Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Elimination of **child labour in agriculture** through social protection

GUIDANCE NOTE

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Contents

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Abbreviations

CLMS	child labour monitoring system
CODI	Core Diagnostic Instrument
CPS	child protection system
DW	decent work
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GSFP	Ghana school feeding programme
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISPA	Interagency Social Protection Assessments
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

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Chapter 1
Introduction

The aim of this guidance note is to enable practitioners at national, regional and global levels to eliminate child labour in agriculture through social protection systems and programmes. Thus, the guidance note is a tool to support the design and adaptation of social protection systems which contribute to the elimination of child labour in agriculture, as well as to ensure that social protection programmes do not inadvertently contribute to perpetuating or increasing child labour.

Universal social protection is essential to reducing poverty and improving lives around the world, not least in rural areas. Evidence shows that the integration of child labour concerns into social protection can be a powerful tool to address child labour. However, given the particular dynamics in the agricultural sector, social protection may also lead to an increase in child labour if not designed and monitored in a child-labour sensitive way (FAO, 2020b). This note builds upon research and evidence on child labour and social protection, such as the recently published ILO and UNICEF study (ILO and UNICEF, 2022), to provide guidance specifically developed for the agriculture sector. The guidance note is a living document, as the evidence based on social protection as a tool to eliminate child labour in agriculture is still growing through research and evaluations.

Since 1999, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has developed the **Decent Work Agenda (DW Agenda)** with four pillars: 1) **employment creation**, 2) **rights at work**, 3) **social protection** and 4) **social dialogue**. The DW Agenda is included in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), launched in 2015 (essentially in SDG 1 and 8). SDG 8 aims to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and **decent work for all**." Target 8.7 under this goal urges to: "take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and **secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour**,

including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 **end child labour in all its forms**.". Universal social protection is also grounded in SDG 1, and in the Target 1.3 to "implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable." The elimination of child labour and social protection are both fundamental human rights.

This guidance note will focus on the part of the decent work agenda where social protection and elimination of child labour interact in the agricultural context. The multi-faceted gender dimensions of child labour include the gender aspects of child labour situations, as well as gender inequality among adults at work in rural areas as a driver of child labour. This is why the note will also highlight the linkages with interventions for promoting gender equality and rural women's and girls' empowerment – in line with SDG 5, which seeks to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."

The audience of the guidance note is comprised of governments, UN agencies, policymakers and practitioners in the fields of decent work, social protection and child labour, as well as other stakeholders working on related issues. The emphasis is on social protection systems in the agricultural sector that can affect child labour by:

1. reducing the number of children already involved in child labour in agriculture;
2. preventing children from engaging in child labour in agriculture; and
3. ensuring that the health, education and development of children will not be negatively affected as a result of social protection initiatives unintentionally increasing child labour in agriculture.

The guidance note will shed light on specific social protection measures and point to potentials and pitfalls of these measures in efforts to eliminate child labour. It will further reflect on how to integrate the elimination of child labour in programme cycles of rural social protection programmes. Funding mechanisms of social protection are not considered in this note. As much as possible, the evidence used is derived from research, evaluations and studies specifically related to child labour and social protection in the agricultural sector, but more general evidence on child labour and social protection is included as well.

The guidance note consists of five chapters. Chapter 2 provides definitions of key concepts: agriculture, child labour and social protection. Chapter 3 introduces the rationale for integrating child labour into social protection systems, especially in policies and programmes. Chapter 4 discusses the lessons learned from addressing child labour through social protection, and it develops a conceptual framework for

future action. Finally, chapter 5 provides guidance on how to integrate child labour concerns into social protection systems, policies and programmes. The reference list at the back of this report includes research, practice documentation and frameworks used for the development of this guidance note. These references will also be useful for readers with an interest in understanding key concepts in more detail. Annex 1 contains a summary overview of different types of social protection instruments and their potential impact on child labour.

The guidance note was developed through an extensive desk review of available evidence on social protection and child labour. The evidence reviewed consists of research reports and academic papers, reports on evaluations and studies undertaken by UN agencies and similar entities. In a few cases, this guidance note also includes sources that use a less rigorous methodology, for example briefing notes and policy advocacy briefs, where these are found to be useful to illustrate mechanisms and points derived from across multiple studies and evaluations.

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Chapter 2
Key concepts and definitions

2.1. Agriculture

This guidance note uses a broad definition of agriculture as any activity that produces plants or animals – including freshwater and marine species – for food, fibre, fuel or medicine. Hence, the term refers to a wide range of production systems including crop farming, livestock keeping and pastoralism, forestry, fishing and aquaculture – at different scales, from subsistence to industrial production – using different systems, production and post-harvest handling techniques.

Hence, there is considerable scope for variation in children's involvement in production, depending on the form of agriculture in question, but the agricultural sector contains the vast majority of child labour worldwide. According to the latest global estimates on child labour, 70 percent of it takes place in agriculture (ILO and UNICEF, 2021)

This guidance note will, however, focus primarily on children engaged in work in small-scale agriculture, mostly in the informal sector. This includes activities related to crop farming, herding, fishing and aquaculture, and other agricultural activities. This focus was selected as child labour tends to be more prominent in small-scale production where poverty, marginalization and vulnerability are highly concentrated (ILO and UNICEF, 2021). The focus does not rule out attention to large-scale formal sector undertakings.

2.2. Child labour

2.2.1. Definition of child labour in international instruments

The UN Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) stipulates that all children have the right to freedom from economic exploitation or, in other words, child labour. It is important to note that not all work performed by children is considered child labour. Children can, and should, help out in their family, doing age-appropriate tasks in the household as part of their upbringing. This instils a sense of belonging, responsibility and skills in children. Child labour, on the other hand, is work that is harmful to children.

Exactly what that means is defined in two ILO Conventions: ILO Convention 138 on minimum age, and ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Child labour is defined as **work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children**; and/or that which interferes with their education by depriving them of the opportunity to benefit from school, obliging them to leave school prematurely, or that which requires them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. (ILO, n.d.a)

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Whether or not particular forms of work should be considered child labour depends on a number of factors related to the work the child is doing, the context in which work is being conducted, and characteristics of the child (such as the child's age, the tools used for the work, the hour of the day that work is performed, and so on.) (ILO, n.d.b; Kielland and Tovo, 2006).

The **worst forms of child labour** (WFCL) refer to the most harmful activities for children and are prohibited for children below 18 years of age under ILO Convention 182. They include all forms for slavery such as the sale and trafficking of children, forced labour, use of children in armed conflict, the involvement of children in illegal activities such as the production and sale of drugs, or for sexual exploitation, and for hazardous work (ILO, 2002).

Hazardous work is a WFCL. Hazardous child labour is defined by Article 3 (d) of ILO Convention 182 as: "**work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children**."

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Hazardous child labour is commonly found in agriculture, and it includes the use of pesticides, dangerous tools and machines, working during the night or in isolation – all conditions that harm the health and safety of children. States that ratify ILO Convention 182 must put in place a list of hazardous work prohibited below the age of 18 years. This list will typically include a number of tasks and processes in agriculture, forestry and fishing, such as working at height, diving, and applying pesticides and other toxic substances. ILO Convention 182 is universally ratified. Some countries have included the entire agricultural sector on their hazardous work list. A blanket ban, however, is likely to be counterproductive as it impedes children and young people's socialisation and participation in skills development (FAO and ILO, 2021).

Provided that work is non-hazardous and after compulsory education is completed, children can take up full time work from the age of 15 years (with an option for a country to set the minimum age at 14 years for an interim period of time, and at 16 years in fishing in accordance with ILO Convention 188). School-going children may perform light work from the age of 13 years (or 12 years). Light work is work that is non-hazardous, does not interfere with education, and takes place for a limited number of hours per day. This must be defined in national legislation.

2.2.2. Child labour in agriculture

Applying these definitions, the latest global estimates (ILO and UNICEF, 2021) have found, alarmingly, that the number of children in child labour is increasing globally for the first time since 2000, with an estimated 160 million child labourers in the world in 2020. 70 percent of the children in child labour are engaged in agriculture as defined in this guidance note, and most of them perform work that may harm their health and education in family operations.

Children working in agriculture are generally very young. Agriculture accounts for **76.6 percent of all child labour in the age group of 5–11 years**, and for **75.8 percent in the age group of 12–14 years**. Yet, the older age **group of 15–17 years is at particularly high risk of performing hazardous work**, such as applying pesticides or toiling with heavy work instead of being engaged in a decent work opportunity.

Child labour in agriculture is driven by a complex web of causes. These include (but are not limited to) poverty and economic vulnerability, especially when an adverse event causes an economic shock to the household, labour shortages during peak season, low agricultural productivity, unsafe migration practices and exploitation of migrant workers. In turn, limited access to education, health care and other social services, as well as social norms normalising child labour, represent an additional layer of underlying drivers of child labour. In particular, social norms related to gender often define the work that children do: boys tend to work in herding, fishing and other activities considered men's work, while girls tend to work in small livestock keeping, post-harvest handling, and so on, which is considered women's work. Some tasks such as weeding fields and fetching water for irrigation, are often considered children's tasks, not adult work (ILO and UNICEF, 2021; FAO, 2020).

The consequences include the perpetuation of inter-generational poverty, physical and mental health problems for children, and the continuation of agricultural practices that are not sustainable. Child labour undermines progress towards fulfilling the SDGs, not only SDG 8, but also the goals of achieving zero hunger and poverty eradication, education for all and sustainable use of natural resources.

2.3. Social protection

2.3.1. Definitions of social protection

Social protection, or social security, is a fundamental human right and can be understood as a set of policies and programmes which addresses economic, environmental and social vulnerabilities to food insecurity and poverty by protecting and promoting livelihoods.[1] Social protection is important to help realise other human rights, such as the right to education.

