity of the phenomenon requires the involvement of international organizations such as the WTO and the World Bank to complement the work of specialised agencies such as the ILO and UNICEF. Since the worst forms of child labor have priority in the agenda of international organizations, this chapter highlights the importance of the role of the private sector and individuals in reaching segments of working children that may never be targeted by international agencies. In this respect the thesis is not undermining the role of international agencies but raising the importance of the role of the private sector and individuals as a complementary role to that of specialized agencies.

Chapter two examines the case of Egypt as a traditional case where child labor is caused mainly by poverty and low educational standards. National and international efforts have been geared towards solving this problem, but it is still persistent. Here is where the role of the private sector and individuals become crucial in order to complement the work of the government and international organizations.

Chapter three concludes by focusing on policy implications suggesting how private sector and individual initiatives may be implemented. It focuses on a project that may be implemented by individuals or private entrepreneurs targeting working children in different occupations and conditions of work. We exclude here children working in unacceptable conditions since this type of work must be completely eliminated. The project addresses one of the main causes of child labor, which is education. It also shows that with minimum efforts and budget, those working children may be given a chance for a better life in the future. (See Appendix V for the real experience of the project implementation)

The Literature Review

Before starting to analyze child labor, I would like to examine the literature considered in this research. I will consider the literature by organizations rather than by authors since their views reflect the policies and strategies of the agency they are writing for. In doing so, I am not criticizing the role of any of the agencies in combating child labor since the different perspectives revealed in their documents reflect their original role and mission.

The literature is divided into documents produced by the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank. Those documents deal with the problem of child labor from a totally social and humanitarian aspect. The ILO and UNICEF focus on the definition of child labor in its worst and abusive forms, causes of the work of children -poverty and education- and their role in setting conventions and financing projects that would help eliminating the work of children. The documents produced by the World Bank reveal the fact that the issue of child labor is not a direct aspect of the bank's mission. With the rise of child labor as an important international problem caused mainly by poverty, the bank started to dedicate some efforts towards solving this problem. However, none of the sources considered the work of children in normal conditions, within their families and in the hidden jobs such as the ball boys (the case studied in this thesis), servants in houses and other similar jobs.

Other documents produced by the WTO, and the U.S. Department of Labor present the arguments of advocates and detractors regarding the impact of new global trends such as globalization and trade liberalization on child labor as mentioned earlier. The literature also reveals that developed countries arguing in favor of trade sanctions against LDCs where child labor is used in certain industries do not consider

the economic and social implications of such measures on the exporting countries and the dismissed children.

The works of the different scholars mentioned earlier have focused and agreed on the characteristics and causes of child labor globally and in Egypt. Several attempts were made to analyze the relationship between education, poverty and the work of children. However, only one study conducted by Dr. Heba Nassar focused on the role of the private sector in solving social problems. The study analyzed the potential role, the impact of such contributions and the problems that may face the private sector.

As a conclusion, most of the sources collected for this thesis focus on the causes and characteristics of child labor as well as the efforts and projects implemented by the different international agencies. The role of the private sector and individuals and the incentives that may optimize those efforts are not given any emphasis in the sources collected. The focus on the prohibition of the work of children is high although it is not an effective solution to the problem without the existence of good coordination between the different agencies and the government to formulate good rehabilitation programs and income generating alternatives for the dismissed children.

The link between breaking the cycle of poverty and child labor for future generations through literacy and awareness programs as well as income generating projects targeting poor people is mentioned in several documents. However, it is not given the desired significance. Although it is probably the only real solution to the problem of child labor, it will not render quick results but will definitely have an impact on child labor in future generations.

CHAPTER ONE

CHILD LABOR: THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Child labor does not refer to young people who work a few hours a week to earn pocket money or to help their families. Working and earning can be a positive experience in a child's growing up. It depends on the age of the child, the conditions of work, and whether work prevents the child from going to school. In this context, child labor refers to children who have to work long hours, under detrimental conditions harmful to their health and their development in order to ensure their own or their families survival. By their hard work, those children are deprived of their childhood, their dignity, and their access to education.

Children work within their families or with an outside employer, in agricultural fields, workshops, mines, houses and in the streets.¹ They work mainly in the informal sector which easily escapes inspection. Child labor in this sense exposes children to lasting physical and psychological harm. Working at looms for example, has left children disabled with eye damage, lung disease, stunted growth, and a susceptibility to arthritis as they grow older.²

Definition of Child Labor

It is difficult to set a global definition of what constitutes child labor due to differences in defining a child in many countries, as well as the different variables that may be included in the definition of child labor. Also the controversy regarding part-time jobs for children adds to the difficulty in setting the definition.

¹ Ola M. Anwar, *Amal El Atfal fi Misr* (Child Labor in Egypt) (The National Center for Social and Criminological Research, 98)

² Human Rights Watch, *Child Labor*; available from <http://www.humanrightswatch.org/hrw/about/projects/erd/child-labor.htm>

The ILO defines child labor as children performing work, which is exploitative or detrimental to their development and generally does not include certain types of light work performed by children part-time. Light work is further defined as work that does not harm a child's health or development, or hinders school attendance. Furthermore, the ILO defines childhood as a period of life, which should be spent in education and development, and that child labor jeopardizes children's rights in becoming productive adults.¹⁵ The ILO is not opposed to every type of work done by children and recognizes the importance of the traditional role of children in helping their parents.¹⁶

Although the definition of child labor is not clear in the literatures concerning UNICEF, This organization is guided by the UN Convention of the Right of the Child (CRC) implying the rights of children to good education and healthy development. Accordingly, its definition of child labor would probably fall within the same framework of the ILO.

According to the study conducted by Dr. Ola Anwar "Child Labor in Egypt", Children are defined as all human beings below the age of eighteen, thus conforming with the definition set by the Convention of Children's Rights (CRC). According to the author, manpower surveys in Egypt have defined the work of children as the participation of a child in any forms of paid labor. However, because the work of children is sometimes unpaid the following definition is more precise, the work of children is described as any activities implemented by a child that is considered

¹⁵ International Labor Office, *Towards the Abolition of Child Labor: ILO Policy and its Implications for ILO Technical Cooperation Activities*; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/comp/child/policy/towards.htm>

¹⁶ International Labor Office, *Economic Incentives for Children and Families to Eliminate or Reduce Child Labor*; available from <http://www.ilo.org/>

participation in production, and facilitates or replaces the work of others. Thus working children are those who fall into the age bracket of six to fourteen either working with or without pay, with their families or outside and do not go to school. The author omitted the work of children with their families in agricultural fields and small workshops, during their free time and without affecting their school attendance, from the definition of working children.¹⁷

Dr. Adel Azer¹⁸ does not accept this definition and considers children involved in any type of work, even if they still go to school a form of child labor that should be eliminated.¹⁹ Also, According to a study presented at a workshop on the analysis of poverty in the MENA region in August 2001²⁰, most of the girls work in domestic chores without pay. Therefore when the study included domestic work in the definition of child labor, the authors concluded that nearly one third of the sampled girls work at least fourteen hours per week.

In this thesis, the term child labor refers to any work, paid or unpaid, done by children below a minimum age, for long working hours, thus preventing them from attending school. It also refers to any work that is injurious to the health and safety of children even if it is on a part-time base. Part-time jobs in good working conditions that do not involve any danger for the health of children are excluded, even if the reason of work is to generate more income to the family. Some aspects of work may be good for children if performed under the right circumstances. Non hazardous work

¹⁷ Anwar, Child Labor in Egypt

¹⁸ Dr. Adel Azer has many publications in the field of child labor during his work at UNICEF and the AUC Social Research Center.

¹⁹ Dr. Adel Azer, interview by the author, 21 May 2000, Social Research Center, Cairo.

²⁰ Ragui, Levison and Zibani, *The Effect of Child Labor on School Enrollement in Egypt*.

can teach self-reliance, and responsibility. In developed countries children work delivering newspapers and babysitting and many others help on a part-time base in their family business. In the United Kingdom the majority of children experience paid employment by the age of fourteen. In the United States²¹ half of the fourteen-year-olds do some part-time work during the year.²²

Magnitude of the problem

Before attempting to estimate the magnitude of child labor in the world, we should emphasize the quantitative importance of the child population. Overall, thirty seven percent of the world's population are children. They form the majority of the population in Africa.

Child labor is a pervasive problem throughout the world, especially in developing countries, as a result of their economic conditions. According to recent global estimates by the International Labor Organization (ILO), 250 million children between the ages of five and fourteen work around the world, including children who perform invisible work in the informal sector. Of these nearly 120 million are estimated to be working full-time²³, while others combine work with school or other activities. Nearly 50 million are between five and eleven years old and work in hazardous conditions, considering their age and vulnerability.²⁴ Estimates suggest that

²¹ In the U.S. sixteen is the minimum age for most nonfarm work. However, fourteen and fifteen year olds may be employed outside of school hours in certain occupations under certain conditions. They may deliver newspapers; perform in radio, television, or theatrical productions; work for their parents in their owned nonfarm businesses, except in mining, manufacturing, or in any other declared hazardous by the secretary of labor.

²² International Labor Office, Conceptual and Research frameworks for the Economics of Child Labor and its Elimination; *ILO/IPEC Working Paper 2000*, 1.

²³ Full time labor refers to working between forty and forty eight hours a week, and is incompatible with school attendance.

²⁴ ILO estimates are based on experimental surveys conducted by the ILO Bureau of Statistics in a number of countries.

Africa, the poorest region, has the highest incidence of child labor reaching 40 percent of global child labor.

Although child labor in its abusive form is more widespread in developing countries, it should not be assumed that this phenomenon occurs only in poor and developing countries. Hazardous forms of child labor in developed countries usually affect children of ethnic minorities and immigrants. Child labor is reported to be on the rise in Central and Eastern Europe, but the challenge is much bigger in developing countries where the number of children involved is higher and the conditions in which they work are unacceptable.²⁵

Characteristics & Causes of Child Labor

The following section describes the characteristics of working children with respect to the type of work they perform as well as the conditions in which they work. It also explains the causes of child labor starting with the causal factors which are common in all developing countries. Other conditions which facilitate the occurrence of child labor are highlighted. However, those conditions would not lead to the work of children unless poverty -a causal factor- is persistent.

Characteristics of Working Children

Several studies have revealed that working children suffer both at work and at home. At the family level they suffer from low economic, social and educational standards. At the work level, the ILO reports that children work the longest hours and

²⁵ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor, 4

are the worst paid of all laborers.²⁶ Working children are usually deprived of a stable family life and are the objects of extreme exploitation in terms of long working hours for minimal pay. They suffer from weak health conditions and malnutrition and are deprived of basic learning, as they are not able to receive any schooling, or to complete primary education.²⁷ Working children have low enrollment rates and high absentee and dropout rates, resulting from fatigue, work related injuries and illnesses, and/or work schedules that are incompatible with school hours.

As adult workers, those children continue to be employed mainly in low paid, unskilled jobs thereby perpetuating poverty. Furthermore, employers capitalize on the children knowing that these laborers cannot legally form unions to change their conditions or defend their rights.²⁸

Type of Work

Agriculture

Many millions of working children work in hazardous conditions such as fire, extreme heat, or they use sharp tools. One of the most common forms of child labor in both industrialized and developing countries is the use of children in agriculture. In the United States, over 300,000 children worked on commercial farms, mostly in hazardous conditions. It was estimated that only fifty five percent of farm worker children in the United States finished high school.²⁹ Although agriculture represents

²⁶ Faraaz, Siddiqi and Harry Anthony Patrinos. *Child labor: issues, Causes and Interventions. World Bank, Human capital Development and Operations policy Working Paper 56*, 1

²⁷ Adel, Azer and N. Ramzy, *Child Labor in Egypt* (The National Center for Social and Criminological Research in Collaboration with Unicef, 1991).

²⁸ Siddiq and Patrinos, *Child Labor: Issues, Causes and Interventions*, 2

²⁹ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2001: Children's Rights*; available from <http://www.humanrightswatch.org/hrw/wr2kl/children/child5.html>

only two percent of GDP, it still enjoys a special place in the perception of citizens due to the beginning of the U.S. as a nation of farmers. Federal and State labor laws governing agricultural employment reflect this belief as they are less restrictive than those applied to other industries. Children working on farms owned or operated by parents are completely exempted from Federal Agricultural Child Labor provisions.³⁰

The agricultural sector, in general, is considered among the most dangerous for health and safety. Children are exposed to dangerous chemical products and mechanical equipment in both industry and agriculture, without any training, safety precautions and in the most deplorable conditions of hygiene.

The Informal Sector

Most working children are found in farms, households and in the informal sector of the urban areas where they are normally beyond the reach of protective legislation. The informal sector's operation is not reached and controlled by the labor laws that govern the formal sector in addition to the absence of trade unions and regulatory bodies that help preserve the rights of workers.³¹ Working conditions in the informal sector tend to be poor with no social or health insurance, long working hours, and minimal sanitary and safety regulations.

Child Prostitution

Child prostitution is widespread, particularly among girls. Around the world, especially in Asia and Latin America, more than one million children are forced into prostitution.³² Children are being sold and smuggled across national frontiers for the

³⁰ U.S. Department of Labor, *Report on the Youth Labor Force*, June 2000.

³¹ Shafey, *Adolescence and State Policy in Egypt*, 49-50

³² *Women's Issues - Third World*; available from <http://women3rdworld.abo...en3rdworld/library/weekly/aa083098.htm>

world sex market. Girls risk early pregnancy, exposure to sexually transmitted diseases and serious psychological problems.³³ Articles thirty four and thirty five of the Convention of the Right of the Child (CRC) forbid sexual exploitation or trafficking of children, while other international instruments in human rights, humanitarian law, refugee law, and labor standards protect children against prostitution. However, some children are still trapped in sexual exploitation and trafficking.³⁴

Domestic Work

In Developing countries young girls are employed as domestic servants in urban areas. They are obliged to work very long hours, deprived of family contact, schooling, leisure, emotional support and social interaction. They are sometimes subjected to beating, insults and sexual abuse.³⁵

Child Bondage and Trafficking

Debt bondage which involves children becoming collateral for the debts of their parents is a common form of child slavery in some countries like India, Pakistan, Nepal and Thailand.³⁶ In most cases the children cannot work off the debt, nor can the family afford to buy the child back. Also, trafficking which is the illegal transport and sale of women and children for the purpose of exploiting their labor is common in some countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand, and India.

³³ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor, 4

³⁴ Human Rights Watch, *Promises Broken: An Assessment of children's Rights on the 10th Anniversary of the CRC*; available from <http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/crp/promises/abuse.html>

³⁵ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor, 5

³⁶ Ibid. p.5

Causes of Child Labor³⁷

Child labor is a complex issue that is strongly correlated with the prevailing social and economic environment. Children work for a variety of reasons; the most important of which are poverty and education. Although children are not well paid, they still serve as major contributors to their family's income in developing countries. Education problems are also major reasons behind child labor. The problem arises either due to the inaccessibility of schools or the lack of quality education, which force parents to send their children to work.³⁸

Causal Factors

Poverty

Poverty is cited frequently as the primary reason for child labor. A review of nine Latin American Countries shows that without the income of working children aged thirteen to seventeen the incidence of poverty would rise between 10-20%.³⁹

According to the World Bank, more than 1.3 billion people live on less than one dollar a day and almost three billion on less than two dollars a day. The UNICEF estimates that 650 million children live in extreme poverty, and their number is rising.⁴⁰ Due to high levels of poverty, families send their children to work in order to avoid the educational expenses, to earn an extra income for the family and in order to learn a new skill. When they work children contribute by twenty to twenty five

³⁷ Several International organizations have defined the reasons behind the work of children, namely the ILO, World Bank & UNICEF. They all have agreed that the major reasons are poverty, and education.

³⁸ Siddiq and Patrinos, *Child Labor: Issues, Causes and Interventions*, 4

³⁹ United Nations Children Fund. "Education and Child labor" *Proceedings of the International Conference on Child Labor in Oslo*, October 27-30, 1997, 4

⁴⁰ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, *Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor*, 6

percent of their families income. This income may be needed to minimize the potential impact of a job loss by another member of the family or a poor harvest.⁴¹

Poor families are likely to be present oriented compared to better off families. Therefore they are more likely to discount the future, to take their children out of school and to send them to work.

Understanding poverty as a cause of child labor must include understanding that it is a consequence. Most children working full-time are unable to either attend school or to progress adequately in school. As a result they lack the human capital which allows them to compete in the labor market. This translates at the national level into a labor force which cannot compete in today's global economy where successful development will increasingly be based on skilled workers. According to a study conducted on the relationship between poverty and child labor, a parent who was a child laborer doubles the probability of the work of the child. This evidence suggests that impoverishment is transmitted from parents to children and that child labor perpetuates poverty.⁴² Furthermore, while the work of children may lead to increasing their family income, it also helps to keep adult wages low and increase unemployment rates among them.⁴³

⁴¹ Madiha Murshed, "Unraveling Child Labor and Labor Legislation," *Journal of International Affairs* 55, no. 1 (Fall 2001) : 7.

⁴² Jackline Wahba, "Child Labor and Poverty Transmission: No Room for Dreams" Economic Research Forum, Working Paper 0108, 12.