Social protection has gone from being seen as individual, ad hoc social protection programmes, often run by donors, to sustainable national systems owned and coordinated by governments (White, 2016).

A social protection system is considered to fulfil four complementary functions (FAO, 2021):

- **Protective social protection (SP1)** seeks to meet households' basic needs and supports access to basic services such as education and health. Protective interventions include cash and in-kind transfers, conditional or unconditional, and subsidies to access social services. In the agricultural sector, these measures aim to reduce the use of adverse risk-coping strategies, such as selling productive assets.
- **Preventive social protection (SP2)** aims at reducing shocks that push households into poverty, as well as to avert deprivation. Preventive interventions include insurance schemes, savings clubs and livelihood diversification initiatives. These measures seek to mitigate risks in the agricultural sector associated with events such as droughts, floods, loss of livestock, etc.
- **Promotive social protection (SP3)** aims at increasing household income and assets, providing employment and creating community infrastructure. This includes public works programmes, productive input subsidies and different types of transfers (social, asset, input). These measures are geared towards

[1] This definition is taken from FAO in 2017, but the definition by the Social Protection Interagency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B) can also apply: "Social protection is a set of policies and programmes aimed at preventing and protecting all people against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion, throughout their life cycle placing a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups. This means ensuring adequate protection for all who need it, including children; people of working age in case of maternity, sickness, work injury or for those without jobs; persons with disability and older persons. This protection can be provided through social insurance, tax-funded social benefits, social assistance services, public works programmes and other schemes guaranteeing basic income security and access to essential services."

creating a basis for the farm household to invest in productivity-enhancing activities, to access markets through improved infrastructure, as well as to promote off-farm investments in microenterprises.

- **Transformative social protection (SP4)** seeks to change structural inequalities by addressing underlying social vulnerabilities and discriminatory practices and behaviours. This includes awareness raising, anti-discrimination campaigns and promotion of rights, such as women's rights. The goal is to promote equitable access to productive resources such as land, reduce discrimination in access to and ownership of productive resources, and give equal labour opportunities.

Social protection should be universal, as stated by target 1.3 of the SDGs: 'Implement nationally **appropriate social protection systems and measures for all**, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable'. Today, only 17 percent of the population in Africa is covered by at least one social protection benefit (ILO/UNICEF, 2021).

Social protection includes different initiatives and policies, both short term and long term, both targeted and universal, aiming at preventing or protecting people against poverty, shocks, social exclusion and other vulnerabilities throughout their lifecycles, with a particular emphasis towards vulnerable groups.

The FAO Social Protection Framework (FAO, 2017) not only includes the four social protection functions (protective, preventive, promotive and transformative). It also stresses the importance of three cross-cutting principles: social inclusion, gender equality and sustainability. The framework places social protection within the context of strengthening resilience, promoting food security and nutrition, eradicating poverty and promoting stable livelihoods in rural areas. A systems approach to social protection is essential in avoiding fragmentation of interventions. National social protection systems must be put in place in conjunction with agricultural development, promotion of decent rural employment, natural resource management and delivery of social services, such as education and health.

In this regard, it should be noted that agricultural subsidies, agricultural extension, provision of micro-credit, youth employment programmes and similar activities to increase income and productivity are not usually considered social protection *per se* (FAO, 2021). However, they may play an important supportive role to social protection, especially in relation to promotive and transformative social protection and the elimination of child labour as found by the ILO and UNICEF (ILO and UNICEF, 2022). Therefore, this guidance note applies a slightly expanded definition of social protection compared to the FAO Social Protection Framework (and other classifications), which also includes, for example agricultural improvement.

Across the UN system and UN member states, the concept of a 'social protection floor' defines common minimum standards for social protection. ILO *Recommendation 202 on social protection floors* defines a social protection floor to comprise at least the following services: access to essential healthcare (including maternity care); basic income security for children; basic income security for persons of working age who are unable to earn a sufficient income; and basic income security for older persons. This also points to another important principle of significant relevance to social protection in the context of child labour elimination: the life cycle, or life stage, approach.

2.3.2. Classification of social protection related to child labour in agriculture

Social protection can be classified into four types: non-contributory provision, social insurance, labour market programmes and social care services. This recognises that not only direct support to children is relevant to child labour elimination, but that support at other life stages could have an impact on child labour as well.

Non-contributory provisions include schemes for all residents (universal free public health care services for example) or broad schemes for individuals belonging to a specific group (e.g. child grants, universal old-age pension or cash transfer programmes targeting vulnerable groups). Social insurance includes schemes that allow fee-paying members support in the case of events that may change the person's living conditions and circumstances (e.g. unemployment benefits). Labour market programmes support individuals through promoting employment opportunities (e.g. through training or job intermediation services). Labour market programmes may be implemented in conjunction with non-contributory social assistance or social insurance schemes. Social care services cover direct support to children and families through outreach, case management and referral services (e.g. child protection systems).

Figure 1 illustrates a classification of key types of social protection schemes and services of different UN agencies, and it will be used for understanding social protection in relation to child labour. Note, again, that labour market programmes and social care services are not always considered as social protection services *per se* but could be presented as supportive services that are still relevant to understand in the context child labour elimination and social protection in agriculture.

The different types of social protection instruments that may be used to address child labour may sometimes serve multiple higher-level purposes. For example, child grants may be both protective and preventive – preventing economic shocks from, for example natural disasters, while also protecting livelihoods. Challenges arise where a social protection initiative may protect and/or transform families' economic resilience and at the same time render children vulnerable to child labour. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Figure 1. **Social protection classification adopted in this guidance note**

Figure 2. **Classification of social protection interventions per function**

When analysing and applying social protection towards the elimination of child labour, it is important to bear in mind that children are not just passive recipients of social protection services determined by adults. Children have a right to participation in decisions that impact their life under article 12 of the ***UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*** (UNCRC), which also states that actions taken must always be in the best interest of the child (art. 3). A number of organization, for example UNICEF, promote child sensitive social protection as children are more likely than adults to experience poverty, and addressing poverty and deprivation in childhood can have life-long consequences. Depending on a child's age, gender, family situation, and so on, social protection may have different impacts. Similarly, children's need for social protection and supportive social care services change over time, for example, as the child grows from needing early childhood care and development services, to basic school access and then to secondary school access (UNICEF, 2014).

Child- or adolescent-sensitive social protection is not the same as child- or adolescent-focussed social protection, where services are targeted at children and adolescents. In child- and adolescent-sensitive social protection frameworks, the impact on children and adolescents of various types of social protection is analysed, understood and considered when designing and implementing social protection schemes. Hence, for example, old age pensions may have an impact on children. In a child-sensitive social protection framework, this impact is understood, and the pension scheme is applied in such a way that it benefits children, or at the very least does not harm them (UNICEF, 2014). The same applies to adolescents (Cirillo *et al.*, 2021). For instance, different types of social protection interventions (including unconditional or conditional cash transfers targeting poor households, or child grants) influence the participation of adolescents in labour activities (Cirillo *et al.*, 2021). In the context of an adolescent- or child-sensitive social protection framework, the impacts on adolescents and children will depend on design and implementation features of a social protection programme, such as the targeting method and the eligibility criteria, the conditionality, the transfer amount and other key features.

Hence, the child- and adolescent-sensitive approach to social protection is closely aligned with the life-cycle approach included in the FAO Social Protection Framework, insofar as it considers the evolving needs of different groups and individuals as they develop over time and with age progression. In the life-cycle approach to social protection, the impacts are understood in relation to all age groups, not just those below the age of 18 years. In this sense, the child- and adolescent-sensitive social protection approach is most relevant to issues of child labour as this concerns children and young people below 18 years of age.

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Chapter 3
The rationale for integrating child labour action into social protection programming in agriculture

Child labour is a severe human rights violation that must be eliminated as a matter of priority. There is a growing body of evidence, and a growing recognition, that social protection can be a highly effective means to prevent and eliminate child labour, if designed and implemented thoughtfully and based on an understanding of the mechanisms that drive child labour. However, there may be unintended consequences of social protection in agricultural settings, for example where the productive impact of cash transfers increases household labour demands, thereby enhancing the risks of child labour. Therefore, mitigating measures are required to avoid those unintended consequences. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

FAO's vision for social protection is that *"People and communities living in rural areas as well as those whose livelihoods depend on natural resources are supported by social protection systems that help to: ensure their food security and improved nutrition, protect them before, during and after shocks and stresses, promote resilient livelihoods and sustainable management of eco-systems, and stimulate pro-poor growth and inclusive rural development"*. (FAO, 2017)

Child labour tends to undermine resilient livelihoods, pro-poor growth and inclusive rural development through perpetuating inter-generational poverty. Therefore, child labour can undermine FAO's vision for social protection if not considered.

The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated just how vulnerable children may be to crisis-induced shocks. The latest global estimates on child labour were developed pre-COVID, but include scenarios for the possible impact of the pandemic on child labour, predicting an additional 8.9 million children in child labour by the end of 2022 if urgent mitigation measures were not put in place. Where comprehensive social protection measures are put in place, these could more than off-set the expected impact of COVID-19 pandemic on child labour and lead to a further reduction in its incidence globally (ILO and UNICEF, 2021).

With these caveats, integrating child labour analysis into social protection policies and programmes, while making sure that programmes address the underlying drivers of child labour and/or directly target families and communities prone to exhibiting a high incidence of child labour, is a win-win situation. It will contribute to the elimination of child labour in line with SDG 8.7 as well as fulfil FAO's vision for social protection and realising SDG target 1.3.

Child labour and social protection cannot be seen in isolation if the world is to accelerate progress towards decent work and poverty reduction. In a global policy review, the ILO concluded that social protection is an integral element of the policy mix required to accelerate progress towards reaching SDG target 8.7 (ILO, 2017). In addition to ensuring access to social protection, the elimination of child labour requires states to legally ban child labour and strengthen the capacity for enforcement and compliance with the legislation. To address the root causes of

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child labour, states and other stakeholders need to promote access to decent work for adult and young workers, ensure access to education for all children, and to put in place measures to combat child labour in supply chains. Addressing child labour in situations of fragility and crisis interacts with these root causes as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic (ILO, 2017; FAO, 2012; FAO and WFP, 2021).

Hence, one could argue that in contexts where child labour risks are real, social protection programmes must, at the very least, ensure that they do no harm by shielding children from the risk of having increased labour demands imposed on them. Social protection, in fact, has the potential to prevent and protect children from child labour, while at the same time preventing negative impacts and protecting livelihoods from all sorts of shocks. Social protection may also play a child labour transformative effect – for example, by removing the structural needs for child labour or changing attitudes towards child labour – much the same way that social protection can have gender transformative impact (UNICEF, 2022).

Chapter 4 will discuss the available evidence on social protection and child labour in agriculture and present a conceptual model for how social protection can contribute to the prevention and elimination of child labour in agriculture.

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Chapter 4
Child labour and social protection in the agriculture context

In this chapter, we present evidence related to the four different types of social protection in the classifications presented in Chapter 2:

- Social assistance
- Social (and agricultural) insurances
- Labour market programmes/livelihood support (supportive function)
- Social care services (supportive function)

For each of these types of social protection interventions (and complementary interventions with social protection functions), we look at the existing evidence on child labour from specific initiatives including the lessons related to negative (unintended) as well as positive impacts – whether of a preventive, protective, promotive or transformative nature.

Based on the evidence, we propose a conceptual model for the integration of child labour prevention and elimination into social protection programmes in agriculture. Note that while universal social protection is the primary social protection strategy to eliminate child labour, there are specific concerns related to agriculture that need to be considered. Hence, the discussion below pays significant attention to mechanisms in agriculture that may lead to increased child labour and to the positive and negative impacts of social protection in that specific context. Within the wider context of universal social protection, we discuss instances where targeting the most vulnerable children and families and/or children in remote rural areas may increase the likelihood that social protection can contribute to the elimination of child labour in agriculture. This does not in any way detract from the fact that the evidence is clear: universal social protection is essential for addressing the root causes of child labour (ILO and UNICEF, 2022).

4.1. Review of available evidence

4.1.1. Social assistance

Rationale

Social assistance schemes include a range of universal and targeted transfers and services such as child grants (universal and targeted towards vulnerable children), non-contributory retirement benefits, food assistance, free and universal health care, education support initiatives in the form of cash or in-kind transfers (e.g. bursaries). The evidence on the role that non-contributory schemes play in preventing and eliminating child labour in agriculture is mixed, though most cases illustrate how social protection can effectively prevent and mitigate child labour.

Social assistance schemes have the potential to cushion against all sorts of covariate and idiosyncratic shocks affecting particularly rural households' income and assets. This increased economic resilience can potentially lower the family's dependence on income from child labour to meet basic needs. The most obvious link is with transfers that are directly linked to children below legal working age – for example, child grants, education grants, school feeding programmes, and so on. However, benefits for the entire household – such as universal health care schemes or food assistance – could also reduce the need to rely on child labour to cover family expenses. Moreover, schemes targeting family members at other life stages could impact child labour. For example, unemployment benefits or retirement pensions can decrease child-labour, inducing vulnerability for the entire household (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, undated).

Child grants/cash transfer schemes

Evidence from cash transfer schemes, such as child grants, point to declining child labour rates in agriculture. Cash transfers protect the level of income and may even increase it, allowing additional spending on children and/or replacing income previously brought home by children in the family. One example is a cash transfer programme in Kenya that helped reduce family farm labour among boys (Asfaw and Davis, 2018). Another example from Ethiopia shows reduced participation in household chores and farm work among younger children after their family received cash through the Ethiopia Social Cash Transfer Pilot Programme (Prifti *et al.*, 2020; Asfaw and Davis, 2018).

However, the evidence is not uniform. Cash transfers and public works programmes that may also seek to improve labour market participation of adults and young people may boost the demand for child labour either directly in the household

business, or in activities within the household otherwise carried out by adults (Dammert *et al.*, 2018).

The evidence on whether grants targeted at women or men has different, direct impacts on child labour is limited. De Carvalho Filho found a clear correlation between cash grants targeted at women and child labour in Brazil, where grants for women lowered child labour rates (de Carvalho Filho, 2012. There is also substantial evidence that cash transfers (from social protection grants or other sources) aimed at supporting women's overall economic empowerment and wellbeing is more likely to benefit children in the household (Panday *et al.*, 2019). Unfortunately, much of this evidence is not specific to rural settings or agriculture.

An extensive trial research of three schemes, Malawi's Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP), the United Republic of Tanzania's Productive Social Safety Net (PSSN) and Zambia's Multiple Category Targeted Programme (MCP), also shows mixed results on child labour (de Hoop *et al.*, 2020; de Hoop, Groppo and Handa, 2020). All three government-run programmes provide regular cash transfers, targeting extremely poor and vulnerable households in rural areas. Many of the households engage in subsistence agriculture, which is often associated with high levels of child labour. The programmes aim at, among other things, smoothing income during the low agricultural season, cushioning against economic shocks and strengthening general resilience. Evidence shows that the targeted cash transfers have effectively improved child well-being and school attendance. However, the cash transfers also led to increased use of child labour in some instances. In all three countries, practically all households spent the additional cash income on basic needs such as food and clothing, as well as school expenses. In many households, income was also spent on expanding farm activities, particularly livestock keeping. This increased working time for both adults and children in the households. Adult family members were unable to cover the increased labour demand, and families were unable to hire adult labour. This led to an increase in on-farm work performed by children, including work that could be classified as child labour. Children were drawn into livestock tending most commonly across the three countries. In Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania, the increased farm work rate was offset by children doing less paid work outside the household. In Zambia, this did not happen and the total workload for children increased. In addition to the labour demand, the research points to social norms and perceived skills transfer to children as driving factors behind the higher workloads.

Cash transfers specifically targeting families with children are commonly seen as an effective tool to address child labour. In Lesotho, Pellerano *et al.*, (2020) found that a cash grant targeting families with children had little impact on children's

work participation in the poorest families. In better-off families, the child grant led to increased school attendance and lower work participation rates. This indicates, possibly, that besides the availability of adults to work in farming, the size of the grant also matters, especially in poorer households in which the share of household income contributed by children is so significant that small grants will make little difference to child labour practices in the household.

In several countries in Latin America, child grant schemes tend to be not just targeted for – but also conditional on – school attendance. In a systematic review covering 23 conditional and 7 unconditional cash transfer schemes, de Hoop and Rosati (2014) found a significant positive impact from conditional cash transfers on child labour, especially boys, and they concluded that there was practically no negative impact on children's work participation rates. However, this review is not limited to rural and agricultural settings, where cash transfers with productive impacts has been seen to drive up labour demands. Moreover, cash transfers conditional on attending school can only benefit children and families in contexts where quality education is in fact available. As education access is often lower in rural areas and as some groups of children working in agriculture, for example migrant workers' children (Tharani *et al.*, 2021) are excluded from accessing education (not least in times of crisis like the recent COVID-19 pandemic), it is not possible to conclude that conditional cash transfers are more effective than unconditional cash transfers overall. Whether a cash transfer is effective in addressing child labour is associated less by whether it is conditional or unconditional. It is the size, the duration and the regularity of the payments that matter (ILO and UNICEF, 2022).

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Pensions and other social assistance later in life

There is limited evidence on the impact of other forms of social assistance – targeted at persons in other life stages – on child labour. However, evidence (though not specific to agriculture or to a rural setting) from South Africa (Edmonds, 2006) and Brazil (de Carvalho Filho, 2012) indicates that pensions can reduce child labour. Evidence from the Plurinational State of Bolivia, on the other hand, suggests that while pension schemes may reduce overall household vulnerability and increase income, pensions may not always contribute to a reduction of child labour. Chong and Yáñez-Pagans (2019) studied the effects on child labour from a national old-age pension programme in the Plurinational State of Bolivia called Bolivida, a flat unconditional payment to all Bolivians aged 65 and older. They found that the programme led to increases in the probability that boys engage in labour in rural areas. They suggested that Bolivida may trigger demand for labour in rural settings where labour markets are missing, where hiring labour cannot be easily substituted for family labour, and where returns on child labour are seen as high by families. Their definition of child labour did not include domestic chores; given the adherence to traditional gender roles in the Plurinational State of Bolivia where males are the key family providers, boys in rural areas are more likely to work outside the home while girls are more likely to be engaged in domestic chores.

In Lesotho, the government's child cash grant scheme was combined with agriculture and home-gardening support in an FAO-supported project to improve food security and nutrition. Evidence from this project (Daidone *et al.*, 2017) indicates a similar pattern of improved household wellbeing, in this case specifically improved nutrition status. However, the evidence also points to children spending increased amounts of time in on-farm and non-farm economic activities. This was the case especially for younger girls. Though it should be noted that the survey rounds for the study took place during school holidays and therefore, the increased work activity may not have led to the survey registering negative impacts on school attendance.

Social assistance may also be targeted at other populations, such as persons living with disabilities. From a child-labour perspective, there is evidence that children, whose parents are ill or live with a disability, are more likely to end up in child labour as shown in a study in Pakistan (Sajid and Noor, 2018), while children and youth living with disability are at higher risk of hazardous labour than their peers, especially if they live with cognitive or mental health disabilities (Emerson and Llewellyn, 2020). Hence, grants targeting people living with disabilities, regardless of their age, may have an impact on child labour if delivered in a context where other factors do not nullify the impact of social assistance grants.