⁴³ UNICEF, *Education and Child Labor*, 4

Education

It has been estimated that 110 million primary school age children are out of school, 60 percent of them girls.⁴⁴ We may put the assumption that a very high proportion of those children who are not enrolled or have dropped out of school are engaged in some form of economic activity. In India, the Ministry of Labor documented the direct association between the dropout rate in primary education and the incidence of child labor. The State of Kerala, with a dropout rate of less than one percent, has the lowest incidence of child labor, despite its high levels of poverty. However, school enrolment and drop-out data are not fully satisfactory indicators of the magnitude of child labor, since a large number of child workers attempt to combine schooling with work. According to available statistics, between fifty and sixty percent of all child workers attend school.⁴⁵

Completion of school has been linked to increased earning power while early entry into labor contributes to continuing poverty. Based on a household survey in ten Latin American Countries, the loss of income that working children later encounter during their lives by not attending school is equivalent to between four and six times the income they would earn if they had acquired two additional years of schooling.⁴⁶

Furthermore, educated children grow-up to be educated adults who are more able to provide for their families. They make more informed and active citizens; they prove to be more productive workers who are capable of making a real contribution to the development of their country and community. They are less likely to subject their

⁴⁴ African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European bank for Reconstruction and Development, Inter-American Development Bank, IMF and World Bank, *Global Poverty Report* (July 2000).

⁴⁵ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, *Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor*, 3

⁴⁶ UNICEF, *Education and Child Labor*, 4

children to child labor, as it has been proven that school enrollment is strongly linked to the education of parents.⁴⁷ Limited access to education affects the ability of the poor to get jobs and to obtain information that could improve the quality of their lives. Therefore, education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty and child labor.

School Related Problems

Many times children seek employment simply because there is no access to schools, because of long distances, or the lack of schools. When there is access, the low quality of the education often makes attendance a waste of time for students. In poor urban and rural areas schools usually suffer from problems such as overcrowding, inadequate sanitation and apathetic teachers. As a result parents find it useless to send their children to school and prefer to keep them home to learn a profitable skill and add to the family income.⁴⁸ Furthermore, inflexible school calendars cause large numbers of children in rural areas to drop out because they are forced to be out of school to harvest or plant.

Education Expenses

The cost of education is a major factor explaining why children are not enrolled in schools. The cost of primary education per child can represent up to a third of the cash income of a typical poor family. It has been calculated that free compulsory education covers only twenty per cent of the total cost of schooling. Other costs such as books, stationary, school uniform and transportation, need to be paid by families.⁴⁹ When Malawi removed school fees in 1994, the number of students

⁴⁷ Murshed, *Unraveling Child Labor and Labor Legislation*, 8

⁴⁸ Siddiq and Patrinos, *Child Labor: Issues, Causes and Interventions*, 5

⁴⁹ UNICEF, *Education and Child Labor*, 4

enrolled in primary education increased by fifty percent from one academic year to the next.⁵⁰

For poor families, sending their children to school would not only add to their expenses but would also lead to a loss of income that would be provided to the family if the child works instead of going to school. The opportunity cost of going to school, which is the wage rate earned in the labor market by that child, may be too high to make a labor ban viable. The household decision to send their children to work is based on a comparison of the future benefits to the child or the household from the child's education relative to the opportunity cost of the child's time which is his productivity at work, or at home, in addition to the direct costs of education. For example when mothers go to work, girls are more likely to stay at home. The opportunity cost of the girls' schooling is their mothers' wages.⁵¹ Accordingly, the higher the opportunity cost of school attendance in relation to household's income the greater the need for the child to work.

Facilitating Conditions

Other secondary factors such as the family size, rural-urban migration and cultural values facilitate the occurrence of child labor. However, those factors will only have an impact on poor families, where the need for extra income is the main cause behind child labor.

Family Size

The number of family members is an important determinant of the work of the family's children in the case of poverty. The larger the family, the greater the

⁵⁰ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, *Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor*, 8

⁵¹ Jackline, Wahba, "Child Schooling and Child Labor: Evidence from Egypt." *Economic research Forum, working paper 9916*, 6

probability that children will work in order to support themselves or their families. In some cases, the older child has to work in order to allow the siblings to attend school.

Rural-Urban Migration

Several studies have established a correlation between rural-urban migration and child labor in urban areas. Families leave the severity of agricultural working conditions to search for better economic conditions. In 1988, 32 per cent of the population of the developing world lived in urban areas. It is estimated that by the year 2025 this number will reach 57 per cent. The increasing rate of internal migration together with the worsening economic trends, force children and their families into urban poverty; thus leading to the work of children in those areas.⁵²

Cultural Values & Local Customs

Local customs and cultural values are among the important factors that lead to child labor. Children are sometimes expected to play their social role or follow their parents footsteps in a particular trade in order to support themselves and their families. Many parents having themselves worked when children, tend to consider the early work of their children as a way to provide them with some skills for their future.⁵³

The parents of working children are usually illiterate or have only completed the primary stage of education. Therefore, they may not appreciate the importance of education for their children and prefer to find a profitable job in order to secure their

⁵² Siddiq and Patrinos, *Child Labor: Issues, Causes and Interventions*, 7

⁵³ International Labor Office, *Child Labor: What's to be done?*, June 1996; available from <http://www.ilo.org/>

future.⁵⁴ In Asia, there is a belief that children should work to develop a sense of responsibility and develop a career. In Pakistan, a survey on parental attitudes found that parents pushed their children to work at an early age in order to avoid the dangers of vagrancy. In Africa, child labor is considered beneficial if it contributes to the well-being of the child, family, and the community.⁵⁵

Although we cannot ignore the above mentioned factors as causes of child labor, they should not be considered among the main reasons but rather aiding conditions to the occurrence of the phenomena. Within families that are financially stable and well off, those factors should not have an impact on the work of children. No matter what the situation of the family is regarding size, cohesion, and location, if the income of the parents is enough to cover the expenses of the family, children will not be driven to work, since their income will not be needed. So as a conclusion poverty and education are the main causes behind the work of children.

Targeting poverty alleviation and the improvement of education standards is the most effective long-term solution to the problem of child labor. In the case of non-hazardous work, long-term solutions should focus on improving the conditions of working children rather than eliminating their work and depriving them of their source of income, thus adding to the hardships of their families. In this respect, immediate results will not lead to a decline in the number of working children but rather in better working conditions, and more opportunities for education and health care. Educated children will have better work opportunities as adults in the future, and as parents will understand the importance of education for their children, thus

⁵⁴ Anwar, Child Labor in Egypt.

⁵⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, *By the Sweat and Toil of Children*.

breaking up the cycle of poverty and cultural barriers. Consequently leading to less working children in future generations.

International Efforts

The following section identifies the efforts of different international organisations where child labor is directly or indirectly influenced by their development programs. Childhood is a critical stage of life and represents a transition to a productive adulthood.⁵⁶ Accordingly many governments, labor unions, syndicates, enterprises, religious bodies, NGOs and individual activists all over the world have recognized the needs to find more effective ways to combat child labor.⁵⁷ They have also realized that no institution can work alone to solve the problem of working children. Partnerships are therefore essential and a global effort is necessary in order to be able to eliminate child labor.

Child Rights and Protection

Several conventions have been issued by different international organizations aiming at protecting the rights of children and attempting to eliminate and regulate child labor.

The Minimum Age Convention 138

In 1973, the ILO initiated the Minimum Age Convention No. 138, which requires states to design and apply national policies to ensure the effective elimination of child labor and to set a minimum age for employment for countries where the elimination of child labor is difficult and requires long-term planning. The Convention

⁵⁶ UNICEF, *Education and Child Labor*, 1

sets the minimum age for employment at fifteen years. It allows countries which incur certain economic and educational problems to set the minimum age for employment at fourteen years. The Convention is also a flexible instrument by allowing employment of children in light work from thirteen years of age.

In countries that have signed the Convention, many children still work at an age below fourteen years and are still exposed to dangers and deprived from education and health care. Therefore, it is not a matter of only setting conventions, but monitoring the adequate implementation is very important in order to achieve the desired result. Also, the convention has not been ratified by many Asian countries where a large number of children begin working and the government has not taken actions to prevent their work or to keep them in school.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was drafted over ten years (1979-1989) by a working group comprising members from the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, independent experts, NGOs and UN agencies. It was adopted by the UN general assembly as an international human rights treaty on 20 November 1989, and it entered into force in September 1990. The Convention is considered the first comprehensive human rights treaty for children. It defines children as all human beings under the age of eighteen. The Convention protects children's right to survival, to develop to the fullest, protection from harmful influence, abuse and exploitation. It also sets standards in health care, education, legal, civil and social services.

⁵⁷ International Labor Organization, *A New Tool to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labor: ILO Convention 182*. (Geneva)

By signing the Convention, governments start to identify the national laws and practices that need to be brought into conformity with the convention's standards. Then by ratifying the Convention governments commit themselves to protecting and ensuring children's rights and to hold themselves accountable for this commitment before the international community.⁵⁸

The Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention 182

In June 1999, the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, No. 182, was adopted by the ILO in Geneva and is adopted by 174 countries. The convention defines the worst forms of child labor as follows

" Child labor - in its worst forms - is abuse of power. It is adults exploiting the young, naïve, innocent, weak, vulnerable and insecure for personal profit."⁵⁹

The convention included child slavery, prostitution, debt bondage, forced labor and hazardous work as part of the worst forms of child labor. It encourages governments to ban them as well as to be creative in tracing and wiping out the root causes of the problem. The convention also recognizes the danger of banning child labor without providing alternatives to their labor. Accordingly it obligates states to ensure that children removed from the worst forms of child labor be given direct assistance to ensure their removal, and rehabilitation. It mandates that removed children be ensured of access to free basic education, and vocational training wherever possible.

⁵⁸ UNICEF, *The Convention of Children Rights*; available from <http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>

⁵⁹ Definition of the worst forms of child labor according to the Convention 182.

By ratifying an ILO convention, a country becomes bound under international law to apply its provisions in national law and practice. It also implies that governments must do more than just issue new laws. Effective actions must include providing and applying penal or other sanctions, establishing monitoring mechanisms and engaging in international cooperation.⁶⁰

As mentioned earlier, child labor still exists -even in its worst forms- and in countries that have ratified the conventions. These international standards are non-binding. The laws of individual countries define children and child work differently; using different ages and types of work. The challenge is not in the promulgation of convention; the real challenge is in the global implementation and monitoring of its regulation.

Project Implementation

Although the ILO has a leading role in the fight against child labor, some of the actions required to attack its main causes such as poverty, insufficient economic growth and deficiencies in the education system fall within the framework of other international organizations such as the World Bank, UNICEF and WTO. The World Bank targets the reduction of poverty around the world which is a main cause of child labor, UNICEF has a leading role in improving the lives of children and child labor involves children, the WTO plays an important role in setting labor standards and working children are part of the labor force. Consequently, partnerships and coordination between those organizations is necessary in order to synchronize the efforts of all organizations into well organized programs that would target different groups of working children according to the scope of work of each organization. In

⁶⁰ UNICEF, *The Convention of Children Rights*

intolerable forms of child labor and to attack its root causes. The initial experience of the IPEC suggests that it is easier and less expensive to prevent child labor through attacking its causes than to eliminate their work and rehabilitate them.⁶¹ Sustainability is an important element of the IPEC's strategy. It refers to the process by which participating countries assume greater responsibilities for programs of action for the elimination of child labor. Many countries participating in IPEC are integrating child labor into their socio-economic development plans, education policies and institutional structures as well as contributing resources to child labor activities. Capacity building in this respect is crucial to improve the success of IPEC once assistance is phased out. It includes training of labor inspectors, police officers, prosecutors and judges.⁶²

Reliable national statistics and data on child labor are rare, and when available, are often incomplete. In most cases employers and households are reluctant to report when children are working. Furthermore, many governments do not collect employment data on persons below their minimum working age due to the illegality of the issue. Most government data on child labor are gathered through population censuses or periodic labor force surveys conducted by national statistical agencies. Census and labor force surveys have been found to be ineffective in measuring child labor. Since a large proportion of child labor occurs in the informal sector or within household based enterprises performed mainly as unpaid work, child labor can remain

⁶¹ ILO, *Child Labor: What's to be done?* 4

⁶² International Labor Office, *IPEC Highlights 2000*; available from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/public/imp99/report2000/draft7.htm>

largely undocumented. Also data on working and living conditions, health and safety are not included in those surveys.⁶³

The lack of reliable data hinders the setting of realistic targets and the design of national plans against child labor. The ILO's Bureau of Statistics launched the Statistical Information and Monitoring Project on Child Labor (SIMPOC) in January 1998. The project is assisting countries in the collection of reliable data on child labor and in establishing a database on institutions active in this field. Household Surveys and Rapid Assessment Surveys (RAP)⁶⁴ are methods used by the program to obtain data on child labor. With this program several countries have completed national child labor surveys and others are in the process of doing so.⁶⁵

United Nations International Children Fund

The UNICEF is the largest organization in the world dedicated to improving the lives of children, their families and communities. It works in 160 countries, guided by the UN Convention of the Right of the Child, to fulfil children's rights to health and nutrition, quality education, emergency relief, protection, immunization, water and sanitation.⁶⁶ It also aims through its country programs to promote the equal rights of women and girls. The UNICEF has emerged as a leader in the international movement against disabling, hazardous, and exploitative child labor.

⁶³ U.S Department of Labor, *By the Sweat and Toil of Children*; available from <http://www.dol.gov/ilab/public/media/reports/iclp/sweat5/appendixb.html>

⁶⁴ RAPs include interviews with a variety of key informants from local authorities, community and religious leaders, businessmen, teachers, social workers, health professionals, families and children.

⁶⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, *About Child Labor*; available from <http://www.dol.gov/>

⁶⁶ United Nations Children Fund, *What is UNICEF*; available from <http://www.unicef.org.uk>

UNICEF and Child Labor

UNICEF strategy towards solving the problem of child labor aims at providing children with education and vocational training in an attempt to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy. Also other strategies focus on providing credit to poor families as a way of raising their income, advocating compulsory education, and persuading corporations to adopt codes of conduct stating they will not employ children under conditions that violate the Convention of the Right of the Child issued by the United Nations in 1989. The UNICEF believes that raising the living standards of poor families by increasing their income would lead to a decline in the rate of working children.⁶⁷

For example, UNICEF is working in partnership with the government of Bangladesh to end child labor in the garment industry. It has helped build 140 schools for 7,000 former working children who lost their jobs when a new law banned anyone under the age of fourteen from working in a clothing factory. By providing children with education and vocational training, UNICEF seeks to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy that has trapped many people in hardship in Bangladesh.⁶⁸

The World Bank Group

The World Bank is the world's largest source of development assistance, providing loans worth nearly \$16 billion to its client countries. The World Bank's objective is to enhance the quality of life for hundreds of millions of human beings in partnership with its members countries. It promotes the adoption of policies designed to increase economic growth and reduce poverty. The Bank supports reforms, gives

⁶⁷ Dr. Adel Azer, Interview by Author, 20 May 2000, Social Research Center, Cairo.

loans, undertakes studies and research, and coordinates assistance with donors, governments, with NGOs and with the private sector.⁶⁹ It is currently working in more than 100 developing countries in order to improve living standards and eliminate the worst forms of poverty.

The Bank started recently to devote some efforts to the problem of child labor, which are consistent with its focus on development and poverty alleviation. It has committed itself to help reduce child labor through its ongoing poverty reduction efforts in its member countries by integrating child labor considerations into its programs. According to the World Bank, missteps in trying to solve the problem of child labor may only lead to worsening the situation of those children. Solutions are needed to reach beyond conventional thinking. For example, although improving primary education is a key, schools should be adapted to accommodate children who otherwise could not attend and to increase real access by reducing the cost borne by families when their children go to school.

The Global Child Labor Program was established in May 1998, and became the focal point for the Bank's child labor activities, projects and policies. The program supports various child labor projects including research and analyses, pilot studies, and child labor reduction evaluations.⁷⁰ Furthermore, The World Bank can help in several ways within its focus on development and poverty reduction. In its lending activities the Bank has started to design new projects aiming at reducing the harmful effects of child work by supplying services to working children and income

⁶⁸ United Nations Children Fund, *UNICEF calls for an end to child labor*; available from <http://www.unicefusa.org/issues97/jan97/labor.html>

⁶⁹ The World Bank, *The World Bank and its Beginnings*; available from <http://www.worldbank.org>

⁷⁰ The World bank, *The Global Child Labor Program and Regional Initiatives*; available from <http://wbln0018.worldbank.org>

generating opportunities to their parents. A start has been made in an urban Sector Development project in Brazil. Also the Bank has started to emphasize child labor issues in its other projects. For example, in education projects, increase the flexibility of school hours in order to accommodate working children. Some signs of progress are already implemented in existing projects in India. Furthermore, in some projects in South Africa child labor concerns have been introduced in social assessments.

The Bank has acknowledged that child labor was used in its projects and thus has instructed task managers to identify and report any cases of children working on Bank-financed projects.⁷¹ Furthermore, the Bank created a staff position specifically to deal with the issue of child labor in the course of bank lending. It also started to cooperate with governments and NGOs to remove children from those projects, rehabilitate them and provide them with education. The silk industry in India which was heavily supported by the World Bank, employed many bonded child laborers. As a result the Bank included NGO monitoring of projects for child labor as a condition of support on future projects.⁷²

World Trade Organization

The General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs

The General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) was signed by twenty three countries and was adopted in 1948. It is a multilateral agreement that encompasses mutual rights and obligations that are binding among the contracting parties and aims at liberalizing international trade and relations. In April 1994, the

⁷¹ The World Bank, *Child Labor: Issues and Directions for the World Bank*; available from <http://www.worldbank.org/HDNet/>. One of the initiatives included in this paper is the establishment of the Global Child Labor Program.