However, the positive impact of cash transfers may be undermined if transfers are irregular and have limited value. The same can happen in situations of unfulfilled labour demand, as the increased income will generate more work, leading to children becoming increasingly engaged in family agricultural undertakings and/or in household chores to substitute for their mothers. For the latter, the evidence is limited, but this scenario may be particularly prevalent when the cash grant targets other family members. A life-cycle perspective on the impact of any given cash transfer is, therefore, needed to understand the full impact on child labour.

In-kind social assistance

In addition to cash transfers, social assistance schemes can include in-kind grants. School feeding programmes and take-home rations are used as a means to secure children's school enrolment and attendance, and to ensure that children in food-insecure areas receive nutritious meals that will prevent illness and enable them to learn.

There is some evidence that school feeding and take-home rations can have a positive impact on the lessoned incidence of child labour by lowering the demand for children's income to cover basic needs, especially during a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic (FAO and WFP 2021; ILO and UNICEF, 2022). In Mali, Aurino *et al.* (2019) found a clear correlation between school feeding and children's enrolment in education in conflict areas. In Côte d`Ivoire and Ghana, the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI, 2019) found a clear correlation between the quality of education and child-labour rates in cocoa growing communities. Higher quality education was strongly associated with lower child-labour rates, while school feeding played a key role in ensuring enrolment and retention and was directly associated with lower levels of child labour. Similarly, Dago and Yugo (2022) found that school feeding improved school enrolment and lowered child- labour participation in Liberia.

It seems, therefore, that school feeding and take-home rations can be effective tools to increase education enrolment and reach the most vulnerable children. Evidence from Ghana's long running Ghana school feeding programme (GSFP) clearly indicates that the GSFP has had consistently positive impacts on school enrolment, including in rural areas and among children from poor families. Challenges are more likely related to ensuring nutritional and cognitive benefits for children, and in maintaining education quality in rural areas (Awojobi, 2019; Tette and Enos, 2019; Essuman and Bosumtwi-Sam, 2013).

In Africa, there has been an increased focus on home-grown school feeding. In this model, school meals are made of locally produced food, procured directly from local farmers or local retailers. Some of the food can also be grown in school gardens

that also allow for integration of farming techniques in the school's teaching. Teaching of locally relevant farming techniques has been demonstrated to increase the perceived value of education in rural families. Hence, teaching local farming techniques at school can, in and of itself, have a positive impact on children's school attendance and educational benefits (FAO, 2020).

It is possible, however, that the home-grown school feeding may trigger an increased demand for children's labour as local economic activities increase. Kazianga *et al.* (2012), in a study from Burkina Faso, did find that school feeding had a positive impact on the elimination of child labour, but this impact was conditioned by the labour demand in children's families. Children from labour-constrained households attended school less regularly than children from less-labour constrained households, even with school feeding in place.

Conclusions on social assistance and child labour in agriculture

This analysis points to labour demand as a key variable for children's school attendance and their labour participation rate in small-scale agricultural communities. Therefore, social protection grants (cash or in-kind) cannot stand alone and should consider additional dimensions to be effective, though they are undoubtedly effective strategies to address child labour. Social protection must be combined with other strategies to address labour constraints in family-run agricultural operations, such as measures to improve productivity especially in activities, such as weeding, that are traditionally done by children (FAO, 2020).

Moreover, the impact of social protection interplays with access to education, especially for school-based, in-kind support, and for grants that are made conditional on school attendance. It is not possible to reach the most vulnerable children with this type of support if children do not have equal access to education. For example, this may be a concern in very remote and marginalized rural areas with poor school infrastructure, or in agricultural areas relying heavily on migrant workers whose children may not be able to access school at equal par with other children (Tharani *et al.*, 2021).

Hence, social assistance schemes can be highly effective in reducing reliance on child labour in vulnerable families, not only in the case of natural disasters or other shocks, but also during agricultural low seasons. To fully understand the role that social protection can play on the elimination of child labour in agriculture, benefits must be understood in a broader life-cycle perspective. Grants such as non-contributory pension schemes may have unintended consequences in other age groups than older persons; these unintended consequences need to be considered in the design and implementation of such schemes.

Social assistance interventions also need to be planned and delivered in conjunction with policies and programmes that underpin the effects of social assistance. This applies not least to the access to education for all children and vocational training for adolescents, including those most vulnerable to child labour, and to policies seeking to promote sustainable agricultural production methods that reduce demand for children's labour (e.g. promotion of no-tilling agriculture). To be effective, social assistance schemes need to include regular payments of significant amounts over a substantial period of time to impact child-labour prevalence.

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4.1.2. Social (and agricultural) insurances

Rationale

Social insurance schemes can play a similar role to social assistance interventions in cushioning against different types of shocks, and in limiting adverse impacts on household vulnerability and reliance on child labour. Contributory social insurance includes interventions such as: unemployment insurance, accident insurance and health insurance which cushions households if a member can no longer bring in income. In addition – and of particular importance regarding agriculture – insurance may also include schemes to insure against lost crops or assets in the case of, for instance, natural disasters. Crop insurance is not social protection *per se*, but it can play a social protection function by protecting household incomes against the risk of crop failure.

Studies from Bangladesh, China, and Nepal have found that households where adults are sick, disabled or have missed work are more likely to use child labour or children undertaking household chores (Nepal A and Nepal M, 2012); even if the parents value the children's schooling, a rise in the adult unemployment rate may lead to reduced schooling hours and increased child labour (Chakraborty and Chakraborty, 2018). Moreover, recent experiences from India shows that there is a direct correlation between adults losing their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic and the incidence of child labour. This is particularly pronounced for migrant workers, returning unemployed to their home areas, and for areas not covered by the government's emergency social assistance grants (Athray, 2020).

Social insurance in an agricultural context

While social insurance schemes may be prone to the same labour-demand constraint and displacement effects as those discussed above for social assistance schemes, there is clear evidence that social insurance can be an effective tool to reduce child labour. Guarcello *et al.* (2010) and Landmann and Frölich (2015) found that health insurance reduced the incidence of child labour in Guatemala and Pakistan, respectively. Social insurance, such as health insurance, can buffer for income loss and economic shocks and prevent child labour much the same way a non-contributory grant can. ILO and UNICEF (2022) confirm that social health insurance not only cushions against child labour during an economic shock, but also has an *ex ante* protective effect. The study concludes that there is a need for more research into the effects of universal health service access regarding child labour.

However, in rural and informal sectors such as agriculture, the access to social insurance is often limited. Multiple barriers – including lack of stable and sufficient incomes, legal barriers, geographical barriers and social norms – hinder participation in social insurance schemes. More often, these groups have to rely on informal social protection provided by family and community members in case of shocks. No evidence was found associating child labour and access to informal social protection (ILO and FAO, 2021).

In a small-scale agricultural context, economic shocks that induce child labour may also come from events that disrupt agricultural production systems, for example due to natural disasters. Fishers may lose their net or even their vessels in storms, crop farmers may lose their crops during drought or flooding, livestock keepers and aquaculture farmers could lose their livelihood if disease breaks out. In a study in the United Republic of Tanzania, Beegle *et al.* (2005) found a direct relationship between crop shocks and an increase in child labour. While affected families sold their assets or used them as security for loans to make up for the temporary income losses, they resorted to an increased use of child labour to make up for income losses too. Therefore, crop and asset insurance may be a viable strategy towards preventing child labour. However, there is limited evidence on how this may be done in practice, given that crop and asset insurance is notoriously difficult for small-scale farmers, fishers and other food producers to access (FAO, 2021).

Overall, insights may be derived from a government-backed insurance scheme in Mongolia. While not explicitly aiming at child labour prevention, a livestock insurance scheme allowed pastoralist farmers to re-establish their herds after they were decimated during severe winters (Fernandez-Gimenez, *et al.*, 2012). In Ethiopia and Kenya, government-backed, index-based livestock insurance allowed pastoralist families to survive during drought (Amare *et al.*, 2019; CTA, 2018). It is no coincidence that these insurance schemes were all backed by governments, as small-scale agricultural producers often face difficulties accessing private insurance.

It is also important to bear in mind that receiving an insurance premium, just like receiving a cash grant, does not automatically lead to prevention and elimination of child labour. Again, child labour may be driven not just by economic shocks but also by labour shortages, social norms and other factors that need to be addressed in conjunction with the social protection measure – in this case insurance. However, agricultural insurance – including forms of micro-insurance – can also be a way to deal with shocks and protect households against child labour.

Conclusions

Social insurance and crop and asset insurance schemes have significant potential to cushion agricultural households against economic shocks to livelihoods that may increase their reliance on child labour. However, these schemes can be very difficult to access for small-scale agriculture producers. Therefore, government backing is often required for the insurance schemes to become accessible. There is also a need to further explore how micro-insurance schemes may be used to prevent and protect against shock-induced child labour. The evidence base is relatively weak in relation to micro-insurance. Still, available evidence does suggest that contributory schemes can be effective tools towards prevention and protection against child labour if they are delivered through integrated programmes that also address social norms, productivity and labour demands, and notably (seasonal) labour shortages in family operations.

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4.1.3. Labour market programmes

Rationale

Labour market programmes cover a range of initiatives aimed at strengthening individual and household resilience by enabling better opportunities, reducing barriers and improving individuals' and households' ability to make a living income. Such initiatives are important from a child labour elimination perspective as they may promote overall improvement to family wellbeing and livelihoods that decrease the need for child labour as a "survival strategy". Moreover, some labour market programmes – notably public works programmes – have the potential to improve livelihoods, school attendance, and so on, through building or rehabilitating roads, schools and other infrastructure that underpin people's lives.

Agricultural input subsidies

Agricultural input subsidies can be used to support small-holder farmers to boost their income, improve their nutrition status and create employment. From a child-labour perspective, agricultural input subsidies are a potential strategy to address underlying drivers of child labour in agriculture. However, a study from Malawi (Frempong, 2018) shows that children in small-scale farming households benefitting from the government-run Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) have a higher propensity to engage in child labour. Not only were the children more likely to work in the family, but they were also more likely than children in non-beneficiary households to perform hazardous work, such as spraying pesticides. The research puts forward labour constraints in beneficiary households as the main explanation for this pattern.

Agricultural input subsidies and social protection measures in combination can be effective in improving livelihoods. However, agricultural input subsidies often increase household labour demands and as the evidence from Malawi shows, this can increase child labour unintentionally. This is primarily due to the fact that subsidies increase household resources, enabling higher activity levels, and growing labour demands that are filled by children in the household if adult workers are not available or are too expensive to hire. This is supported by evidence from the project in Lesotho discussed above, where agricultural support in combination with child grants led to higher work participation for children, especially girls (Daidone *et al.*, 2017).

Income generation and micro-credit

Income-generation activities and micro credits/savings targeted at small scale agricultural households, or the women living in these households, are recognised as a key strategy towards child labour elimination (FAO, 2020). For example,

support includes: financial services, training on post-harvest handling and value addition, skills for alternative income businesses, and business skills, and so forth. The approach can be effective in protecting children if it is combined with other initiatives, such as awareness-raising on child labour. Failure to integrate information on child labour may lead to increased child labour to satisfy higher demands for family labour. When targeting women, it is of particular concern to ensure that girls are not removed from school to undertake household chores that mothers no longer have the time for (FAO, 2020; Dammert *et al.*, 2018).

The evidence on micro-credit is more mixed. Microcredit, targeting women or more broadly targeting poor rural families, can support child labour elimination, depending on the context (ILO, 2017). It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the labour demand dynamic and the gender norms discussed earlier may also influence the impact of labour market programmes.

Public works programmes

Public works programmes are used in rural areas to both improve infrastructure and to create income earning opportunities for vulnerable households in an area. There are several examples from public work programmes that have as a primary goal to provide income to the poorest, while building up infrastructure and expanding basic services. They seldom address child labour explicitly. Experience from Argentina, Ethiopia, India, Malawi and Sierra Leone all found that their public work programmes did not generate any reduction in child labour. On the contrary, the evidence showed that in some cases, children were taking over chores from the adult participants in the programmes (ILO, 2018).

This shows that household poverty reduction alone does not automatically reduce child labour. However, a study from Ethiopia showed that children from households that were involved in a public work programme were less likely to be involved in child labour (Dinku, 2019). In the United Republic of Tanzania, a programme combining cash transfers and public works had a positive effect on children by lowering the drop-out rate in schools. The effect in households which only received cash transfers was that school dropouts remained unchanged (de Hoop *et al.*, 2020). It should be borne in mind here that the study does not clarify the extent to which the children combine school and work.

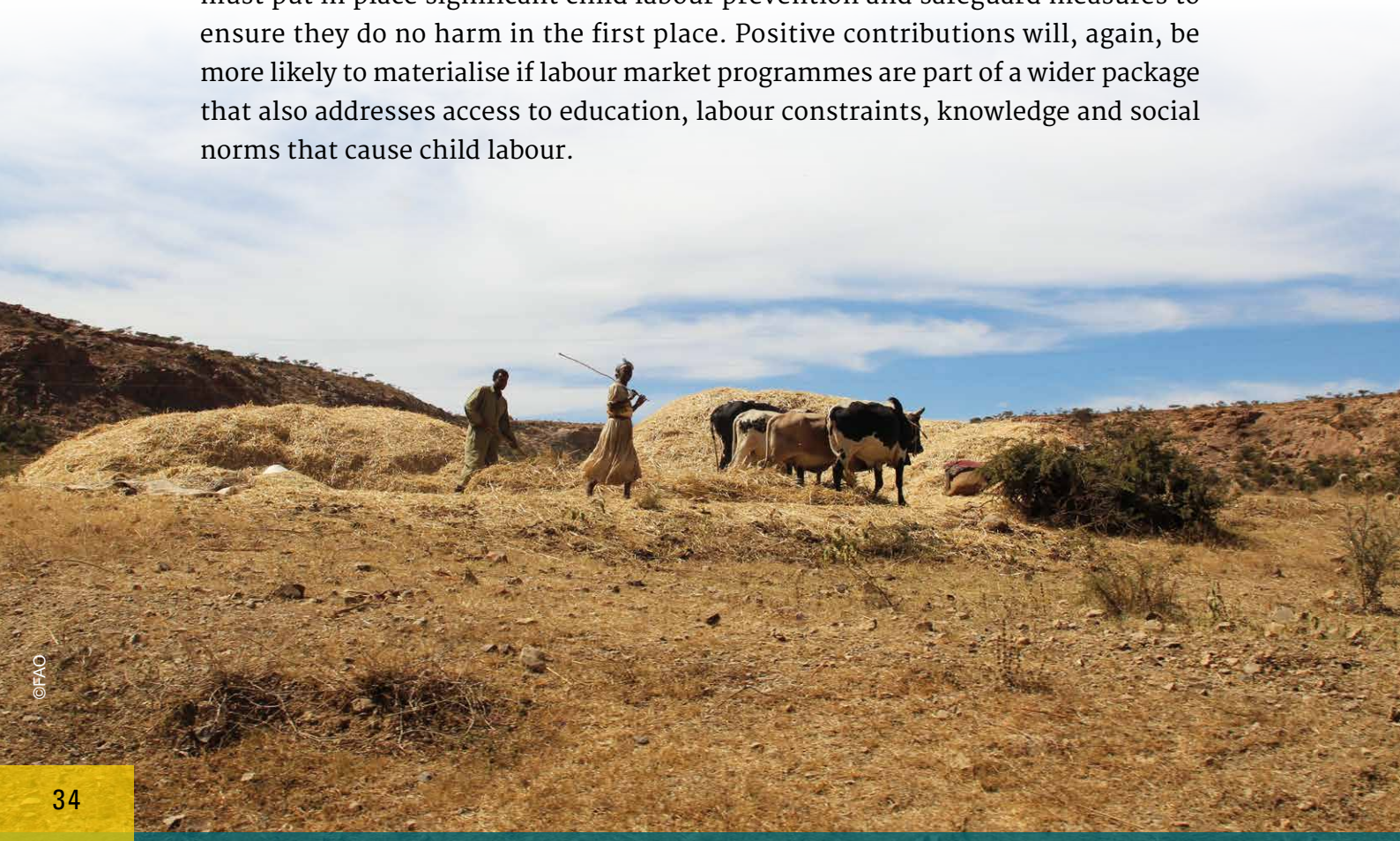
Hence, evidence on public works programmes is inconclusive in that public works may have a positive impact on child labour, and school attendance or may lead to increased child labour, depending on the context. Therefore, in order to prevent and eliminate child labour in agriculture, public works should not stand alone but be part of a package that addresses labour shortages, knowledge about child labour,

social norms, and so on. In addition, it is critically important that public works projects build in measures to ensure that children are not engaged directly in the project's work programme such as schools, health centres and social centres.

Conclusions

Income generation activities, micro-finance support, public works and other labour market programmes aiming to promote improved resilience and livelihoods may also be used as key contributions to promote youth employment and protection of young workers. These activities may help those over 15 years of age who can work legally, to gain a foothold in the labour market. This can be an important contribution to the elimination of child labour in and of itself; therefore, targeting labour market programmes for young people may be a useful way to integrate child labour elimination into social protection programmes (FAO and ILO, 2021).

Summing up, labour market initiatives can have strong positive impact on child labour, promoting improved livelihoods and well-being and protecting livelihoods in times of crisis. However, as labour market interventions aim to increase the economic activity of a household, children may end up engaging in the additional work associated with increased economic initiatives, such as income-generating activities and public works programmes. Labour market programmes can also be associated with strong displacement risks as adults in the household have less time available for household chores and farming. Therefore, labour market programmes must put in place significant child labour prevention and safeguard measures to ensure they do no harm in the first place. Positive contributions will, again, be more likely to materialise if labour market programmes are part of a wider package that also addresses access to education, labour constraints, knowledge and social norms that cause child labour.



4.1.4. Complementary social care services

Rationale

Social care services can essentially be considered supportive or enabling services. They include services and initiatives that aim to transform structures and social norms that underpin the use of child labour and initiatives that support and protect individual families.

Education

Universal, compulsory, good-quality, basic education is a critical social service – and a right for all children. The impact on child labour of compulsory, basic education, or the lack thereof, is discussed extensively in research, studies, handbooks, conference reports, and so on, over several decades and therefore, this guidance note focusses on other supportive services that are less-well established. However, it is important to underscore that where education is not available, it is highly challenging to eliminate child labour, as education is the primary alternative to child labour, and the most significant transformative activity that children can engage in (FAO, 2020; ILO and UNICEF, 2021; ILO and UNICEF, 2022). Readers interested in exploring child labour and education in detail are encouraged to start by consulting the websites listed in the footnote.[2]

Examples of other transformative activities include child-care facilities, and other services that lower women's workload in household chores and in family and community care. Lowering women's workload in the household, family and community responsibilities may also play a gender transformative role, but from a child-labour perspective, such initiatives are important as children, especially girls, will often substitute for their mother in these types of work (FAO, 2020; FAO, IFAD and ILO, 2010).