⁷² Human Rights Watch, *Child Labor*; available from <http://www.humanrightswatch.org/hrw/about/projects/crd/child-labor.htm>

Final Act of the Uruguay Round was signed in Morocco and in January 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) replaced the GATT as the basis for trade relations among its members⁷³. It became the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations.

Trade Liberalization and Labor Standards

For several years the issue of trade and labor standards has been the subject of intense debate among WTO member governments. At the Ministerial Conference of the GATT held in Marrakesh in April 1994, the issue of trade and labor standards was discussed. However there was no consensus among member governments and thus no basis for agreement on the issue. At the 1996 Singapore Ministerial Conference, the ILO was defined as the organization that should deal with labor standards. Ministers confirmed their support for the work of the ILO in this field and concluded that the WTO and ILO would continue to collaborate on this issue. Existing collaboration between the WTO and ILO includes participation of the WTO in meetings of the ILO bodies, the exchange of documentation and informal cooperation between the ILO and WTO secretariat.⁷⁴

As an answer to the labor and trade debate that was raised during the Singapore Ministerial Conference in 1996, the Director-General argued in his speech that there is no contradiction between labor and trade. Open economies have delivered more job opportunities and security to people. Real income increases, would lead to

⁷³ Rasha El Salawi, *Egypt Financial Liberalization and the General Agreement of Trade in Services* (Cairo: American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt, Business Studies and Analysis Center, 1998)

⁷⁴ World Trade Organization, *Trade and Labor Standards Subject of Intense Debate*; available from <http://www.wto.org/wto/minist1/18lab-e.htm>

raising labor standards and reducing poverty. On the other hand countries that remain closed, remain poor and underdeveloped.

" Trade is about jobs and income, taxable income, to pay for our dreams of better health care and better education."⁷⁵

Trade Sanctions and Consumer boycotts

Developed countries are trying to enforce the application of labor standards in order to eliminate child labor.⁷⁶ Some of the governments in Europe and North America believe that the issue of labor standards must be taken up by the WTO and that trade should be included in labor standard policies. These governments argue that rights such as the elimination of discrimination in the workplace and the elimination of workplace abuse including forced labor and child labor are matters for consideration in the WTO. They also argue that WTO rules would provide an incentive for member nations to improve their workplace conditions. However, many developing countries believe that the issue of labor standards does not belong in the WTO. They argue that bringing labor standards into the WTO undermines the comparative advantage of lower-wage developing countries. They also argue that any sanctions imposed against countries with lower labor standards would lead to an increase in poverty and would thus delay improvements in workplace standards.⁷⁷

" Imposing trade sanctions - making developing countries even poorer - will not stop children being put to work, or lift the living standards of their families. Just the opposite. Poverty not trade, is the main cause of unacceptable working conditions and environmental degradation. And the answer to poverty is more trade and business not less. As living standards improve, so does education, health, the environment and labor standards."⁷⁸

⁷⁵ "Labor Issue is 'False Debate', Obscures Underlying Consensus, WTO Chief Mike Moore Tells Unions"; Press Release, Press/152, 28 November 1999; available from <http://www.wto.org/search97/s97.cgi...sultStart%3DI%26ResultCount%3D50?hlhl0>

⁷⁶ Anwar, Child Labor in Egypt

⁷⁷ "Labor Issue is False Debate, Obscures Underlying Consensus.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

"Poverty, not trade, is the main cause of bad working conditions, and it must be met by expanding commerce, not imposing sanctions." Those are the words of the WTO Director-General Mike Moore before the Seattle WTO Third Ministerial Conference⁷⁹.

Threats of consumer boycotts and trade sanctions, can have negative consequences. In Bangladesh in 1993, thousands of child workers have been dismissed as a response to international pressure. The children were aged eleven to fifteen years and were hired to serve as helpers in the garment industry. They worked twelve to fourteen hours per day to sew buttons, cut threads, and carry cloth from station to station. Most of those children went to work in worse jobs. Girls found jobs in domestic labour and boys mostly turned to self-employment. Subsequent studies found that none of the children discharged ended up in school, that many ended up on the street in prostitution or crime, and the rest were working in worse conditions and for less pay. A study comprising household surveys, interviews with working children and in depth interviews with children working in the garment industry concluded that it is difficult for children to enter into formal schooling after being dismissed from their work in the garment factory. They tend to move into less regulated and less safe occupations to compensate for their lost income.⁸⁰ Similar situations of children working in the clothing industry may be found in Lesotho, Guatemala, Honduras, Portugal and Morocco. There was no mention of any trade sanctions on those countries to eliminate child labor in their garment industry.

⁷⁹ Mike Moore was addressing the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) conference on "Globalisation and Workers' Rights" in Seattle, on the eve of the WTO's Third Ministerial Conference which was held in Seattle on 30 November 1999.

⁸⁰ ILO, *Economic Incentives for Children and Families to Eliminate or Reduce Child Labor*, 7

According to the ILO labor standards should not be used for trade purposes and the comparative advantage of any country should not be called into question where trade is concerned. Thus the ILO does not sponsor limiting imports or imposing sanctions on any exports to press countries to conform to child labor conventions.⁸¹

The trade sanctions approach is very difficult to monitor. Employers' assurances that child labor is not used in their factories or workplaces are worthless without effective monitoring mechanisms. Also boycotts targeting a particular industry have very small impact, since only five percent of child laborers work in export industries. Trade sanctions alone cannot help reduce the number of working children. Cooperation between the WTO, other international organizations and governments is necessary in order to avoid pushing children into the worst jobs of the informal sector.

In Bangladesh, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in 1995 by the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, UNICEF and the ILO. The agreement included the commitment to stop the hiring of under-age children, the removal of children under fourteen from garment factories and their placement in appropriate education programs with monthly stipend. The program included the enrollment of children below fourteen years in schools, the provision of a stipend, health care and food supplements. Also, a qualified family member is offered a job in the factory in their place.⁸² Monitoring teams make unannounced visits to factories and schools, reporting violations to a steering committee for action.

⁸¹ Mr. Tim De Meyer, Legal Officer, ILO/IPEC, written at the National Tripartite Seminar to Promote Ratification of the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention 182, 1999, IPEC - ILO Cairo Office.

⁸² UNICEF, *Education and Child Labor*, 17

This MOU was signed after the dismissals of child workers under the threat of the implementation of the U.S. Harkin Bill, which makes the United States stop importing products made by children. This process of dismissing children did not result in increased numbers of children in school as hoped, but in their seeking work in the informal sector. It also proved that banning the work of children is counter-productive if wages of adult workers in the family does not increase to cover the loss of income of the working child.

As of September 1996, 130 MOU schools for former child workers have opened, serving nearly 2300 children. The ILO monitoring teams continue to find some underage workers that were either missed by the original surveys or are new hires. Furthermore, the schools are not filled. Unless the industry is fully committed to the MOU, its potential success may remain unrealized.⁸³

Private Sector and Community Participation

Despite the undeniable and important efforts of different governments and international organizations in their fight against child labor, the contribution of other actors is crucial. Social mobilization of all sectors of civil society including employers, NGOs, community leaders, media, and families is very crucial to combat child labor and to reach all segments of working children. No organization can solve the child labor problem on its own. The government, NGOs, the public and the private sectors must work in complementary and cooperative ways in order to achieve the best results.

⁸³ U.S. Department of Labor, *The Apparel Industry and Codes of Conduct: A Solution to the International Child Labor Problem*; available from www.dol.gov/dol/ilab/public/media/reports/iclp/apparel/lc.htm

International organizations target the most abusive forms of child labor as well as certain industries where child labor is widespread. Some groups of working children are completely left out in this process, simply because they do not belong to the priority lists of international organizations. This is where the role of the private sector, NGOs, and individuals would make a difference and give those children a chance for a better life.

Highlighting the role of the private sector and individuals in this section does not in any way decrease the importance of other actors such as the media and NGOs. The purpose is to emphasize the importance of the social role of private enterprises and individuals as a mean of helping to solve social problems including the problem of child labor.

The role of small and medium business enterprises as well as individual participation at the community level is of great importance in combating child labor. Individual enterprises may contribute in this field in several ways. Enterprises should adhere to the provisions of national laws which determine the conditions under which employers can make use of children. They should ensure that children are kept away from any hazardous work and that their working hours allow them to attend school.⁸⁴ Adhering to the provisions of national laws is only one step in the contribution of the private sector to the problem of child labor. Other important and more effective initiatives may be used by private companies to target the root causes of child labor. To date some programs have been successful in getting employers of private business to adjust working hours so that children would be able to attend school, or to provide schooling opportunities in the place of work. A recent success story in Morocco

⁸⁴ ILO, *Child Labor: What's to be done?*, 7

illustrates progress in this area. In July 1997, an important carpet factory⁸⁵ launched a series of activities for its child workers. The owners decided to provide basic education, health care and other social services to all children below the age of fourteen. The children attended school for three hours a day without any deductions of their salaries. For those over fourteen, literacy classes were held for fifteen hours a week.⁸⁶ By doing that, children maintained their work which is an important source of income for them and their families; and at the same time were able to get the basic education required for having better job opportunities in the future. Certainly we assume here that the job is not in any way harmful to the children health and that the conditions they are working in are appropriate. This is the type of efforts that are needed in order to give some working children a better chance.

Charity is a very significant procedure by which the large private enterprises may contribute to solve social problems. It may take several forms such as providing financial assistance to help build schools and hospitals or targeting remote and poor areas. Providing financial support to low wage employees in order to help them educate their children may help to decrease the rates of school dropouts. Raising charity campaigns to provide clothes, toys, schoolbooks and stationary to working children within one company or to working children in several companies may help in decreasing the hardship of their families. Companies may dedicate a certain percentage of their income to help working children pay the unaffordable cost of schools or to get the health care that they usually lack because of their families low income.

⁸⁵ Name of the factory was not mentioned in the study.

⁸⁶ UNICEF, *Education and Child Labor*, 12

In small enterprises where child labor is widespread, the initiative of the employer is very crucial. Literacy classes and minor health care procedures may be arranged using volunteers from the surrounding community. This experience was successful in a small carpentry workshop in a poor urban area in Cairo where the employer arranged for literacy classes for his adult and child workers, with his wife volunteering to become the teacher. Few of the workers attended the classes at the beginning, then when they started to witness the success of the classes all the illiterate workers joined in.⁸⁷ However, this experience has succeeded because the owner of the carpentry shop and his wife belonged to well educated and highly cultured families where the carpentry business was hereditary. It is difficult to apply the same experience to similar craft shops due to the lack of awareness and interest. At this level it is the role of NGOs to provide the awareness and allocate the funds in order to raise the interest of the employers.

On the other hand this successful experience may be easily applicable to other types of working children. Domestic workers in households (mainly girls), the porter's children in a building may be able to attend literacy classes and to receive health care if individuals of the building or in the house where they work only take the initiative of supporting such activities.

CONCLUSION

The problem of child labor occupies a good proportion of the agenda of many international organizations. Conventions, and international laws are issued in order to prevent the worst forms of child labor. Projects are implemented through different international agencies in order to eliminate child labor. However, the problem is still persistent, especially in poor countries.

⁸⁷ Mr. Khaled El Badry, Interview by author, 25 August 2000, Ein El Seira, Cairo.

During the past two decades, international organizations such as the United Nations and the ILO initiated many conventions prohibiting the work of children. However, the ratification of those conventions by different countries is optional. Without this ratification countries are not bound to commit themselves to the regulation set by the conventions. Furthermore, although many countries have ratified the conventions, violations still exist and children are still working.

The ILO and the UNICEF have implemented many projects to help working children in different industries by providing education, health care and income generating programs to their families. They both target sectors such as textile, leather, cotton, and carpet industries where child labor is widespread. Other hidden forms of the work of children are left out, either because they are undetected or because the number of children working is not very big. Consequently, they are not on the priority list of any of the organizations.

Due to the nature of the World Bank's mission in development and poverty alleviation, combating child labor is not a priority of the Bank's activities. However, due to the existence of working children in some of the bank's financed projects, it started to put child labor on its agenda. The effort dedicated is still in the form of policy recommendations. However, if the role of the World Bank is intensified, it would have an important impact since the main mission of the Bank is poverty alleviation.

The World Trade Organization's role is very debatable in this issue. Imposing sanctions on countries that employ children in export industries can affect children negatively such as in the case of Bangladesh. Prohibition by laws and sanctions will not alone solve the problem of child labor. In fact it may worsen the situation. Before

prohibiting child labor in certain industries, governments in coordination with international organizations and NGOs must provide income-generating alternatives to the families of the dismissed child. Otherwise, those children will end up working in similar or worse conditions.

As a conclusion, the complete elimination of child labor in hazardous industries and occupations is currently the main focus of international organizations and governments. However, the efforts are not well synchronized in order to avoid the transfer of children from one dangerous occupation to another and to provide for the lost income, either by arranging another part-time job to the dismissed child or by providing a job to an adult of his family. A child's withdrawal from work must be accompanied by certain supporting measures such as education, training, health care and nutrition. In case another job is provided to the child, certain measures should be taken into consideration in order to ensure the rehabilitation of the child and his admission into good literacy classes.

Role of individuals and the Private sector

Although the contribution of individuals and the private sector is small compared to what governments and international organizations may do, Their role is still significant. They can fill the gap rising within the role of international organizations by reaching some working children that may not be targeted by other actors in the field. At this level, not only the abused, the underaged or children working in hazardous conditions, who are on the top priority lists of international organizations will be targeted. Children working in normal conditions, in the informal sector, in houses and in other jobs that may not be detected by international organizations will be able to benefit from this assistance. Also, projects implemented by individuals and the private sector will not face any sustainability problems,

especially the lack of funds, due to the small size of the project and the willingness of people to help. Many people are keen to help, but they just need the awareness, initiative and the availability of a project.

It should also be considered that the contribution of individuals and the private sector in the child labor problem can only take the form of improvement in the current working conditions of children and in providing the chance of education and health care to those children. This is only a step towards breaking the cycle of poverty and child labor for future generations.

The involvement of the private sector in social problems in general requires awareness programs in order to produce the initiatives, and incentives in order to encourage this initiative. The replicability of certain projects is also questionable due to the different jobs that children may work in, and the fact that children may work on individual basis in domestic chores, and in small workshops. Such cases, would require the involvement of an NGO to help raise the interest of the surrounding community.

Chapter Two

Child Labor in Egypt

The following chapter provides an overview of the child labor problem in Egypt. It highlights the causes of the problem and the characteristics of child labor, concluding that Egypt represents a traditional case as described in the previous chapter regarding the characteristics and causes of the child labor problem. It also identifies the importance of the role of national and international organisations as well as the importance of the role of the private sector and social mobilization in solving the problem of child labor in Egypt.

Magnitude of the Problem

The lack of correct and accurate data has made it very difficult to determine correctly the number of working children in the country, although, several attempts have been made in this respect. A survey conducted by the Social Research Center at the American University in Cairo in 1996 revealed that the number of working children aged six to fourteen years reached 1.4 million children.¹ The Population Council in Egypt reports that one third of the adolescents aged ten to nineteen is involved in economic activities, with more than half below the age of fifteen.² A local newspaper estimated the number of working children to be approximately one million children in 1999. It also highlighted a decline of the rate of child labor from 11.8 percent of the labor force in 1960 to 2.7 percent in 1993 (approximately 450,000

¹ Egyptian Federation of Industries, *Towards integrated policies to solve the problem of child labor* (Cairo: El Ahram El Iktessadi, 1999)
This booklet is the outcome of series of round table discussions on child labor issues with member employers.

² Population Council, Regional Office for West Asia & North Africa, *Transitions to adulthood: A National Survey of adolescents in Egypt* (Cairo, 1999)

children)³. However, there was no mention of the reasons behind the decline during the period 1960-1993 and the more than doubling of the rate of child labor during the period 1993-1999. The sharp drop in the prevalence of child labor is consistent with the results of the Labor Force Sample Surveys (LFSS)⁴ which estimated the percentage of child labor within the total labor force to reach 10.8 percent in 1984 (1.4 million) compared to only two percent in 1995 (354 thousands). However, following the 1988 LFSS⁵ a less detailed approach was adopted to measure child labor, and there was no extensive research on the issue, whereby it is likely that the 1990's surveys have underestimated the occurrence of child labor. Another explanation that may support the reduction in child labor during the period 1984 to 1995 -however, not the high reduction mentioned above- is the increase in school enrollement rates due to the massive school building campaign in rural areas.⁶ Enrollement rates in compulsory and secondary education increased from 42% in 1960 to 80.9% in 1996/97.⁷

CAPMAS is considered the comprehensive source of all social and economic data derived from all sectors of the economy in Egypt. It is considered a very reliable and comprehensive source of data as it gathers its data from the different Ministries

³ El Ahran Newspaper (Cairo), 20 July 1999.

⁴ The Labor Force Sample Surveys are conducted by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). They are considered the main source of a series of data on employment in Egypt.

⁵ The 1988 LFSS is a deep measurement of employment conditions at a high level of quality. Data collection of the survey extended for two months, October-November 1988. The survey focused on employment conditions including: basic characteristics, labor mobility, employment of women and children, earnings and return migrants.

⁶ Ragui, Asaad, Deborah Levison and Nadia Zibani, "The Effect of Child Labor on School Enrollement in Egypt," *Proceedings of the Workshop on the Analysis of Poverty and its Determinants in the MENA Region*. Held in Sanaa, Yemen 31-1 July-August 2001.

⁷ Heba, Nassar *Al Masoulia Al Igtemaeya Leketaa Al Amal Al Khas* (The Social Role of the Private Sector) (Center for Economic and Financial Research and Studies, Cairo University, Cairo, March 2000), 6

and specialised agencies. Despite the importance of determining the magnitude of the problem of child labor in Egypt, CAPMAS did not publish any updated statistics regarding child labor due -as they mentioned- to the illegality of the issue.

The Ministry of Manpower is responsible for labor regulation protection in Egypt. Therefore it is considered responsible for the protection of women in general and working women in particular as well as working children. According to the Ministry of Manpower, the official number of illegal working children currently reaches 1.4 million children.⁸ This is the same figure mentioned by the survey conducted by the SRC in 1996, thereby confirming the underestimation of the magnitude of child labor in the LFSS surveys during the 1990's.

The controversy of the data over the magnitude of child labor in Egypt implies the importance of national statistical surveys that would provide an accurate and broad picture of the child labor situation. However, providing accurate statistics in Egypt is a very challenging task considering the large informal sector ranging from 30-50 per cent of economic activities.⁹ Reliable and accurate data are necessary for effective policy and program development.

School Enrollment and Drop-out Rates

In the absence of good data on child labor, some scholars suggest the use of other determinants such as the drop-out and enrollement rates in schools. First of all, it should be mentioned that children aged up to fifteen years old represent 37.5 percent of the total population in Egypt, out of which 24.4 percent are less than ten

⁸ Nadia El Gazare, interview by author, 23 April 2000, Ministry of Manpower and Migration, Cairo.

⁹ EFG-Hermes, *Egypt Country Report*, (May 2000), 12

years old.¹⁰ With high children rate in the population and high poverty levels, the provision of social services and safety nets are crucial through government intervention and encouragement of the participation of NGOs and the private sector. Second, the issue of combining education and work is controversial. The 1988 LFSS revealed that 35.4 percent of working children combine work and study, other recent studies revealed that the majority of children do not combine work with education, especially in urban areas and among boys. In rural areas children work and go to school due to the seasonality and flexibility of work, especially in family business. The Egypt Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 1996 (EMICS)¹¹ indicated that very few children combine education and work in urban areas (1.6 percent of children six to fourteen years, with no gender differences. However, the survey indicates that a higher percentage of children manage to combine education and work in rural areas (6.2 percent of children six to fourteen years), with a higher percentage for boys.¹² Despite the controversy on the magnitude of children combining school and work, all surveys revealed that the phenomenon is more prevalent in rural areas due to the higher rate of child labor and the seasonality of the work they engage in.

Despite the fact that school entry age is six years, only forty one percent of children are enrolled at that age for the school year 1996/97. The rate increases to eighty five percent among seven year olds and stabilizes at a peak of ninety percent in the age group of eight to eleven years. Enrollement rates decline significantly after the

¹⁰ CAPMAS, Population Census, (February 2002)

¹¹ Egypt Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey EMICS 1996) was conducted in urban and rural areas of twenty one governorates. Topics included indicators of child well-being such as breast-feeding, diarrhoea, respiratory infection, school enrollement, deprivation from education and child labor.

¹² The American University in Cairo, Social research Center, *Working Children in Egypt*; available from <http://www.aucegypt.edu/academic/src/childlabor/education.htm>

age of eleven, reaching seventy three percent at the age of fourteen.¹³ Boys enrollement rates in primary education increased by 14.7% during the period 1990/91 and 1996/97. As for girls enrollement rates increased by 63.7% during the same period. This increase is the result of the massive education campaigns in rural areas during this period. Both sexes witnessed a small decline in enrollement rates of 3.3% for boys and 1.6% for girls during the period 1996/97 and 1998/99.¹⁴ According to a survey conducted in 1997¹⁵, individuals fifteen years of age and older indicated that the reasons for never attending school were either financial reasons or the lack of desire to attend school. Therefore, it is not work that prevents school enrollement, but is rather the consequence of not attending school.

Having studied the available data, enrollement rates would not provide a very precise indication on the magnitude of child labor. First of all, even with the lowest percentage of children combining work and education (6.2 percent), there will be nearly 90,000 children combining both activities if we consider the recent estimates of child labor (1.4 million children). Second, statistics on the prevalence of child labor in Egypt indicate a slight increase from 1.3 million in 1988 to a current estimate of 1.4 million, therefore, the increase in enrollement rates was not accompanied by a decline in child labor, thus school enrollement would not necessarily prevent the work of children, especially when child labor is mostly prevalent in rural areas when work is seasonal.

¹³ Population Council, *Transitions to Adulthood A National Survey of Egyptian Adolescents*, 62.

¹⁴ CAPMAS.

¹⁵ The Egyptian Integrated Household Survey (EIHS) 1997 was carried out by the International Food Policy Research Institute in coordination, the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation and the Ministry of Trade and Supply.

Many children drop-out of school because of financial reasons or because they failed in school. Therefore, work is not the cause behind dropping out of school but is rather a consequence. Drop-out rates in general primary education declined from 2.9 percent in 1990/91 to 0.94 percent in 1996/97 for boys and from 6.5 percent to 0.54 percent for girls. In general preparatory education drop-out rates reached 2.6 percent in 1996/97 for boys and two percent for girls.¹⁶ The proportion of drop-outs increases with age and educational attainment coinciding with the decline of enrollement rates after the age of eleven as mentioned earlier. This phenomenon may explain the fact that some children work in order to go to school, however, they would eventually drop-out due to the massive effort required to achieve both tasks. Furthermore, the above findings coincide with the results of the LFSS in 1988 and the ELMS in 1998 which indicated that higher rates of children work among those aged twelve to fourteen as compared to children aged six to eleven.

Although enrollement rates increased and drop-out rates declined since 1988, child labor slightly increased during the same period. Accordingly both measures would not be highly effective in providing an indication of the extent of child labor in Egypt. However, they both reveal that work is not the cause of not attending school but is rather a consequence, ending up in perpetuating poverty and child labor.

Characteristics of Child Labor

Type of Work

Since child employment in Egypt is illegal, it is difficult to protect them from exploitation and diverse forms of oppression.¹⁷ Working children do not benefit from

¹⁶ CAPMAS

¹⁷ Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, ed., *Working Children in Cairo: Case Studies*. Children in the Muslim Middle East. Eftenan Farag (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 239-249

any social or health insurance as a result of the illegality of their work. Also according to the 1988 CAPMAS survey ninety nine percent of the children do not have any work identification cards. According to the Population Council National Surveys in Egypt, half of all working adolescents work seven or more hours per day, also two-fifths of working adolescents work seven days per week.¹⁸

Children who attempt to combine schooling with work are faced with a severe handicap, since above a certain threshold, work has a detrimental effect on children's ability to learn. According to the 1988 LFSS, 35.5 percent of working children combine work and study. Furthermore, working children are usually a more manageable workforce, are less aware of their rights, are paid less than adult workers –according to the 1988 LFSS forty four percent of working children work without pay- and do not receive any social security benefits that adult workers are entitled to.

The phenomenon of child labor is more prevalent in rural areas where children are mostly employed in agriculture. According to the LFSS 1988, 15.6 percent of working children are in rural areas compared to only 5.3% in urban areas. The 1998 Labor Market Survey (ELMS)¹⁹ revealed that 8.7 percent of working children are in rural areas compared to only 2.5 percent in urban areas. It is important to take into account that the percentage of children involvement in agriculture varies over the year due to the seasonality of the work.²⁰

While in rural areas eighty seven percent of the working children work in agriculture, more than seventy percent of the children in urban centers work in crafts

¹⁸ Population Council, *Transitions to adulthood*.

¹⁹ The Egyptian Labor market Survey 1998 was conducted by CAPMAS in collaboration with the Economic research Forum. Data collected in LFSS 1988 was used as a baseline for the study. The survey aimed to assess the major changes in labor market conditions during the period 1988-1998.

²⁰ The American university in Cairo, *Working Children in Egypt*.

and industries such as shops, workshops and factories, or as servants in houses -where they are insulted and exposed to moral hazards and violence (mainly girls)- and street vendors. They also work in leather tanneries, the carpet industry, and in the collection, transportation and the recycling of wastes where they are exposed to respiratory and skin diseases. More precisely they work in the private sector since public sector enterprises do not employ children under the minimum age in compliance with the law.²¹

The distribution of working children among the different sectors is approximately as follows: 77 per cent in agriculture, 15 per cent in industry, 6 per cent in commerce, and 2 per cent in other services.²² According to a study conducted on the informal sector in Cairo, working children represent 10 percent of the labor force and according to another study conducted in an industrial area in Cairo, children working in workshops represent nearly twenty-five percent of the labor force in the area under study.²³

As for other types of child labor, child prostitution, trafficking and bonded labor is rare in Egypt due to religious and traditional beliefs. Also there is no evidence of any underage recruitment into the armed forces.

²¹ Ahmed Abdullah and others, eds. , *Child Labor in Egypt: An Overview and an Explanatory Study of the Child Labor Triangle of Misr Al-Qadeema (Old Cairo)* (Al-Jeel Center for Youth and Social Studies, 1995)

²² Mr. Tim De Meyer, Legal Officer, ILO/IPEC.

²³ Anwar, *Child Labor in Egypt*. The studies mentioned are the following:
Mashhour, Amira and Alia El Mahdi *The Informal Sector: Case Study in Cairo* The National Center for Social and Criminological Research (Cairo, 1994, pp.146)
Azer, *Adel Training and Welfare of Working Children in Shubral El Kheima, Pre-project Survey* (Cairo, NCSCR and ILO, 1993)

Apprenticeships

Children as young as seven or eight years old work as apprentices in carpet workshops and in the leather industry where conditions are hazardous. They are often only paid when the employer sees fit and when he does the pay is very low. It is accepted by the child's family as a way of learning a skill. Such situations are overlooked by labor inspectors.²⁴ In carpet factories children between the ages of ten and fourteen work a full day for ten hours in violation of Egypt's labor laws. Their wages varied between twenty to sixty dollars. Young girls start as trainees at the age of seven or eight and their products are not sold. By the age of ten they start working on professional looms.²⁵ Parents often see it as a useful activity that will increase the income of the household and train the child in skills that are useful for future employment opportunities.²⁶

Child Labor in the Cotton Industry

Over one million children in the age bracket of seven and twelve years are hired by the agricultural cooperatives to take part in the cotton pest management each year. The children's task is to aid in controlling cotton leafworm infestations by manually removing and destroying infected portions of leaves. Those children work eleven hours a day, seven days a week thus violating the limits set by the Egyptian child law. They also face routine beatings by their foremen whenever a child was perceived to be slowing down or overlooking leaves, as well as exposure to the dangers of heat and pesticides thus violating Egypt's obligations under the Convention

²⁴ U.S. Department of Labor, *By the Sweat and Toil of Children*

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Madiha, Murshed "Unravelling Child Labor and Labor Legislation." *Journal of International Affairs* 55, no.1 (fall 2001) : 5

of the Right of the Child which was ratified in 1990 as well as the ILO convention 182.²⁷

Hand-Knotted Carpets

Children between the ages of ten and fourteen work on looms in the hand-knotted carpets factories. Young girls start as trainees at the age of seven for nearly two years, then they work on practice looms for another year or two and their products are not sold. By the time the girls are ten or eleven they start to work on professional looms. The children reported that their wages are approximately \$20 per month when they first start, rising to \$60 or more per month. They also reported that some of them work from eight o'clock in the morning to six o'clock at night in violation with Egypt's labor law.²⁸

Leather Tanning Industry

Child labor is concentrated in small enterprises that produce for domestic consumption. They perform cleaning, preparing material, and packaging. The average child working in this industry was 11.7 years and worked 12.8 hours per day.²⁹ A study conducted on the working children in a leather tannery in Masr El Qadima revealed that most children work six days a week, and rarely do they receive annual paid or unpaid leaves. The average number of hours they work reaches seven to nine hours per day. Also one third of the children work overtime after seven o'clock at night.

²⁷ Human Rights Watch, *Underage and Unprotected: Child Labor in Egypt's Cotton Fields* (January 2001), available from <http://www.hrw/reports/2001/egypt/Egypt01.html>

²⁸ U.S. Department of Labor, *Egypt Country Profile*; available from <http://www.dol/ilab/public/media/reports/iclp/sweat/egypt.htm>

²⁹ U.S. Department of Labor, *Egypt, Country Profile*.

Textiles Industry

Children under the age of fifteen worked in cleaning, carrying tools around the factory and as attendants to the weaving machines. Most of them work in excess of twelve hours per day and earn an average of \$8 per month. In factories that work on a shift system, some children work the night shift in violation of the Egyptian labor law which prohibits the work of children after seven o'clock at night.³⁰

Causes of Child Labor in Egypt

A study conducted on Child Labor in Cairo in 1991³¹, distinguished between the causal factors of the work of children which are as previously mentioned in Chapter I poverty and education and the factors that are not necessarily a cause of child labor but that may facilitate and increase the probability of the entrance of children into the labor force.³² The survey also revealed that educational failure and the desire to learn a profession were the main causes of work for boys. For girls, economic factors were the most important causes of work, followed by the contribution to the family income. As for parents they stated the burden of school expenses and the relevance of the education system in providing their children with the experience and training needed for their future.³³

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Azer and Ramzy, *Child Labor in Egypt*.

³² Egyptian Federation of Industries, *Towards complete strategies to solve the problem of child labor*.

³³ American University in Cairo, *Working Children in Egypt*

Causal Factors

Poverty

According to the Ministry of Social Affairs, the number of families whose monthly income is less than LE100 reaches 6.9 million families and the number of families whose yearly income is only LE500 reaches nearly 4 million families³⁴. One fourth of the population of Egypt lives below the poverty line and another twenty per cent are moderately poor.³⁵ Due to this high level of poverty in both urban and rural Egypt, some children below working age have to bear part of the load of poverty by having to work and are sometimes the main providers of income in their families.

According to the LFSS conducted in 1988, the rate of child labor increases among low income families. Most of the working children belong to poor families where the fathers work in agriculture, crafts or services. Despite cultural beliefs, girls in poor families are driven to work especially as domestic servants in urban areas in order to support their families especially after the death or disability of the father.³⁶ Moreover, the study revealed that eighty seven percent of waged child labor belong to households earning less than LE4000 annually and fifty percent to households earning less than LE2000 annually. Research indicates that poor families depend heavily on their children's income. The Child Labor Survey conducted in 1991

³⁴ Adel, Azer, *Tawzif El Bahth Al Elmi: Tagroba fi Magal Moalagat Zaherat Amalet El Atfal* (Using Scientific Research: An attempt to Solve Child Labor Issues) 1998.

³⁵ Aida, Seif El Dawla, *Traps for Democracy*, National reports 2000: Egypt; available from http://www.socwatch.org.uy/2000/eng/nationalreports/egypt_eng.html. The moderately poor are defined as those who are just above the poverty line and at risk of falling below it.

³⁶ Ishac Sarwat, *Towards a Strategic View bfor the development of Children in the Social Context* (Cairo: 1999)

indicated that a working child's income represents approximately 23 percent of the family's income.³⁷ Thus there is no doubt that poverty is a major cause of child labor.³⁸

Moreover, Another study on the effect of child labor on school enrollement in Egypt concludes that wealth has a negative effect on working and not going to school in urban areas for both boys and girls. However, in rural areas wealth does not have a strong negative effect on working and not going to school for boys but has a strong effect on girls. The poorest rural girls are those that are most at risk of working and not attending school. These results provide strong evidences that school dropout and child labor are highly related to poverty.³⁹

Another related determinant of poverty in Egypt is the high unemployment rate reaching nearly eleven percent. This rate has driven increasing numbers of workers into the informal sector where wages are low and labor laws are not enforced thus perpetuating poverty and encouraging child labor.

Education

It has been proven that child labor increases with age and that school participation declines with age.⁴⁰ The following is an explanation of the reasons behind the latter statement.

Cost of Education

Although education is free of charge in all governmental schools, educational expenses are high due to other imposed fees such as extra services fees, insurance

³⁷ American University in Cairo, *Working Children in Egypt*.

³⁸ Jackline Wahba, *Child Schooling and Child Labor: Evidence from Egypt*, 6.

³⁹ Ragui, Levison and Zibani, *The Effect of Child Work on School Enrollement in Egypt*.

⁴⁰ Jackline Wahba, *Child Schooling and Child Labor: Evidence from Egypt*.

deposits for the use of school furniture and equipment and fees for after school enforcement lessons, uniforms, supplies and transportation. As a result educating children is a burden for some poor families; thus, leading to an increase in the drop-out rate and child labor. It was estimated that forty three percent of children from the lowest socioeconomic stratum of the population are out of school compared to seventeen percent from the highest stratum.⁴¹

The average yearly spending on primary education is LE250 representing 13-35 percent of the income of the poor families and is thus considered very high. Furthermore, due to the difficult curriculums and low qualifications of teachers in governmental schools, children have to take private lessons and buy additional books thus incurring extra high costs.⁴²

For many poor families in Egypt, sending their children to school does not only burden the family with expenses but also represents a lost income for the family.