Pre-schools and kindergartens have proved particularly effective in limiting women's and older children's workloads, and also have made a significant impact towards ensuring that children enrol in primary education at age (UNICEF, 2019). An example comes from a UNICEF-supported project in Rwanda that establishes pre-school centres in tea plantations. The pre-schools allow young mothers to work full time in the plantations and earn an income, while their children are in a safe environment nearby. In addition, the pre-schools allow the children to grow and stimulate their development (UNICEF, 2018). By offering early childcare

[2] ILO child labour and education site; *Education International*.

to working mothers, they are able to work without relying on older girls to take on family care duties. As such, establishing childcare, as well as other family and community care support, may have a child labour transformative effect through lowering labour demand in the family. This is especially effective when applied in an integrated manner with social assistance and insurance aimed at protecting income and livelihoods.

It is important to note that formalized care services may not be available, nor particularly appropriate in informal settings, such as many agricultural production areas and workplaces. ILO and WIEGO (undated) classify different forms of childcare systems available in the informal economy. They include home-based care, which is often associated with an increased risk of child labour as the children work alongside their carers (ILO and UNICEF, 2021) – but also forms of childcare that may decrease that risk – such as the workplace-based care in the Rwandan example above, as well as community organized care facilities.

Health care

Access to health care seems to have a strong positive impact on child labour, insofar as health insurance has a strong cushioning effect, protecting children from child labour in the case of ill-health causing economic shock to families. Moreover, health insurance seems to have an *ex ante* protective effect, in that households with guaranteed access to health care are less likely to rely on child labour (ILO and UNICEF, 2022).

The evidence related to universal access to health care services and child labour need further research according to ILO and UNICEF (2022). Nevertheless, it is quite clear that access to health care plays a strong supportive role in protecting children from child labour, and both health insurance and other means of making access to health care universal could be major contributions to addressing the underlying drivers of child labour. Since a life-cycle perspective is important to understand impacts on child labour, access to health care should not only consider children's access, but the wider impact of maternity health care, and health care for parents and grandparents with responsibilities for children, and so on.

Child labour monitoring systems

Systems and programmes which protect children from child labour include child labour monitoring system (CLMS) and child protection system (CPS). These systems aim to enable the identification of children at risk, and in the case of CLMS, the children already engaged in child labour, and then to provide them with referrals for individualised support. This may include psycho-social support, health care, social assistance grants, and/or labour market programme support for the

family, and so on. (ILO 2005; UNICEF, 2021). Often, CLMS functions are integrated with government run CPSs (UNICEF, 2018b), but for example. CLMS can also be established as a separate initiative covering a particular supply chain, as is the case in the cocoa farming areas in Ghana (ICI accessed 1 April 2022).

CPS and CLMS are highly effective tools for protection of individual children and families, for generating data and knowledge, and for ensuring that services reach the most vulnerable children. However, they are highly complex systems that can be challenging to establish and maintain in remote, rural areas, in contexts where government resources are limited and in situations of crisis and disruption (ILO, 2018b; ILO, 2019). Hence, it is not always possible to rely on CPS/CLMS as child labour safeguards in social protection programming. But where such systems are operational, they may be a valuable link between wider social protection programmes and the elimination of child labour.

Conclusions

Complementary social care services are a key element of comprehensive, integrated social policy and social protection responses to child labour. In a sense, the complementary services are what enable the realisation of positive child labour impact from social assistance programmes, social insurance, and labour market programmes.

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4.2. A conceptual model for addressing child labour in agriculture through social protection

The conceptual model for integration of child labour into social protection programming in agriculture presented in this section is based on conclusions derived from the review of available evidence presented in Section 4.1. These are the main conclusions from the review:

1. Social protection is a very effective means towards the prevention and elimination of child labour in agriculture. However, as child labour is complex, social protection cannot stand alone. It needs to be part of an integrated package which targets multiple underlying drivers of child labour in agriculture.

2. These underlying drivers are complex and inter-related. They include (but are not limited to):

   a. The impacts of different types of shocks that undermine rural families' livelihoods and lead to child labour in order to satisfy basic needs.

   b. Labour shortages and decent work deficits (e.g. poor occupational safety and health) in agricultural production as well as in household chores and community work normally performed by women.

   c. Limited access to services, notably education and childcare services, that makes it possible to use social protection to send children to school.

   d. The non-institutionalisation of robust and effective child labour monitoring systems (or child protection systems with a child labour component) in the agricultural sector makes it less likely that children already in child labour, or at immediate risk of child labour, will get access to social protection services that may protect the child and their family.

   e. Social norms that normalise child labour in agriculture. These drivers may be exacerbated by the informality in (small scale) farming operations where non-registration of farming operations, farm workers, and members of farming families makes it more difficult to organise, access services, and so forth.

3. Universal social protection is the starting point for eliminating child labour, for example, the implementation of universal child grants. Within the wider framework of universal benefits, specially targeting children in rural areas or the most vulnerable families (e.g. families impacted by disability) can increase

the likelihood that social protection services will have a positive impact on child labour in agriculture. This is the case, for example, where children in rural areas face constraints accessing universal services. It must be underscored that child labour in agriculture is widespread and complex, so targeting children in rural areas will be insufficient in and of itself, as this is no guarantee that displacement effects will not occur. It is necessary to combine social protection benefits with supportive services, such as awareness raising, information and education.

Therefore, a life-cycle approach is key to social protection planning to be able to identify possible unintended consequences of, for example, income generating support for women. A life-cycle approach, or a child-sensitive approach, will enable systematic assessment of the impact of various social protection initiatives on children and their work participation. By systematically analysing the impact on children of social protection targeting people of all ages, it is possible to prevent unintended consequences on child labour from social protection interventions that aim to improve general well-being in a household or support individuals in other age groups. It is also possible to build a protective framework around children through integrated social protection frameworks that start with maternity benefits and maternity health care, continuing through early childhood support, access to education, child grants, unemployment benefits, retirement benefits, etc.

4. If planned and delivered in an integrated manner, social protection can transform child labour, in addition to transforming gender balance, building resilience, etc. So, child labour is not an "add-on" to social protection. The elimination of child labour is, and should be, an integral part of social protection policies and programmes, especially in rural areas.

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5. For integrated social protection services to be delivered in remote rural areas and in the informal sector, legal frameworks as well as administrative, operational and financial capacities must be strengthened, while all sorts of barriers that limit access to social protection of agricultural workers must be removed. In this effort, the objective of preventing and eliminating child labour in agriculture must be considered by design. Hence, social protection for child labour elimination needs to be combined with institutional capacity development measures.

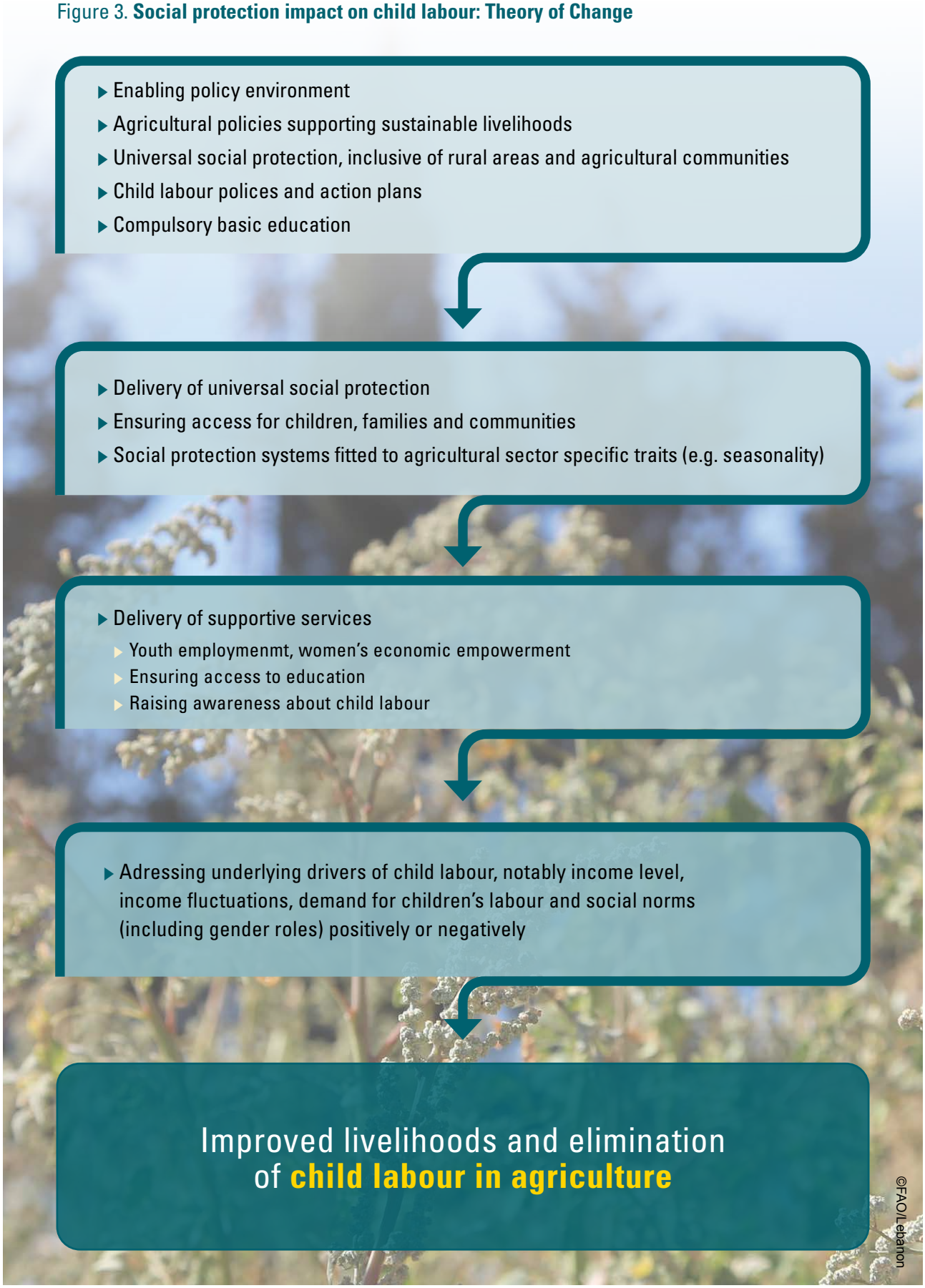
6. Promoting productivity and lowering labour demands is important in rural areas, as children in agricultural households work in both agricultural production and in the domestic and community chores which underpin production. Labour shortages are an important underlying driver of child labour, hence supporting sustainable and productive agriculture practices in combination with social protection interventions is more likely to have a positive impact on child labour.