The Education System

Poor scholastic performance is an important reason for dropping out. This holds among the two sexes, regardless of the social and economic status of the household of the student. According to a study conducted on the relationship between work and school enrollment, it has been concluded that work has no direct effect on schooling for boys, but has a strong effect for girls. The study suggests that the direction of the causality is mainly from school to work, i.e. boys who fail in school end up going to work.⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid. 72

⁴² Adel Azer, *Child Labor in Egypt*

⁴³ Rragui, Levison and Zibani, *The Effect of Child Work on School Enrollement in Egypt*, 17

Students coming from poor households are more likely to be poor achievers due to their poor health status as well as other social and economic barriers, and therefore end up more likely to drop out. Other school related reasons combine dislike of school and teachers' bad treatment.⁴⁴

Some families have complained that the Egyptian educational system does not help preparing their children for the future. School curriculums are rigid, dull, overly academic and fail to address the needs of a large section of the students, especially working children. Therefore families prefer to send their children to work in order to help them learn a skill that would secure their lives in the future. In a survey evaluating basic education in Egypt, nearly half of the fathers stated that education does not guarantee employment, and 40 percent believed that it does not provide adequate earning. This issue is also a cultural issue arising from the difficulties incorporated with the educational system and the availability of good and well-paid job opportunities for university and school graduates. Also the increasing rates of graduate unemployment have decreased the economic importance of education.

Facilitating Conditions

Family Size

According to a study conducted on child labor in Egypt⁴⁵, child labor is not only related to families with high numbers of children. Other reasons are behind the work of children within poor families with or without a large number of children. The authors in the study based their results on widows and divorced women who need the work of their children to support their families. They based their argument on the fact

⁴⁴ Population Council, *Transition to Adulthood: A National Survey of Egyptian Adolescents*, 94.

⁴⁵ Azer and Ramzy, *Child Labor in Egypt*.

that during the 1980's, the government of Egypt was encouraging family planning processes and thus attributed the increase in child labor to the large number of family members.⁴⁶ He also cited that several foreign studies have not found a positive relationship between child labor and the size of the family. According to another study, a large family is a main characteristic of the working child. The average size of the families of working children is seven members; thus the share of income per person does not exceed one Egyptian pound.⁴⁷ Other studies indicate that larger household sizes tend to be associated with less investment by parents in children's human capital through schooling and a higher probability of child work. In fact one motivation for households to have more children is the labor they supply and the income they earn to the family.⁴⁸

The number of children within the family is an important cause of the work of the family's children, especially in the case of poverty. However, it is not a main cause of child labor; in some families where the number of children is two or three, children still work if the family is very poor as will be shown in the case studies in chapter three.

Rural-Urban Migration

Although studies proved a positive correlation between rural-urban migration and child labor, The study conducted by Ola Anwar on child labor in Egypt concludes that rural urban migration has no impact on the work of children. Twenty-five percent of the families of working children in the study mentioned above have always lived in

⁴⁶ Adel Azer, interview by the researcher, 21 May 2000, (Social research Center, Cairo)

⁴⁷ Anwar, Child Labor in Egypt.

⁴⁸ Jackline Wahba, *Child Schooling and Child Labor: Evidence from Egypt*, 6-7

the city of Cairo. Also, according to CAPMAS, the volume of child labor is bigger in rural than in the urban areas.

Low Technological Standards

The low technological standards used in agriculture leads to increasing child labor due to their very low wages as is the case in rural areas in Egypt.⁴⁹ The mean monthly remuneration for working children is 130 and 88 Egyptian pounds per month among males and females respectively. Children working in urban areas earn 60 percent higher than children working in Lower and Upper Egypt.⁵⁰

On the other hand, increasing technological levels in urban industries leads to increasing unemployment among unskilled labor. As a result, children in low-income families have parents who cannot provide enough money for their households. Consequently, those children are driven to work in order to help their families.

Family Relationships

It is widely thought that most of the working children come from very unstable families, and that they are subject to abuse from their families and are forced to work. However, according to the 1988 CAPMAS survey, eighty two percent of the children live in stable families. However, it has been mentioned in another study that working children are usually deprived of a stable family life.⁵¹ Studies have revealed that 14 percent of working children have witnessed the death of one of the parents, and three percent were driven to work after the divorce of the parents.⁵² Another study revealed

⁴⁹ Anwar, *Child Labor in Egypt*.

⁵⁰ Population Council, *Transitions to Adulthood: A national Survey of Egyptian Adolescent*, 108.

⁵¹ Azer and Ramzy, *Child Labor in Egypt*.

⁵² Sarwat Ishac, *Towards a Strategic View for the Development of Children in the Social Context*.

that the absence of the father does not have an effect on work of children. However, the absence of the mother and the presence of a stepmother have a different effect for boys and girls. Boys living with stepmothers attend school less and are more likely to work than when there are no stepmothers. As for girls, the absence of the mother increases their domestic work at home and their dropout of schools.⁵³

Despite the differences of results regarding the above issues, different arguments may be accepted since those factors are not main causes of child labor but rather contributing factors to the phenomenon.

National Efforts

Enforcing the elimination of the work of children by law will never be the only solution to the problem. On the other hand it might lead to negative results with respect to those children and their families. There must be an economic change in the conditions of the families in order to free a child from the responsibility of working. As is the case of the carpet industry in Bangladesh where the importation of carpets was prohibited as a result of the involvement of children in its manufacturing process. Consequently, those children lost their work and it only resulted in increasing their misery and poverty as well as leading to juvenile delinquency.⁵⁴

The Ministry of Manpower and Migration is committed to solving the problem of child labor. However, it is convinced that eliminating child labor should come gradually in order to avoid the negative effects of aggressive actions which increases the number of hidden working children and the financial problems that occur to the

⁵³ Ragui, Deborah, and Zibani, *The Effects of Child Work on School Enrollement in Egypt*.

⁵⁴ Adel Azer, *Tawzif El Bahth Al Elmi*.

family as a result of the loss of the child's work.⁵⁵ The following section highlights the different laws adopted by the Egyptian government in attempting to combat child labor.

Enforcement by Laws & Legislation

Convention of the Rights of the Child

In 1990 Egypt ratified the Convention of the Right of the Child issued by the United Nations in the same year. All countries which have ratified the convention are required to present a report on a regular basis to the International Committee in charge of the following up of the implementation of the convention. The Committee on the rights of the child praised Egypt's efforts after the submission of the 1993 report. However, as previously mentioned, child labor in the cotton, textile and carpet industries is an example of the violation of the convention.

The struggle against child labor cannot be won by legislative actions alone. However it certainly cannot be won without it. The adoption of legislation specifying a minimum age for work, compulsory education, the prohibition of child labor in hazardous conditions, health and development of children must be the backbone of any national strategy against child labor.⁵⁶ Egypt used several strategies in its national fight to abolish child labor as follows:

Work Inspectors

Labor inspection is very important in combating hazardous child labor. However, it is not very effective in addressing the hidden forms of child labor such as prostitution in other countries or abuse in domestic work in Egypt. One of the

⁵⁵ Nadia El Gazare, Interview by the author, 23 April 2000 (Ministry of Manpower, Cairo).

⁵⁶ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor, 12

strategies used by the government to combat child labor in Egypt is work inspection. However, this method of control involves several problems as follows:

There are only 2500 inspectors for the whole country as opposed to a large informal sector that reaches 30-50 percent of economic activities as previously mentioned. They have very scarce resources to reach and inspect establishments outside cities and are overloaded with work due to their limited number. The inspector's role is to report and penalize the employer if child labor exists in his workshop. The inspector may also grant the employer a grace period during which he should get rid of the working children. However, this system is not leading to the elimination of child labor. It is very easy to hide working children in small workshops from the eyes of inspectors who are considered a threat, consequently receiving no cooperation from workshop owners. Moreover, according to Dr. Azer and Dr. M. Osman, inspectors are not doing their jobs properly. Visits to workshops either in the formal or informal sector are not regular and even when implemented are not always reported. The Ministry of Manpower does not acknowledge a problem in this area and only highlights the lack of training of the existing inspectors in order to be able to assess the conditions in which children work.⁵⁷

The Ministry of Manpower and Migration has obtained USA aid assistance in a training program for inspectors. The program aims at providing training to inspectors at the Ministry in order to establish a balance between their work as inspectors and consultants that provide guidance and advises to employers and

⁵⁷ Adel Azer (SRC), Mohamed Osman (ILO), Nadia El Gazare (MOM), interviews by the researcher, Cairo.

working children in order to avoid hazardous conditions at work and prevent the work of children if needed.⁵⁸

Although child labor is widespread in the agricultural sector, MOMM does not have the mandate to inspect child labor in cultivated lands. Only the Ministry of Agriculture has the mandate to inspect cultivated lands and thus it should be an important partner in the fight against child labor.

Policies & Regulations

Child labor in Egypt is governed by the CRC which Egypt ratified in July 1990. However, since the early 1980's several attempts have been made to combat the root causes of child labor in Egypt. With respect to policies and regulation, in 1981, Labor Law 137 was passed dedicating a section on the working children "Ahdath", prohibiting the work of those under the age of twelve. This Law was inconsistent with the Education Law 139 of 1981 which defined education as mandatory up to the age of fourteen. In 1982 and 1983 Ministerial decrees were issued by the Minister of Manpower and Migration prohibiting child labor in certain industries and sectors that were considered hazardous. Furthermore, President Mubarak declared the decade of 1989-1999 as the decade of child protection. Also the decade 2001-2010 was declared the second decade of the child protection in Egypt. Mrs. Mubarak stated that an integrated work plan was being designed to implement the objectives of the new decade.

⁵⁸ Nadia El Gazare, Proceedings of The International Workshop for the Implementation of Forced labor laws, Washington, April 2000 by the Ministry of Manpower and Migration.

Child Law No. 12

In 1996, the Comprehensive Child Law no. 12 was issued, thus raising the minimum age for employment to 14 years instead of 12 years.⁵⁹ The law also prohibited the employment of children for more than six hours a day, including one meal and one or two breaks. The law allows twelve years old to do seasonal jobs that do not harm their health or growth rate and as long as these jobs do not affect their studies.⁶⁰ The law still has some weaknesses as follows: it neglects the agricultural sector where child labor is highly widespread. Also, the minimum age for employment should be set at 15 years, in order to meet with the basic education system that have pushed up the end of compulsory education from 12 to 15 years.

The Unified Labor Law

Also the new unified labor law which was prepared in coordination with the ILO and is currently being discussed in the People's Council involves a section on child labor legislation. According to the law, the minimum age for the employment of children will increase to fifteen years; thus allowing the child to finish the years of compulsory education. The new law eliminates the discrepancy which existed between the Law no. 12 and the Education Law no. 139 for the year 1981 with respect to the minimum age of fourteen set for employment and the age of end of compulsory education. (See Appendix I and II for details of the Law no. 12 and the new Unified labor law)

⁵⁹ Shafey, *Adolescence and State Policy in Egypt*

⁶⁰ Labor Law # 12 for 1996.

Ministries and Agencies

In addition to the laws and regulation, several agencies and ministries are attempting to solve the problem of child labor each in its own domain. The following highlights the efforts of different agencies and ministries in Egypt in their fight against child labor. Furthermore, to coordinate all the efforts a National Steering Committee (NSC) was formed, including a number of concerned parties such as the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, The NCCM, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the ILO.

The Federation of Egyptian Industries

The FEI has published a book titled "Towards Integrated Policies for Curing the Phenomenon of Child Labor". The book is the outcome of a series of round-table discussions on child labor issues with member employers. Furthermore, the EFI is in the process of preparing a position paper or a declaration on the elimination of child labor in its members industries.

The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education (MOE) called for the mobilization of community leaders to support the efforts for improving primary school enrollment and retention. The Minister of Education called on primary school teachers to put more efforts into retaining students and reducing dropout rates from primary education. This is considered an attempt at solving one of the main causes of child labor.⁶¹

As has been mentioned earlier, school failure and the opportunity cost of schooling are among the main reasons of child labor. In this respect, the intervention

⁶¹ International labor Organization. *ILO-IPEC Progress report on IPEC Activities in Egypt* (Cairo, March 2000).

of the Ministry of Education is crucial in attempting to reduce the work of children. Policies that make schooling more attractive for parents and children, as well as policies that provide incentives and flexibility to the educational system are more appropriate than trying to enforce the prohibition of child labor by law. It is easier to monitor school attendance than to monitor children in the workplace, and easier to force and convince parents to send their children to school than to force employers not to hire children.

The Ministry of Manpower and Migration

The Ministry of Manpower and Migration (MOMM) has established two committees responsible for reviewing child labor legislation. It has also established a Child Labor Unit (CLU) which is responsible for all child labor issues as well as the organization of inspection units. The unit is also responsible for coordinating the national, regional, and international efforts regarding child labor. The Ministry is in the process of modernizing the vocational training centers which are found in all governorates in order to organize vocational training programs for children who have dropped out of schools.

The Ministry organized a steering committee that established short term and long term goals. In the short-term, the plan aims at saving children working under hazardous conditions, increasing the income of their families, compensating for the loss of income occurring from the child ceasing to work, providing medical care, educational services, with priority given to girls and younger children. Regarding the

long-term plan, the solution of the problem lies in solving its root causes which are poverty, low income and illiteracy.⁶²

The National Council for Childhood and Maternity

The National Council for Childhood & Maternity (NCCM) was established in 1988 by a Presidential decree. The Council is headed by the Prime Minister and involves the Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Culture, Education, Manpower, Planning, Information and The Supreme Council for Youths and Sports. The Council is responsible for the recommendation of public policies regarding childhood and motherhood in Egypt.⁶³ It aims at the long term eradication of child labor through the provision of welfare services to children in order to raise their living standards as well as providing income generating occupations to their parents.⁶⁴

The National Council for Childhood and Maternity has been implementing pilot projects for the rehabilitation of working children in Greater Cairo.

EL Herafiyeen City Project

A pilot project has been implemented by the Council in the Craftsmen City in cooperation with the Governorate of Cairo and the Social Fund for Development. This city was established in 1989 on the Ismailia Road where all car mechanics workshops were transferred. The city includes nearly 380 workshops.

⁶² Dr. Abdel Kadder El Aasar, Director General, International Relations department, MOMM, presented at the National Tripartite Seminar to promote Ratification of the Worst Forms of Child labor Convention (No. 182), 1999 (IPEC-ILO Cairo Office), November 2000.

⁶³ The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood. *A newsletter Issued by the General Secretariat of the NCCM*, no.34 (December 1999).

⁶⁴ Ambassador Moushira Khattab, Secretary General, NCCM, presented at the National Tripartite Seminar to promote Ratification of the Worst Forms of Child labor Convention (No. 182), 1999 (IPEC-ILO Cairo Office), November 2000.

The project aimed at providing complete rehabilitation programs, in addition to improving the existing services and working conditions in the area. The project also aimed at providing health care and educational services to working children. For the purpose of the project, a study was conducted in 1997 revealing that there are nearly 700 working children in the "Craftsmen City" representing thirty five percent of its labor force. Seventy-four percent of those children are aged fourteen to eighteen years, nineteen percent are aged thirteen to fourteen years and seven percent are aged eight - twelve years. According to the study, the number of illiterate children reached seventy two percent of the total number of working children in the city. The number of children working in order to help their parents reaches seventy four percent. Also, fifty five percent of the children work twelve hours and more, twenty six percent of them spend the night at the workshop due to several reasons such as bad family relationships, high transportation cost and the large number of working hours.⁶⁵

In the short run the project aimed at improving the living standards and working conditions of working children in the city through providing health and education services as well as organizing sports and cultural programs for them. The project also aimed at encouraging family members to join vocational training centers in order to provide alternatives sources of income to replace the income generated by the working child. It also provided literacy classes to children, mothers and workshop owners.

With respect to health services and care, the project provided regular check ups and curative as well as preventive services to children and their families. Also, it provided a good nutritional meal to working children. The project also organized several workshops and seminars that included the children in order to discuss certain

⁶⁵ Al Ahram Newspaper (Cairo), 20 July 1999.

issues such as smoking, and drugs. It also organized trips to museums and several sports activities. The project established the "Friends of the Environment Club" as an awareness center that explains environmental problems and their solutions.

Workshop owners also benefited from the project by joining literacy classes, attending environmental seminars, receiving first aid training as well as improving safety and health standards in the workshops.

The above project has been very successful and is sustainable due to the political support of Mrs. Mubarak who as previously mentioned contributes much effort to this cause. According to the Newsletter of the National Council of Childhood and Maternity, the third batch of working children in the city have graduated from literacy classes. Already 119 male and female students have graduated after completing the primary stage of education. Also, a large number of children whose illiteracy has been eliminated, expressed their desire to complete their studies. The council has prepared a new educational program, through which preparatory classes will be inaugurated.