7. Thoroughly assessing and understanding the contextualized impact of social protection on children is essential. Does it make a difference, for example, whether pensions are paid to men or women? How is the internal division of labour in target households? Who controls the use of income? Does it make a difference whether income is controlled by women or men? By older or younger household members? More research on this could be valuable and analysing these questions in context is relevant for the design of social protection programmes.

This note did not analyse alternatives to government-run social protection schemes, such as community-based savings schemes, or farmer association savings and credit schemes. In the actual design of projects which integrate social protection and other types of livelihood support, looking into existing and potential mechanisms for alternative livelihood support schemes delivered by cooperatives, farmers' groups, village groups, and and so on, which might be useful for the elimination of child labour in agriculture – especially in remote rural areas. This might also allow for the integration of raising awareness, community mobilization and livelihoods support in rural and agricultural communities. For readers interested in exploring these topics in more detail, the Stop Child Labour Coalition *5X5 Stepping Stones for Creating Child Labour Free Zones handbook* may be a starting point.

Based on these conclusions, we propose a conceptual model for action which assumes that social protection programmes of either of the four types in the classification used in this note will lead to changes in the life situation for children and families. This will, in turn, prevent, protect against and sometimes transform (the risk of) child labour in rural, agricultural households as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. **Social protection impact on child labour: Theory of Change**



However, the positive impact on eliminating or preventing child labour is dependent on the extent to which the contextual child labour risks and drivers are assessed, understood, and addressed as part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the social protection programme in question as we cannot assume an automatic positive impact.

Therefore, social protection programmes must include child labour risk assessments and appropriate safeguards and complementary measures to prevent unintended consequences, and to promote the positive life situation changes that can lead to lower reliance on child labour and fewer children trapped in child labour in rural households.

This logic is illustrated in Figure 4 below.

In Chapter 5, we look in more detail at the specific steps that can be taken to ensure that child labour protection, prevention and transformation are effectively integrated into social protection programmes. While Chapter 5 focusses on steps that can be taken within the framework of a social protection programme, it is important to bear in mind that the wider-systems approach contained in the FAO Social Protection Framework, linking social protection services with interventions to improve nutrition, agricultural productivity, and so on.

Figure 4. **Social protection programming steps to ensure positive impacts on child labour**

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Chapter 5
Integrating child labour action into social protection programming in agriculture

This chapter provides guidance on how to integrate child labour considerations into social protection programmes. The guidance is aligned as far as possible with the structure of the ISPA CODI tool[3] (ISPA, undated), and is therefore organised in three major sections:

1. Policy development
2. Programme design
3. Programme implementation

With an additional fourth separate section added:

4. Programme monitoring and evaluation

As such this guidance note can be used as an additional resource in the application of the CODI tool, informing the analysis from a child-labour angle and making policy, programmes and operations child-labour transformative. It should be noted, though, that this guidance note is not limited to analysis and planning using the CODI tool, but it can be applied in any social protection policy and programme design, delivery and monitoring process.

[3] The ISPA Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI) is "a set of practical tools that help countries improve their social protection system by analyzing its strengths and weaknesses and offering options for further action."

5.1. Policy development

Policy level key questions:

1. Are social protection policies in a country child-sensitive, so that intended and possible unintended impacts on non-target beneficiaries are clear?
2. Are social protection policies aligned with and reinforced by education, labour market and agricultural development policies that all contribute to addressing the underlying drivers of child labour?
3. Does social protection coverage extend to rural areas and to the agricultural sector, and also when farming, forestry and fishing operations take place in the informal sector?

Policy formulation is an essential underpinning of any social protection initiative. To make social protection child-labour transformative, it may be necessary to engage in wider policy dialogue to ensure that the social protection schemes are anchored in a conducive policy environment which can address some of the underlying drivers of child labour and at the same time, increase the effectiveness of social protection interventions.

This could entail placing social protection within a wider policy context of, for example, employment, education, child protection and health policies to ensure that complementary social services and labour market interventions are available to recipients of social protection. As an example, linking social protection to national education policies and programmes can help ensure that children in target households have access to quality education, thereby ensuring that increased income in the household does, in fact, translate into school attendance over child labour.

In the agriculture sector and in rural contexts, it is evident from the discussion in Chapter 4 that poverty, vulnerability, labour demands, and agricultural productivity are key determinants of the impact of social protection on child labour. Therefore, linking social protection to agricultural development policies is essential. In rural areas, social protection must be linked to food-systems transformations and agricultural programmes which address the underlying labour demands driving child labour. Food systems transformations can be led by better governance and inclusive business models, allowing less functional and economic dependency on child labour. In practice, this can mean providing solutions to labour intensity of operations and availability/affordability of the workforce in food systems, along with enhanced opportunities for women and youth to have better control and access to assets. These transformations can be favored by the implementation of social protection interventions and lead to child labour reduction. Cross-sectoral policy studies and policy dialogue can be

a valuable element of project planning, especially in countries and contexts where evidence is limited. The FAO diagnostic tool, linked in the box below, contains helpful information on how to conduct policy studies and build coherence that is applicable to the integration of child labour into social protection in agriculture.

Undertaking such inter-sectoral policy analysis will also allow for analysis regarding key cross-cutting factors, such as gender, age and migration status. In turn, this will eventually allow for a more precise targeting of social protection programmes, taking into account that "one size fits all" may not be effective or, in a worst-case scenario, may even be detrimental to the elimination of child labour – and thereby to reducing inter-generational poverty.

There are a number of tools available to support such inter-sectoral analysis, including the ISPA CODI tool, and FAO guidance on gender-sensitive programming (see the box below). The FAO tool also includes information on child labour and social protection from a gender perspective. Two ILO tools, the global guide on assessment-based dialogue (on social protection), and the child labour national action plan toolkit, both contain guidance on how to organise national policy dialogue to mobilise support for coherent, inter-sectoral policy frameworks.

In addition to the wider policy analysis, it is strongly recommended to undertake a child-labour assessment during project planning which relates specifically to the social protection system(s) in question. Such an assessment will allow for the identification of specific safeguards and other initiatives which fit the specific context when the project reaches the design stage. A child-labour assessment will entail collating data and information on child labour to assess the risk of child labour in the country – in agriculture specifically – and among key populations. By integrating a child-labour assessment with the diagnostic study of the social protection system(s) in question, it will be possible, for example, to determine if the social protection systems are available to the children most at risk for child labour and their families. The FAO e-Learning suite linked in the box at page 49 will help you understand child labour in more detail, in order to define what to look for in the child-labour assessment. In addition, FAO is developing a child-labour, risk assessment tool for agricultural investment programmes, which may also be useful to conducting child-labour assessments linked to social protection.

Information and data for a child-labour assessment can often be found through desk studies of national surveys, sectoral surveys, and through other research carried out by national statistical departments, ministries of labour or agriculture, by trade unions, employer organization and NGOs. In some countries, child labour is poorly documented and analysed, so the child-labour assessment would benefit from actual research on child labour. If a separate child labour research activity is

required, we recommend conducting a rapid assessment in the key target area or in key agricultural sectors in the country. The ILO has developed a standardised methodology for child labour rapid assessments, which is linked in the box below. A rapid assessment allows for a limited, adapted, mixed-methodology survey to be undertaken in a particular sector or geographic location. In the box below, there are links to ILO resource materials on child labour research, including a methodological guideline on child labour rapid assessments.

A note on child labour assessment in agriculture:

An assessment of the risks and drivers of child labour in an agricultural sector or a rural area can help identify which underlying causes of child labour in agriculture can be addressed by different types of social protection.

An assessment can include:

- Collating data on the number of children in the target area, their age, gender, family status, education attendance, etc.;
- The types of agricultural and other work (including chores) that children do, the amount of time they spend, and the time of day/week/year they work;
- Analysing income and livelihoods, access to services, etc. in the community
- Mapping social protection and other livelihood support that is available;
- Understanding perceptions and attitudes related to child labour;
- Understanding agricultural production practices and other labour demands.