The Ministry of Social Affairs

In 1996, the Ministry started to establish community centers to care for working children, with a focus on social and recreational activities. The centers were established in Cairo, Kafr El Sheikh, Suez and Ismailia and were operated by selected NGOs. Children and their families are offered free medical services, and are encouraged to participate in activities such as wood carving, drawing on glass, sports, chorus singing and acting. In 1998, the Ministry of Social Affairs started a project for the protection and care of working children in Bulaq Abu El Ela in Cairo Governorate

in cooperation with the Social Services Association. The project aimed at improving the living and working conditions of the children as well as providing them with health care and vocational training. The project also aimed at increasing the awareness of employers and providing some incentives and services to solve problems facing their companies in order to encourage them to enroll the children in the center.⁶⁶

In 1999, the Ministry started the implementation of a similar project in Al Arbaein district in Suez City in cooperation with the Egyptian Association for Child Protection.⁶⁷ Five new projects have been studied for implementation through the five-year plan 1997-2002 with a value of LE500,000 benefiting nearly 1000 child. The projects aim at improving the conditions of the working child and providing social, psychological and health care to both the children and their families.⁶⁸

A very important issue in the success of those projects is the planning of the government for their long-term sustainability in order to avoid the end of funds end of project situation. In this respect political support and commitment of the country is of great importance.

A Call for Coordination

Mrs. Mubarak has dedicated much effort towards child health, social and cultural development. She called for coordination between the National Council for Childhood and Maternity and all the institutions working in the field of vulnerable children.⁶⁹ She asserted that a scientific and objective vision for the needs and

⁶⁶ Anwar, Child Labor in Egypt.

⁶⁷ Ibid. , 111.

⁶⁸ Nadia El Gazare, presented at The National Conference for Childhood and Maternity: A Future Perspective for the Decade 2000-2010, (November 1999).

⁶⁹ Childhood & Motherhood A Newsletter Issued by the General Secretariat of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, no. 26 (July 1997)

demands of Egyptian children will be set for the coming decade, particularly in the fields of health care, female children, handicapped, street children and juvenile delinquents.

Several projects such as health insurance for children, reading projects and the Technological Center have been implemented.⁷⁰ In 1992, a panel was organized under the auspices of Mrs. Mubarak, in cooperation with academics and professionals in the field of education, training, care and protection.⁷¹ Furthermore, in 1996, Mrs. Mubarak sponsored the first meeting of an inter-ministerial committee formed to address the needs of street and working children.

Despite all the above efforts and laws, a study conducted by the NCSCR revealed that working children do not use protective clothes, forty percent of the workshops where they work lack security devices and medical equipment.⁷² Moreover, child labor in the cotton, textiles and leather industries as previously mentioned is an example of the failure of the state's laws and regulations in protecting working children.

Enforcement by laws and regulations will not solve the problem if the economic and social conditions do not change. Moreover, enforcing the prohibition of child labor without improving the conditions of the poor may lead to negative results for children if other alternatives are not provided.⁷³

⁷⁰ Al Ahram Newspaper (Cairo), 3 April 2000.

⁷¹ Adel Azer, *Tawzif El Bahth Al Elmi: Tagroba fi Magal Moalagat Zaherat Amalet El Atfal*.

⁷² The National Center for Social and Criminological Research, *The Child and the Twenty First Century*, presented at The International Conference Number 17 (April 1992).

⁷³ Anwar, *Child Labor in Egypt*.

Donors Assistance

Academic interest in the issue of child labor in Egypt began to be enhanced by the media in 1986 as a result of an incident in the Cairo district of Gamaleya where a number of children were discovered locked-in and forced to work in a bakery.⁷⁴

UNICEF & ILO in Egypt

Seminars and Workshops

Several seminars and workshops were held in Cairo involving the Ministry of Manpower, UNICEF, the ILO as well as other institutions since 1986 to discuss the issue of child labor in Egypt: the Child Labor Symposium, NCSCR and UNICEF in July 1986, aimed at analyzing the phenomena of child labor in Egypt. Another Seminar entitled "Towards a Comprehensive Policy to Treat the Phenomenon of Child Labor", NCSCR & UNICEF was held in May 1992. The Child Labor in Arab Countries seminar, by the Arab Council for Childhood and Development & ILO was held in December 1993, also a workshop on Combating Child Labor in the Arab World, by the Arab Council for Childhood and Development (ACCD) and ILO was held in December 1994.

The Workshop on Restricting Child Labor, by the Ministry of Manpower and Migration and the ILO, was organized in December 1995. The workshop aimed at preparing a national plan for the restriction of child labor in Egypt. The workshop was attended by representatives from the Ministries, The Federation of Labor Syndicates, The FEI, the ILO, UNICEF, The Arab Labor Organization and the International Health Organization. The workshop resulted in the following comments:⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Ahmed Abdullah and others, eds.

⁷⁵ The Ministry of Manpower and Migration, Child Labor Unit, A Memo presented to the Minister of Manpower.

1. *The importance of awareness creation among employers of the dangers involved with child labor especially in hazardous conditions.*
2. *The importance of the training of inspectors on handling employers, working children and the application of the laws and regulations.*
3. *The importance of preliminary education in order to avoid dropouts. Also the importance of the presence of psychological counselors in schools was emphasized.*
4. *The importance of coordination between all organizations involved in child labor.*
5. *The importance of vocational training for children.*
6. *Establishing NGOs specialized in child labor in all governorates.*
7. *The provision of cultural, sports and entertainment services to working children in coordination with the Higher Council for Youths and Sports.*

Studies

Several studies on child labor have been conducted in order to try and identify the root causes of child labor and to find a solution to this problem. In 1988 a study on working children in the tanneries, in 1991 a study on child labor in Cairo and in 1993 a study on working children in Shoubra El Khema were conducted.⁷⁶

In 1991, the UNICEF and the Higher Institute of Social Work at Alexandria University began studying the health, nutritional and working conditions of children working in the industrial zone of AbulDerda in Alexandria. Also another project was organized by the UNICEF and the National Center for Social and Criminological Research to study a sample of 566 children working in industrial workshops of

⁷⁶ Egyptian Federation of Industries, *Towards complete strategies to solve the problem of child labor.*

mechanics, chemicals, furnaces and weaving covering six areas in three governorates namely Cairo, Guiza and Qalyoubiya.⁷⁷

UNICEF Projects

As a result of the 1991 AbulDerda study mentioned above, UNICEF implemented a project aiming at providing protection and care to 350 working children in the district of AbulDerda in Alexandria. The project aimed at improving the working and living conditions of working children and their families. It also aimed at finding alternative sources of income if the children work in hazardous conditions. The project also provided social and cultural care to those children.⁷⁸

The Family development Fund Project

Since 1993, UNICEF has supported a number of microcredit projects in Lower Egypt. In Alexandria, a micro-credit project was implemented to provide credit for women as an attempt to combat child labor. Each borrowers' group comprises five women, two of whom have working children. The condition for the loans is that all children should go to school. This project showed that parents are willing to send their children to school once the economic condition of the family improves.

ILO Conventions and Projects

The ILO in Egypt works and determines its priorities through national constituents, the Labor Union, the Employer Union and the government of Egypt represented by the Ministry of Manpower and Migration.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Ahmed Abdullah and others, eds.

⁷⁸ Anwar, Child Labor in Egypt.

⁷⁹ Dr. Mohamed Osman, Interview by the author, 24 April 2000, (ILO Office, Cairo).

The International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC)

In 1996, Egypt signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the ILO in the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC). The Program aims at eliminating child labor by strengthening national capacities to address the problem, giving priority to the most hazardous and exploitative types of child labor, emphasizing preventive measures, and building in project sustainability from the start by stressing in-country ownership of the program. Therefore the program starts by using strategic actions geared to the mainstreaming of child labor issues into a national policy.⁸⁰

The IPEC program in Egypt aimed at creating awareness of the problem of child labor nation wide. It also focused on providing rehabilitation and reintegration to female working children, promoting vocational training for working children and ensuring the application of protective legislation. Furthermore, the program aims at strengthening the capacity of social partners and NGOs in order to be able to implement direct action programs to prevent children at risk from entering the labor force and to withdraw working children from exploitative and hazardous work.⁸¹

IPEC activities involve the key constituents, namely, Ministries of Manpower and Migration, Social Affairs, Education, Agriculture and Health, the Federation of Egyptian Industries, Egyptian Trade Union Federation and a Non Governmental Organization. (See Appendix III for a list of programs implemented in Egypt by IPEC)

⁸⁰ International Labor Organization, *ILO-IPEC Highlights of 1996-97 and Guidelines for Future Action*. (Geneva: October 1996)

⁸¹ International labor Organization, *ILO-IPEC Country Program Report 1998-1999*, (Cairo)

The ILO Conventions

In June 1999, Egypt ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention, No. 138 (1973) and is in the process of ratifying the ILO Convention No. 182 for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor.

The ratification of the ILO conventions will enable the Government of Egypt to pursue national policies conducive to the elimination of child labor. The Ministry of Manpower has organized a special task force to identify the constituents of such policies and drafting a national plan of action for this purpose.⁸²

Suggested Solutions

Since child labor is a complex problem where roots are deeply embedded in cultural, social and economic structures, declaring and recognising it as a problem is not enough. Efforts to eliminate child labor may lead to a worse situation, unless measures are taken to change the social and economic environment which permits child labor to exist.

Social Policies

According to a World Bank study, a good schooling system represents the most important solution to the work of children. The overall condition of the education system can be a powerful influence on the supply of child workers, whether it be the inaccessibility of schools or the lack of quality education which push parents to send their children to work. Also, it is the low educational level of parents that increases the likelihood of child labor. Thus there is no doubt that investment in education is an important step towards reducing child labor.

⁸² International labor Organization. *ILO-IPEC Country Program Report 1998-1999*.

However, forcing the elimination of child labor and enforcing school attendance is unfeasible for several reasons. First, children will not attend these schools without an economic change in their condition. School attendance will increase only after adding certain substitutes to encourage children to remain in school. The quality of education should be improved; the school should serve food supplements and most importantly be free of any charges. Incentive schemes exist in various forms, ranging from cash stipends to in-kind incentives such as free school meals, health care, stationary, text books, access to micro-credit, clothing or the waiver of school fees.⁸³

A second problem that arises with enforcing the abolition of child labor is that education and employment for children are not mutually exclusive. Many children have to work in order to pay the school tuition.⁸⁴ Good quality education particularly at the primary level has positive impacts on children. Educated persons make more informed and active citizens, they have better prospects in the labor market, and are more productive workers. They tend to have smaller families and higher educational expectations for their children, thus reducing pressure for child labor in the future.⁸⁵

Although education policies are very important, they are not the only action necessary in order to eliminate child labor. Children who are vulnerable to diseases or who are malnourished are unlikely to learn well. They may repeat classes and eventually drop out of school. Social policies have to ensure that child malnutrition, morbidity and mortality are minimized. Thus complementarity between health

⁸³ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, *Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor*, 12

⁸⁴ Faraaz and Patrinos, *Child Labor: Issues, Causes and Interventions*, 7

⁸⁵ ILO, Geneva and UNICEF, New York, *Strategies for Eliminating Child Labor*, 11

policies, education policies and family planning measures are essential for combating child labor.⁸⁶

The FEI suggests that poor families should be exempted from all entrance fees, exams and books fees. Some countries such as Brazil, in their fight against child labor provided financial assistance to poor families in order to help them educate their children. Furthermore, the FEI suggests incorporating technical education and vocational training in preparatory school programs; thus helping students to learn a skill while learning to read and write.

Economic Policies

Eradicating poverty is very important in the fight against child labor. Sound macro-economic policies are important to sustain economic growth. Analysis has proven that the proportion of working children in the total labor force declines with rising per capita income. The impact is great when the increase of income targets those of the poor and women in particular. Labor absorbing economic growth as well as access of women to micro-credit has proven to be a powerful instrument in reducing poverty and child labor.

The FEI suggests the evaluation of the success of productive family programs as well as loans to small and macro enterprises and establishing a social security system that guarantees a minimum living standard for poor families.

Political Support & NGOs

The solution to the child labor problem requires long-term policies to treat the grass root behind the work of children. Since child labor is a reality, legally acknowledging their existence may be the first step towards alleviating their agonies

⁸⁶ Ibid. 8

and deprivation. Enforcing the elimination of child labor without providing alternatives for the loss of income they encounter would negatively affect those children and their families. Therefore, providing protection and care to working children through short-term programs implemented by NGOs should be the target. Those programs should focus on providing education, health care, and vocational training to both children and their families.

In this respect political support and commitment to international conventions as well as support to the role of different actors, especially the role of NGOs, the media and the private sector is very important. NGOs can play a very important role in targeting working children and providing education and health care to them. They may also contribute in raising awareness of the community as well as working children and their families of the problem and its implications on children.

Raising awareness of the child labor problem

Governments, employers, workers, parents and often child workers themselves are not aware of the dangerous effects of child labour. Due to reasons embedded in culture and traditions, many parents consider early work of their children as a way of providing them with skills. In order to be able to protect their children, families need to understand that child labor is a contributing problem and not a solution to poverty. Churches, mosques and schools are appropriate places for considering and discussing child labor issues. Religious and community leaders have strong influence over families and children especially in the rural areas.

Using mass communication channels such as journalists and the media may help in spreading ideas, opinions, arguments and in sharing success stories that would raise the interest of the community regarding child labor.

Private Sector and Community Participation

Private sector and community participation in combating child labor is of great importance. Why should the community wait for the intervention of the government or international institutions in order to solve a community related problem. By involving the private sector and the community at all levels, a lot may be achieved.

First, all forms of child labor can be reached. For instance, international organizations would have priorities when targeting working children. Children working in hazardous conditions and street children are among their top priorities. In such a situation, children working in normal conditions will be left out. Their chances in education and health care will be minimized.

Community participation in this sense makes the difference. If every household becomes aware of the importance of educating the servant that works in it, if every building is convinced of the importance of educating the building caretaker and his family. More may be done at all levels of the community, a small contribution will help raising the standard of living of those children and provide them with better opportunities in the future without affecting their income generation.

Second, at the private sector level, a small contribution of the income of the sector may help in combating child labor. If every employer allows their illiterate employees-either children or adults- to attend literacy classes for a number of hours during the week and help providing some incentives for them, illiteracy rates will decline thus helping in the fight against child labor.

Third, sustainability problems are solved. Projects sustainability will no longer depend on the availability of donors funds, but rather on the will and participation of the community.

The government coordination with NGOs in this respect is very important. Public awareness of the problem of child labor, its causes and consequences is necessary in order to raise community participation. Awareness may be raised through the media, public seminars and the publishing of individual or community success stories.

According to study conducted by Cairo University, the private sector in Egypt is well aware of the social problems and is willing to contribute in solving them. However, the role of the private sector requires organization, coordination and public awareness of their efforts. The government should identify the different priorities, and should facilitate procedures and bureaucracy in order to encourage the private sector to contribute in social problems.⁸⁷

Challenges & Problems

Several problems and challenges face the Ministries, international organizations and the private sector in their fight against child labor in Egypt.

Macro-Level Challenges

Structural Adjustment

During the past decade Egypt witnessed several economic changes and have embarked on a comprehensive Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Program (ERSAP). The program entailed a shift from a centrally planned economy to a decentralized, market based outward-oriented economy. Egypt is also facing many changes and increased competitiveness implied by the GATT agreement on members countries. Those economic changes have social implications on the labor market and thus on the labor force.

⁸⁷ Nassar, The Social Role of the Private Sector, 50-51

Low income families in Egypt face three short-term challenges under the umbrella of the internal and external policy changes namely unemployment, the decrease in real wages and the increase in the prices of goods and services. Structural adjustment policies in Egypt lead in the short run to increases in unemployment, inflation and poverty levels. Furthermore, the elimination of subsidies on food, electricity and fuel have had a major impact on poor families, thus increasing their financial burdens.⁸⁸

In addition other problems such as the increasing population rates and the persistent educational problems are also important challenges facing the Egyptian government in its attempts to develop its human resources.

Trade Sanctions

The Egyptian government considers imposing economic sanctions and the prohibition of imports of products involving child labor a hindrance to economic growth and a cause of more poverty in developing countries. By enforcing the implementation of laws and regulation that lead to firing children from their work, the country will not only lose its comparative advantage of cheap labor but also the children will be involved in more serious problems since they may work in worse conditions, in drugs, crimes or prostitution.⁸⁹

According to the International Economic Conference organized by the International Chamber of Commerce in Budapest in May 2000 in which Egypt participated along with 130 other countries, the WTO should not interfere in issues that are not related to international trade such as environmental issues, labor standards

⁸⁸ Ola Mostafa and Azza Kurayim, *Child Labor in Small Enterprises*, NCSCR (Cairo, 1996).

⁸⁹ Nadia El Gazare, Ministry of Manpower and Migration, presented at The International Seminar on the Implementation of Forced Labor Laws (Washington, April 2000)

and human rights. Those issues should be handled by the United Nations and are very sensitive to developing countries.⁹⁰

If trade sanctions are to be imposed on countries where certain industries rely on child labor, cooperation between the international organizations, governments and NGOs are very important. Alternatives for the work of children should be found in order to avoid worsening their conditions.

Strategic Challenges

Quantification Problems

Strategic challenges arise from the difficulties of quantifying the phenomena of child labor due to several reasons. First of all, children leave the workshops where they work during inspection periods, they refuse to give any information to inspectors, or provide wrong information when forced to talk. Second many workshop owners close them during inspection. Third, inspectors hide information in order to avoid harming the children who are in need for the income provided from their work and may be fired as a result of this inspection.⁹¹ Furthermore, when inspectors attempt to take action to enforce child labor legislation, they are faced with public indifference, the hostility of powerful economic interest groups and the complicity of children and their parents.

Furthermore, as mentioned before, it is difficult to establish accurate data regarding child labor due to the illegality of the issue and its existence mainly in the informal sector workshops or as domestics in private households which are difficult to

⁹⁰ El Ahram Newspaper (Cairo), 7 May 2000, 14.

⁹¹ The Ministry of Manpower and Migration, Child Labor Unit, A Memo presented to the Minister of Manpower.

determine. The implementation of the SIMPOC by the ILO in Egypt would help solve this problem.

Project Related Problems

Projects may be subject to problems of corruption and mismanagement as well as the possibility that the children and families involved may become too dependent on the program or project, the possibility that adult workers in the family may tend to reduce their work if cash incentives are given to the families as an alternative to the work of children.

The most important of all problems at this level is sustainability. Projects may stop if the available funds given by donors are terminated. A plan for sustainability should be thought of since the beginning of any given project.

Conclusion

The case of Egypt represents a traditional case of regarding the causes and characteristics of child labor. It also highlights the fact that conventions and laws and regulations are not an effective solution to the problem. Although Egypt has ratified the CRC, and has set a minimum age for the work of children, child labor is still persistent and will continue to be until the cycle of poverty and child labor is broken.

International agencies and the government of Egypt have been targeting the elimination of child labor for the past decade. Many projects implemented by the ILO, UNICEF and the different Ministries target working children in different industries such as textile, leather and carpentry. However, child labor exists in many other different forms but is simply undetected such as ball boys in tennis clubs, servants in

houses, apprentices in small workshops and shops as in iron shops, small supermarkets, laundries and so on. The private sector and individuals can reach those segments of working children.

In some of those jobs, children form a group of workers and thus are easily detectable by interested individuals. However, in other jobs one or two children work in every household or workshop. In this case the effort of detecting them is harder and to set an education or health care project for them is more difficult. Government contribution in providing the necessary awareness and incentives to individuals, employers and the private sector is crucial. Furthermore, involving NGOs would help in encouraging the community in different areas to contribute and to implement projects that would help those working children.

A Suggested project

The following chapter presents a project as an example of the contribution of the private sector and individuals to the child labor problem in Egypt. The project targets a segment of working children that will probably never be targeted by international organisations. The project targets the ball boys who work in tennis clubs and centers and is financed by members of the clubs; thus ensuring sustainability.

CHAPTER THREE

Working Children in Tennis Clubs & Centers

Situation Analysis

The Problem to be addressed

The present situation

Tennis clubs in Egypt (nearly 20 clubs) employ twenty to thirty ball boys to maintain the courts and collect balls during practice. Boys are usually ten to fifteen years old, and work very hard for at least eight hours per day, suffering from the sun and the heat in the summer and the cold weather in winter. They get paid on a per diem rate or depend on daily tips given by guests and players. Furthermore, most of the clubs do not provide any meals.

Due to their daily work, the boys are prevented from going to school, have health problems, family problems and most of all deprived of their right to be children and to play. Although ball boys have existed in Egypt for a long time, only minor efforts have been made towards them. Those efforts are nothing more than tips, and old cloths given by club members on a random basis.

As mentioned in chapter 1¹ child labor is a result of mainly financial and educational reasons. Since in most of the cases their salaries represent a very important source of the family's income, those ball boys cannot quit their work and

¹ For more details see The causes of child labor, Chapter 1

go back to school. Therefore providing healthcare, education, as well as psychiatric or counseling help would be very important.

Field Work: Tennis Center at Katameya District

In a tennis center at Katameya District, there are fifteen ball boys. They work six days a week, eight hours per day according to shifts organized by the chief of courts. Some of them work in a shift that requires work after seven o'clock at night. They are paid according to a fixed per diem rate of LE7 and are not entitled to any sick leaves or yearly vacations. They are provided by one daily meal containing rice, vegetables and sometimes meat. The center provides them with winter and summer cloths and shoes twice a year, according to availability. Since tips are not allowed to employees of the center, there is a collection box made available to all guests at their discretion. The box is opened once every three months and divided equally among the ball boys.

According to the chief of courts, the ball boys in this center work in much better conditions when compared to other clubs. In other sports clubs around Cairo, there is an average of twenty to thirty ball boys depending on the number of tennis courts available. They are in a worse situation since their wages do not exceed LE5 a day and only permanent workers receive monthly wages. Most of the ball boys depend on tips given by tennis players and do not receive any wages from the club where they work. They are not provided with a meal and are not entitled to any leaves. The boys in big clubs sometimes work more than eight hours a day especially in the summer when tennis becomes very popular after seven o'clock at night.

The ball boys age at the Tennis Center in Katameya ranges between thirteen and eighteen years. Only three of the boys managed to reach the end of compulsory

education (third preparatory). Two of them dropped-out in grade six and the rest dropped-out before grade four.

Several interviews have been conducted with the chief of courts, trainers and ball boys at the tennis center at Katameya reveal many important aspects related to the work of ball boys, as well as their social and economic backgrounds. (see Appendix IV for the details of the scope of the interviews conducted)

Rayes Ahmed, The Chief of Courts (Fourty years old)

The interview with Rayes Ahmed contained two aspects: first, the situation at the tennis center and his responsibilities as well as relationship with ball boys, thus shedding light on their day to day activities. Second his own childhood as a ball boy which revealed a lot on the characteristics and life of ball boys.

Rayes Ahmed is responsible for the maintenance of the tennis courts. He is the supervisor of all the ball boys and is the one who recruits them. He organizes their work, and provides them with the necessary supervision and care during working hours. Accordingly, he is aware of their social backgrounds and most of their major problems at home and at work. He also defends them in front of the administration and may suggest certain punishments when they make mistakes. He described his boys as being divided into the good ones with a good potential of becoming chief of courts when they grow up and the lazy ones who are only working to earn some money but who are not interested in a future career in this field. According to him, most of the boys are illiterate, some can read and write but have dropped out of school at a very young age with the exception of one boy who is studying at home.

He characterized the reasons behind the work of ball boys as being the result of financial needs of the family resulting from the death or sickness of the father, his

low income, unemployment or his irresponsibility towards his family. He also mentioned that some of the ball boys work to earn money for themselves in order to buy certain things they desire such as a ball or a bicycle. Whenever they achieve what they want they just quit work and this is one of the reasons behind the high turnover rate of ball boys.

Rayes Ahmed described his own childhood as being a trouble maker who quit school at the age of eleven as a result of his educational failure and his need to play and get rid of any responsibilities. He started working as a ball boy at the age of twelve and climbed his way up until becoming a chief of court. He currently earns a monthly salary of LE850.

Educational failure and the response of the family towards this failure are an important reason behind dropouts from school and the decision to work at this young age.

According to Rayes Ahmed, the boys usually smoke cigarettes during their free time, and some of them are thieves. The high rate of absenteeism of ball boys is a result of the child's health problems or sickness of a member of his family. Sometimes it occurs as a result of the laziness of the boy and his irresponsibility towards his work. Only four of the ball boys live at Katameya and usually work in the shifts that start at seven o'clock in the morning or the shifts that end after seven o'clock at night.

The chief of courts is usually close to and trusted by the families of the children. He informs them of the working conditions, per diem and any addition in the child's income. He also informs them of any punishments, reasons for deduction and absenteeism. Therefore Rayes Ahmed stresses the importance of the introduction of

any project to the ball boys and their parents through the chief of courts first in order to guarantee the acceptance of the idea.

Mohamed Kamel, Tennis Trainer (Forty two years old)

Mohamed came from a very poor family. His father worked in the Maadi Club where he became a ball boy at the age of thirteen. He has four brothers and sisters and his mother never worked. Mohamed continued to go to school until the end of the preparatory stage.

As a ball boy, Mohamed used to play tennis during his free time and entered the ball boys tournament organized by the Egyptian Tennis Federation. As a result of his father death, Mohamed dropped out of school in order to concentrate on his work and gave his salary to his mother as a contribution to the family's income. He is currently working as a tennis trainer at the Katameya Tennis Center and is considered one of the best trainers. He receives a monthly payment of LE1400 which is considered very high when compared to other clubs.

Mohamed explained how a ball boy may become a good tennis trainer. First, the boy must play in the ball boys tournament organized by the federation and when he is old enough he should enter the practical and theoretical exams of the Olympic Academy. After passing the exams he becomes officially registered at the Egyptian Tennis Federation. According to Mohamed, literacy is necessary to be able to apply to the Academy. Without becoming registered at the Egyptian Tennis Federation, a trainer is considered low grade and is recruited only as a part-time trainer in clubs at very low monthly salaries ranging between LE300 to LE500.

The following five case studies of ball boys in the center helped in studying their social background and to determine the reasons behind their work as well as their basic needs.

Mohamed (ball boy)

Mohamed is fifteen years old. He has been working as a ball boy for two years at the Gezira Club where his father worked as a waiter. He lives in Imbaba –a one hour drive from Katameya, with his family. He has three brothers who are all enrolled in schools. Mohamed dropped out of school before completing compulsory education because as he says he did not like it. Both his parents can read and write but none of them really cared when he decided to drop out of school and start working.

Mohamed describes his family relationships as very strong and that he enjoys his discussions and the little time spent with his father. He describes his mother as a good housewife who cares for her family. Mohamed contributes three-quarters of his wage to the family income and keeps the rest for his own spending and transportation. According to him, he started work only because he dropped out of school. The family never had real financial problems and they were able to cover all his education expenses.

Mohamed is a bit of a trouble maker and is always caught doing things against the Center's rules. He was once caught playing with the tennis net as a swing and was suspended from work for one week. When asked about the reasons that made him use the net as a swing, he said that he only wanted to play. Because of Rayes Ahmed insistence that he is one of the best ball boys he would have been fired from the center a long time ago. Although he seemed to be living in a moderate financial situation

when compared to the next case study, Mohamed was scared at the beginning of the interview and seemed a bit annoyed at the questions asked.

Abdulallah

Abdulallah is sixteen years old, short and slim. He has started working at the age of twelve at the Maadi Club. He has six brothers and one sister and he is the only one of his brothers who works, except for his older brothers who are married and live with their families. Both his brothers have completed their school education and received industrial diplomas. Abdullah lives also in Imbaba with his family, he described his relationship with them as very strong and stable. His father is sick and has stopped working three years ago, it was then when Abdullah dropped out of school (fifth primary) and started working. According to him he can barely read and write. He became a ball boy at the Katameya Tennis Center through his older brother who used to work as a housekeeper in the club.

He contributes with all his wage to the family income and only keeps for himself what he uses for his transportation. His family have financial problems to the extent that sometimes he asks the Chief of Courts, Rayes Ahmed, for a loan. Abdullah contributes in the school fees of his younger sister who is in the fifth primary grade and he wishes that she would be able to finish her education. He also wishes he could go back to school but he cannot due to the financial needs of his family. He has emphasized his desire in becoming a good trainer so that he can earn enough money to support his family. Despite his bad financial conditions, Abdullah had a very pleasant smile during the whole interview. He is described by the chief of court as a hard worker and one of the best ball boys he has.

Ayman

Ayman is thirteen years old. He has been working as a ball boy for one year. His father died two years ago and his mother never worked. Ayman has two younger brothers and one sister who is married and lives with her husband. She comes to visit them every now and then. Ayman and his brothers went to school until the death of his father. They tried to continue but it was difficult to bear the expenses of the three boys in school when the pension of the father did not exceed LE100 a month. It was then when Ayman in the fifth grade decided to drop out of school and to start work. His mother started to work as a part-time cook in a house in Maadi.

Ayman and his family live at Katameya, thus he always come to work in the shift that starts at seven o'clock in the morning. According to Rayes Ahmed, Ayman is a hard worker and very responsible. His absenteeism is very little and is often resulting from his illness or that of one of his brothers.

At the beginning of each month, Ayman gives all his wage to his mother and takes only what helps in his transportation expenses. He describes his relationship with his mother as very strong and feels a certain responsibility towards her. He also feels responsible for his two younger brothers, especially Khaled who is only eight years old. Both his brothers stopped going to school and he wishes he could afford sending them back again. He said he wants to learn to read and write well because now he can barely write his own name. His father was educated and wanted them all to finish school. Even his older sister remained in school until she was married at the age of sixteen.

Mahmoud

Mahmoud is fourteen years old. He father works as a housekeeper in a public school near their house in Katameya. He is the fourth in a family of six children, three

sisters and two brothers. Both his father and mother are illiterate and his sisters never went to school. His elderly brother is seventeen years old and reached sixth primary grade. He is currently working with the father in the same school as a housekeeper, his younger brother is in second grade and he has dropped out of school in fourth grade.

Mahmoud started to work two years ago as a ball boy in the tennis center at Katameya. He dropped out of school for several reasons which as he says may be summarized as financial problems of the family and the difficulties he encountered in school with respect to his capabilities to study and the bad way teachers handled the curriculum. "One day I came back from school, after receiving very low grades and punishment from the Arabic teacher, threw away my books and decided never to return again. My father said, it is not worth it if you are not learning that much, you should work and earn some income to help us"

Mahmoud contributes nearly half his income to the family and the rest he uses for his own expenses. According to Rayes Ahmed, the boy is not very serious in his work, sometimes does not show up because he just did not feel like working on that day and prefers to hang around with his friends.

Maher

Maher is fifteen years old. He lives in Imbaba with his father who is working in a carpentry workshop. He has two older sisters who are married and live with their husbands nearby. Maher started to work two years ago with his father in the carpentry workshop. However, he did not like it. So one of his friends brought him to work as a ball boy at the center. He did not quit school and is currently in second preparatory. The reason behind his work was the financial problems his family encountered upon

the marriage of his two sisters. It was then that he decided to help his father by working.

However, because he and his parents are convinced of the importance of education – his two sisters finished compulsory education- he decided to continue from home. “It is very difficult he said with work but I am doing fine, and my father is really proud of me”.

Maher used to give his father all his wage when he started working, but now that the two sisters are married he only contributes half of his wage to the house, because they are still paying some installments and keeps the rest for his own expenses. He wishes he can finish his studying and may be go to the university so that he can make his father even more proud of him.

How can we Help

If the government depends entirely on the efforts of donors and international organizations in combating child labor, how will those ball boys or other similar working children such as domestic servants, boys working in small workshops outside of the major cities be reached? International organisations have their own priorities in determining where their funds go and which group of children they target. They mainly target the abused, exploited and the poorest of the poors.

In order to reach segments of working children such as ball boys in tennis clubs, domestic servants in households, children in small workshops individual initiatives, community participation and private sector contribution is necessary.

Suggested Partial Care Project

Phase one of the project: (Pilot phase)

One of the big clubs in Cairo will be approached with the idea of implementing a partial care project targeting ball boys in the club. The Katameya Tennis Center may be a good start for the implementation of the project because of the limited number of ball boys which facilitates the implementation and follow-up of the project. However, ball boys in the center are considered to be in a much better situation when compared to other clubs where conditions of work of ball boys are worse. But at the end they are all children deprived of education, health care and most importantly of their right to enjoy their own childhood.

A local NGO working in the field of child protection and care will be selected follow-up the implementation of the project in cooperation with board of directors of the selected club. The Katameya Center will also be easier in the implementation because it can depend on the administration efforts only as it is a family managed project and does not have a board of directors. Furthermore, the owners of the center are supporting the implementation of the project.

Awareness of the project will be raised by the NGO within the selected club in order to get cooperation of the club members with respect to fund raising and implementation of the project.

Literacy classes will be arranged and start and health care services will be provided to all ball boys in the club.

Phase two of the project:

The selected NGO will help other NGOs and clubs all over Cairo to implement the same project. Other segment of working children in the same conditions as the ball boys should be identified and targeted.

**A PARTIAL CARE PROJECT
FOR
WORKING CHILDREN IN TENNIS CLUBS
IN CAIRO**

The development objective is to provide working children with education and health care. This is expected to provide solutions to the root causes of the problem of child labor in Egypt.

Strengthening the capabilities of local specialized NGOs to deal with these problems would be an indirect target of the project.

(a) Project Objectives

The project has two main objectives:

1. Providing facility support in working children in tennis clubs and centers.
2. Improving the health conditions of these working children.

(b) Target Beneficiaries

Target Beneficiaries: working children in tennis clubs and centers. There are nearly twenty tennis clubs and centers in Cairo. The average number of ball boys in each club may be twenty to sixty children. A total of approximately 300 boys aged ten to sixteen will be targeted by the proposed project.

Direct recipients: The local NGOs responsible of the implementation of the project, and the staff employed (teachers, nurses, doctors, and club members). The capacity of the local NGO to identify problems of working children and be able to solve them will be enhanced through technical assistance provided by UNICEF and ILO.

SECTION A

(a) Development Objective

The development objective for this project is to provide working children with education and health care. Thus attempting to provide solutions to the root causes of the problem of child labor in Egypt.

Also strengthening the capabilities of local specialized NGOs to deal with those problems would be an indirect target of the project.

(b) Project Objectives

The project has two main objectives:

1. Providing literacy classes to working children in tennis clubs and centers.
2. Improving the health conditions of those working children.

(c) Target Beneficiaries

Target Beneficiaries: working children in tennis clubs and centers. There are nearly twenty tennis clubs and centers in Cairo. The average number of ball boys in each club may be twenty to forty children. A total of approximately 500 boys aged ten to sixteen will be targeted by the proposed project.

Direct recipients: The local NGO responsible of the implementation of the project, and the staff appointed (teachers, nurses, doctors, and club members). The capacity of the local NGO to identify problems of working children and be able to solve them will be enhanced through technical assistance provided by UNICEF and ILO.

Institution: The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Manpower and Migration may help in the achievement of the project targets. Also other associations and NGOs specialized in maternity and children may participate in the implementation of the project.

(d) Project Strategy and Implementation Arrangements

The project will be implemented by a local NGO. The NGO will start the project by forming a steering committee that includes a member from the NGO, a member from the board of directors of the club, and three members from the club. The steering committee will then handle all the required procedures for the implementation and follow-up of the project. Also the NGO will help in the follow up of the project in cooperation with the club board of directors.

The board of directors of the club will help introduce the project to members in order to raise funds, thus maintaining the project sustainability.

The technical cooperation of officers from the ILO and UNICEF and the Ministry of Manpower may be important in raising the awareness and interest of club members in the importance of the implementation of such project. This will encourage a high rate of members' participation in the project.

The steering committee will introduce the project to the ball boys and their families in cooperation with the chief of courts who is as mentioned earlier² the key person for raising their interest.

² See Chapter 3

SECTION B

Prerequisites

Output 1	Activities
<p>A steering committee should be formed in the club.</p> <p>The committee must include a member of the NGO, a member of the board of directors of the club and two interested members of the club. (the number of members may vary according to the size of the club)</p> <p>Responsible Party The NGO with the Board of Directors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NGO approaches the club board of directors in order to introduce the project idea and get approval of the board. - A seminar should be held inviting speakers from the NGO, the ILO and the UNICEF in order to introduce the project to the club members and raise their interest to participate in its implementation. - The steering committee is formed in order to handle the project implementation and follow-up.

Output 2	Activities
<p>Allocate funds to the project.</p> <p>Responsible Party The steering committee</p>	<p>Discuss with the board of directors the addition of one to five Egyptian pounds on the yearly membership fees of the club members. The amount will be determined according to the number of members in the club. The greater the number the lower the addition.</p>

SECTION C

Immediate Objectives, Outputs and Activities***Objective I***

Objective	Success Criteria
1. Providing literacy classes to ball boys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="783 726 1477 976">– By the end of the project, working children in the selected tennis center will still be maintaining their jobs, and at the same time will be attending literacy classes. <li data-bbox="783 1029 1311 1068">– Children would start to read and write.

Output 1	Activities
<p data-bbox="350 1271 903 1379">Allocating a room in the club that would be used as a classroom for the children.</p> <p data-bbox="350 1494 613 1534">Responsible party</p> <p data-bbox="350 1573 675 1613">The steering committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="924 1284 1477 1389">– Negotiations with the club board of directors for the allocation of the room. <li data-bbox="924 1442 1477 1613">– In case of existence of a room necessary changes should be implemented in order to adapt it to the needs of the project. <li data-bbox="924 1666 1477 1771">– Use the club contractor for the renovation of the room if necessary.

Output 2	Activities
<p data-bbox="368 350 737 402">Appoint the technical staff.</p> <p data-bbox="368 502 685 555">Implementation party</p> <p data-bbox="368 576 685 629">The steering committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="944 402 1531 660">– A member of the club working as an Arabic teacher may volunteer for this task thus encouraging members' participation in the project. <li data-bbox="944 700 1531 826">– Otherwise, Contact the Ministry of education in order to appoint a teacher. <li data-bbox="944 852 1531 1042">– Another suggestion is to contact the faculty of education in order to appoint an Arabic language graduate. <li data-bbox="944 1081 1531 1208">– The candidate must be interviewed by the members of the steering committee. <li data-bbox="944 1234 1531 1360">– The second and third alternatives will require funding.

Output 3	Activities
Provision of school books, furniture and stationary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approach the Ministry of education to provide the necessary curriculums.
Provision of school curriculums.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approach the National Council for Childhood and Maternity for the provision their literacy books which were issued for literacy classes within the Comprehensive Care and Literacy of Rural Women and Children.
Implementation Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charity organizations may be approached for the provision of books and stationary. This could be one of the way of ensuring partial sustainability to the project.
The Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many Private schools in urban areas offer old school books free of charge to help orphanages and other specialized organizations.

Objective	Success Criteria
Providing Health Care to Ball Boys in the club.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiating with the club the use of their clinic for the health care of those children. - Providing a well-balanced meal. - By the end of the project, health conditions of the ball boys should improve. - Mental problems arising from working at a young age should also be treated through psychological help and counseling sessions.

Output 1	Activities
Providing a well equipped clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiating with the club the use of its clinic for this purpose. - The clinic will be open for ball boys on a daily basis according to a defined schedule.

Output 2	Activities
<p data-bbox="348 402 712 455">Appointing technical staff.</p> <p data-bbox="348 573 644 626">Implementing party</p> <p data-bbox="348 634 679 679">The Steering Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="928 468 1425 581">– Negotiating with the club the use of the clinic doctor for this task. <li data-bbox="928 613 1431 871">– A member of the club working as a doctor may volunteer for this task. This would encourage members' participation in the project. <li data-bbox="928 915 1442 1094">– Otherwise, the Ministry of Health will be approached to appoint a qualified doctor and nurse. <li data-bbox="928 1139 1400 1252">– Candidates must be interviewed by the steering committee. <li data-bbox="928 1297 1437 1410">– The first and third options will require funding.

Output 3	Activities
<p>Providing the necessary medicines and vaccines.</p> <p>Implementing Party</p> <p>The Steering Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approaching charity organizations for the provision of medicines thus allowing for partial sustainability of the project. - Approaching club members to contribute by providing some medicines to the project purpose. - Approaching the Ministry of Health for the supply of the necessary vaccines if needed.

SECTION D

Inputs

1. *Staff*

Steering Committee

Four members: One from the NGO, One from the Club board of directors, and two members from the club.

One Doctor

One Teacher

2. *Building*

The NGO will arrange with the club the provision of one room to use as a classroom. The room will be adapted to the required needs such as a board, table and chairs.

The NGO will arrange with club the use of its clinic for the project purpose.

3. *Equipment*

One big table and chairs as well as stationary, notebooks and schoolbooks will be provided as mentioned in the previous section.

Medicines and vaccines will provided as mentioned in Section B.

SECTION E

Risks

- The most important risk in this project is related to the legality of the issue of child labor. The parents of a working child may hesitate to use the services rendered by the project fearing the loss of the child's work since it is against the law.
- The subject should be introduced first to the chief of courts responsible of the supervision of ball boys. According to the interview conducted with Rayes Ahmed, the chief of courts at the club, he believes that he should be the one introducing the idea of the project to the parents since they have complete faith in him and trust him with their children.
- Seminars must be conducted to the targeted children and their parents in order to introduce the idea of the project, and explain its role in order to assure the families that the child will not loose his job. A representative of the Ministry of Manpower in these seminars may be important since it will reflect legal approval.
- Another problem that may hinder the process is the difficulty of dealing with working children, especially at adolescence age. Some of them may need some counseling sessions in order to be prepared to accept the idea of education itself.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

The project will be subject to monthly monitoring by the Steering Committee in order to follow-up implementation and progress.

The project will also be subject to a semi-annual evaluation by the NGO in order to follow-up the implementation and progress of the project. The NGO will be responsible of detecting any problems that may hinder the implementation of the project.

See Appendix V for a real implementation of the above project but on a smaller scale.

APPENDIX I

CHILD LAW NO. 12

Working Child Care

Article 64: Subject to the provision of clause 2, article 18 of the Law on Education enacted by Law no. 139 for the year 1981, children shall not be employed for work, before attaining fourteen complete calendar years of age. Nor they shall be provided with training before they attain twelve calendar years of age.

Children of twelve to fourteen years of age may, by decree of the concerned governor, after obtaining the approval of the Minister of Education, be employed for season work which should cause no harm to their health or growth, nor disturb their punctual studies.

Article 65: The executive statutes shall indicate the system of employing the children and the conditions, circumstances and cases in which they are employed, as well as the works, crafts, and trades in which they shall be engaged, according to the different stages of the age.

Article 66: A child shall not be employed to work for more than six hours a day, and the working hours shall comprise a meal and rest interval or more than one interval amounting to a total of not less than one hour. This/these period/s shall be determined so the child shall not be made to work more than four continuous hours.

Children shall not be employed to work overtime, or work during the weekly rest days or official holidays.

In all cases, children shall not be made to work between eight PM and seven am.

Article 67: Every employer who engages a child under the age of sixteen years shall grant him a work ID card establishing that he is working for that employer. On this card, the picture of the child shall be affixed, and the card shall also be approved by and sealed with the stamp of the Manpower Office.

Article 68: An employer who engages one or more children shall:

Put up at a prominent place, at the location of work, a copy comprising the provisions prescribed in this chapter.

Draw-up regularly a statement indicating the duty hours and the intervals for rest.

Notify to the appropriate administrative authority the names of children employed thereby, and the persons assigned to supervise their work.

Article 69: The employer shall deliver to the child personally, or to one of his parents, the wage he earns or the remuneration and other dues payable thereto. The delivery of this payment shall clear the employer's obligation.

APPENDIX II

THE UNIFIED LABOR LAW

Children Employment

Article 98: Every employer who engages a child under the age of sixteen years shall grant him a work ID card establishing that he is working for that employer. On this card, the picture of the child shall be affixed, and the card shall also be approved by and sealed with the stamp of the Manpower Office.

Article 99: Children shall not be employed to work before attaining the age of completing compulsory education.

Article 100: The Ministry of manpower shall issue a decree that organizes children employment, the conditions of employment and the types of work and crafts where children should not be employed.

Article 101: A child shall not be employed to work for more than six hours a day, and the working hours shall comprise a meal and rest interval or more than one interval amounting to a total of not less than one hour. This/these period/s shall be determined so the child shall not be made to work more than four continuous hours. Children shall not be employed to work overtime, or work during the weekly rest days or official holidays.

In all cases children should not be employed between seven PM and 6 am.

Article 102: An employer who engages five or more children shall:

Put up at a prominent place, at the location of work, a copy comprising the provisions prescribed in this chapter.

Draw-up regularly a statement indicating the duty hours and the intervals for rest.

Notify to the appropriate administrative authority the names of children employed thereby, and the persons assigned to supervise their work.

Article 103: The above regulations are not applied to children working in agricultural activities.

Work Inspection and Penalties

Article 258: The employer shall be penalized upon disobeying any of the regulations in articles (98,99,101,102). The penalty shall be a payment of at least LE500 not to exceed LE1000 for each child employed against the regulations.

APPENDIX III

DIRECT ACTION PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED
BY IPEC IN EGYPT**Capacity Building of Labor, Occupational Safety
and Health Inspectorate**

The main strategy of this program is to define new roles and functions for labor inspectors at the Ministry of Manpower to ensure the safety and protection of children in the workplace. This is achieved through training employees of the Ministry of Manpower to be aware of facts and issues about child labor. The program also aims at training health inspectors to act as teachers to guide employers regarding child labor. The budget located for this project is \$20,040

Direct Actions by Employers

Awareness Raising and Policy Development Initiative for Employers at the Federation of Egyptian Industries with a budget of \$44,000.

Target Group: FEI Board of Directors, Board members of 14 chambers of industries & 2000 selected FEI member companies.

Main Strategies: To formulate an FEI policy statement to address the hazards and dangers of child labor and to develop an advocacy position for leading business organizations.

The above projects do not directly target working children. They focus on raising the awareness of employees who are handling child labor issues. Also, those projects require lots of funds and the direct interference of the government as well as other specialized agencies. Although those projects are very important, they do not represent the type of efforts this paper is aiming at highlighting.

Direct Action by Workers

The Integrated Project for Working Girls in Shoubra El Khema with a budget of \$41,784. The implementing agencies for this program are the Egyptian Trade Union Federation & the Association of Social Services.

Target Group: Working girls, parents, labor leaders in Shoubra El Khema.

Main Strategies: To provide protective measures for working girls in workshops of Shoubra El Khema.

Direct Action by NGOs

Project 1

The Integrated Child Labor Project in Kom Ghorab, Greater Cairo, with a budget of \$55,000. Nearly 3500 families live in this area and 1500 children work, mainly in leather tanneries, ceramic ovens and in car mechanics. The implementing Agency is The Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS).

The project targets working children between the ages of 8-15 years in Kom Ghorab. The aim of the project is to limit child labor and rehabilitate children who are already working. The objective is to train those children in different jobs, so that they may move to less hazardous jobs.

Particular attention is given to raising the awareness of community leaders and organizing their efforts in order to ensure continuity of results after the end of the project.

The Shoubra El Khema Direct Action Program for working children in hazardous Industries.

The implementing Agency for this project is the Community Development Association in Manshiyat Nasser. The project is targeting 300 working Children (thirty percent less than 12 years old and seventy percent in the age bracket twelve to fourteen years), Community leaders in Shubra Al-Khayma, workshop owners & the implementing NGO. The main strategies of the project are to provide selected children working in hazardous conditions in textiles, plastics & auto workshops in Shubra Al-Khayma with access to education, vocational training and rehabilitation services.

The above projected was completed in August 1999. IPEC continued sustaining it for at least one more year. Then, IPEC will facilitate the provision of funds to the project through NGOs in the targeted area.

Awareness Raising

The Awareness Raising of Child Labor project in Greater Cairo at the national level with a Budget of \$93,170. The implementing agency is the National Council for Childhood & Maternity. The project is targeting Government, Community Leaders, employers, workers, working children & their parents.

The main strategy is to raise community awareness of the hazards involved with child labor.

The IPEC projects have targeted certain areas in Greater Cairo and some children working in hazardous conditions. However, some segments of working

children are not targeted at all. Furthermore, all those projects are based on studies and research by the implemented agency and have been given priority in implementation because of the type of work and the large number of children involved. They require large funding and the contribution of several specialized agencies and NGOs.

The above projects may be used as models for interested individuals and private entrepreneurs to guide them to the type of organized efforts required. Those efforts should target areas and segments of working children that are beyond the reach of those projects.

Proposed Additional Programs³

IPEC is planning the implementation of other programs with different agencies as follows: Support for the Ministry of Social Affairs in the rehabilitation of working children in its centers, help for the FEI in fighting child labor in specific industries, helping the Ministry of Health and Population in building the capacity of the health inspectors to detect the worst forms of child labor. In statistical research, Egypt is scheduled for a SIMPOC Survey in the year 2001 as well as a Rapid Assessment Survey for the hazardous forms of child labor where children are working in hazardous conditions or are badly treated.

³ IPEC-Egypt Fact Sheet. ILO Cairo Office.

APPENDIX IV
SCOPE OF THE INTERVIEWS
CONDUCTED

The Family Background

- The structure of the family of each child: Nuclear or extended families, number of children, and breadwinner in the family.
- Educational background of the parents and their awareness of the benefits arising from educating their children.
- Economic Status of the Family: property ownership, family income, housing conditions, etc.
- Relationships in the family: Family cohesion, Type of parents' relationship, family problems.

The Child

- Age of the child.
- Educational Level: Reasons behind dropouts or total illiteracy.
- Health Conditions: this stage will not involve any medical examination. It will only provide an idea about the general health condition of each child according to his own definition and that of the chief of the courts.

- The level of income he earns as well as his share in the family income and his expenditures.
- The family income, relationships and the way the child is treated by his family members.
- Needs: To be able to determine the needs of those children whether during working hours, at home or in their future life.

Factors leading to work

- Educational factors: Factors related to schools, and educational failure.
- Financial and economic factors: Need of income for the family or to earn their own money.
- Cultural factors: The need to learn a profession thus providing the opportunity for a faster career.

APPENDIX V

KATAMEYA HEIGHTS TENNIS CENTER
BALL BOYS EDUCATION PROGRAM

This project is a real example of how the private sector and individuals can contribute to the fight against child labor. It is a very simple project, with very little effort and small funds. The project will be sustainable so long as the members of the center are interested and committed to the case.

The ball boys education program was initiated in October 2001 by the center's manager. A brochure was distributed to the members to explain to them the program, the age of the ball boys and their education status. The brochure also highlighted the type of help needed from them. The response of the members was immediate and their interest was very high.

The recipients: Fifteen ball boys who are full time workers at the center and two house keeping girls who joined the literacy classes in January 2002.

Project Cost: LE 5000/year

Funds: The funding of the project is raised through members of the center. Members provide monthly cash, ten to thirty pounds or yearly larger sums. Other members contribute through providing old books and stationnaries.

Literacy classes: A teacher was appointed with a monthly salary of LE300. The classes take place at the center, during the boys break, in order to be well supervised. The teacher assessed the boys in order to determine their levels and divided them into two different groups. We noticed that some of the boys never attended school, others dropped out after their third or fourth grade, however they could not read or even write their names. The third group (only two boys) are still enrolled in school, in

grades seven and nine but their levels are very low when compared to their education year. The center allows those two boys to leave early when they have exams.

Ball boys response: The boys were very happy and interested in the classes. Also the rate of absenteeism decreased, their turnover at work declined, and they became more attached to the place.

Incentives: Money incentives are given to the boys through a system of quarterly exams. Incentives are given to the higher grades in order to encourage the boys to study.

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