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Resource materials

FAO Strengthening Coherence between Agriculture and Social Protection to Combat Poverty and Hunger in Africa. Diagnostic Tool
https://www.fao.org/3/a-i5385e.pdf

ISPA CODI Tools
https://ispatools.org/core-diagnostic-instrument/

FAO Introduction to gender-sensitive social protection programming to combat rural poverty: Why is it important and what does it mean?
http://www.fao.org/3/ca2026en/ca2026en.pdf

ILO Assessment based National Dialogue Global Guide
https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowProject.action?id=2747

FAO e-learning course on integrating child labour into policies and strategies
https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=510

Full FAO e-learning suite on child labour in agriculture
https://elearning.fao.org/local/search/?src=eyJ0ZXN0byI6ImNoaWxkIGxhYm91ciIsInNlcmlcyI6IiIsInJlbGVhc2VkYXRlIjoiIiwibGluZ3VhIjoiZW4iLCJpc25ldyI6IiIsImNlcnQiOiIiLCJtb2JpbGUiOiIifQ%3D%3D

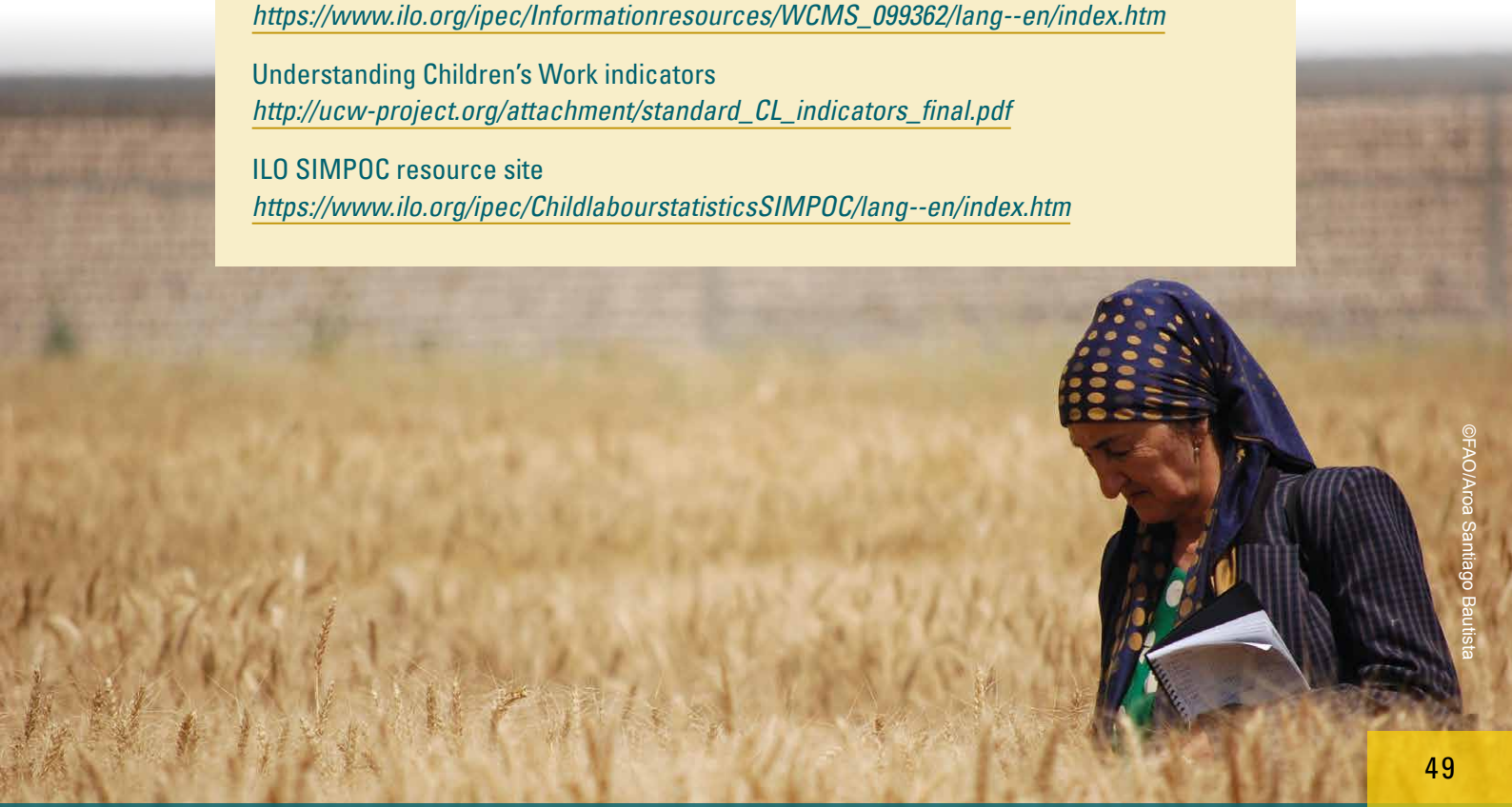
ILO Toolkit for design and implementation of National Action Plan on Child Labour
https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_568877/lang--en/index.htm

ILO Manual on child labour rapid assessment methodology
https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_1819/lang--en/index.htm

ILO SIMPOC manual on sampling for child labour surveys
https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_099362/lang--en/index.htm

Understanding Children's Work indicators
http://ucw-project.org/attachment/standard_CL_indicators_final.pdf

ILO SIMPOC resource site
https://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/lang--en/index.htm



5.2. Child-sensitive programme design

Programme design key questions:

- Are the social protection services under the programme accessible to the children and families most at risk of child labour? If mechanisms are targeted, are they targeting those individuals, families or communities most at risk of child labour?
- Are there complementary measures in place to safeguard against increased demand for child labour with increased household income?
- Are the social protection measures able to transform household and family perceptions and priorities that drive child labour? For example, are grants sufficient to allow families to prioritise education for all children in the household?

The programme design stage is critical to ensuring that social protection programmes adequately integrate safeguards to ensure no harm and to identify opportunities to bring about positive changes in the life situation of children and families that will impact their reliance on child labour in line with the conceptual model presented in Chapter 4.

Once a child-labour assessment is completed, as part of the programme planning phase, it will be possible to design social protection programmes that actively integrate child labour safeguards and child labour transformative measures. As discussed elsewhere, the design of social protection programmes is more likely to result in child labour reduction if the programmes are designed from the outset to be child sensitive and are based on a life-cycle approach.

There are at least three features of social protection programmes that merit particular attention from a child labour perspective. First, child labour sensitive eligibility criteria are essential to ensure access to social protection for families relying on child labour or at risk of engaging in child labour. For example, families living in areas where a high likelihood of natural disasters may trigger the use of child labour in agriculture must be eligible for emergency grants, insurance schemes and other schemes that can offer a cushion against economic shocks. A child-labour assessment may help to shine a light on such questions like: whether targeting certain family members, for example, children of school going age or mothers, can increase the likelihood of children attending school over work; whether increased household income may lead to unfulfilled labour demands that can drive up child labour dependence; whether there is general awareness of child labour in the target communities that will impact family decision making, and so on.

Second, the structure and level of social protection benefits themselves matter. When designing a social protection programme using a child labour lens, it is critically important that the benefits it grants not only reach the right target groups, but also that those benefits support changes in families' and children's life situations and priorities (as outlined in the conceptual model in Chapter 4).

This means that, depending on the context, cash grants, school feeding, take-home rations, and social insurance among other things, may have a different impact. For example, in a situation where schools are few and far between in a remote rural area, school feeding or take-home rations may be less effective as a child labour prevention tool unless they are combined with transportation, school construction, satellite school systems or other measures to increase access to education for children in the most remote areas. In such a context, other social protection measures may be more effective. In any case, the example illustrates how important it is to design and deliver social protection in a contextual manner for social protection to be an effective tool to eliminate child labour.

In addition to the importance of the types of benefits offered, the benefit level matters. We saw examples in Chapter 4 of limited impact of cash grants on child labour where the grant level was too low to really make up for children's contributions to family income (directly or indirectly, by freeing up time spent on household chores for adult family members to work more). From a child labour point of view, it is thus worth considering whether it is more effective in a given context to make low amounts of benefits available to many families or individuals, or rather to make higher amounts available to fewer families and individuals.

It is also worth considering the seasonal nature of child labour in agriculture when designing programmes and deciding on benefits. As discussed, child labour in agriculture is often associated with both low income and/or low food security seasons (e.g. the planting season when stored food supplies are low, or closed seasons in fishing) and peak labour demand seasons (e.g. harvest). It is therefore important to examine whether social protection benefits in rural and agricultural settings should be increased during child labour high-risk seasons (for example when fields are being prepared and food stocks are low, or during closed season for fishers, etc.). The ILO-UNICEF study on child labour and social protection (ILO and UNICEF, 2022) concludes that it is important that social protection grants are not cut off too soon if they are intended to reduce child labour – even if the study did not itself consider the seasonal nature of agriculture.

Finally, the design of social protection programmes needs to factor in the underlying drivers of child labour discussed earlier in this guidance note. For example, linking the social protection programme directly with education programmes is necessary

to ensure that social protection does in fact become child labour transformative. Likewise, if the child-labour assessment indicates low awareness on child labour among target groups and/or in the rural and agricultural communities in general, it is recommended to build awareness raising into the programme design from the onset. A basic understanding of what constitutes child labour and the risks involved in child labour is a pre-condition for sound decision making in the households receiving social protection services. If family members are not aware that certain agricultural tasks may be harmful to children, that it is illegal to employ children below the national minimum age, that excessive domestic chores may also constitute child labour and so on, this may increase the risk that social protection could have detrimental effects or, at best, no impact on child labour.

Awareness-raising activities need not necessarily be built into social protection programmes in the sense that Social Welfare Department staff must carry out the activities. Rather, the entities responsible for social protection programmes may team up with other government departments and/or with civil society organization already engaged in awareness raising and social mobilisation for child protection and child labour elimination. Moreover, agricultural producer organization and trade unions are often valuable partners in carrying out community outreach, workplace-based information campaigns (among other things), regarding the elimination of child labour and the protection of young workers. When planning the information campaigns, it is critically important to take into consideration the gendered nature of child labour and gender, age and other characteristics in the target groups. This may influence both the messaging and the delivery of the messages.

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Integrating child labour awareness raising, or other activities aimed at the elimination of child labour, to ensure no harm and to realise the child labour transformational potential of social protection, requires building partnerships with government entities such as education departments and agricultural extension services, as well as civil society organization. Building partnerships for child labour elimination therefore needs to be considered during programme design.

Some countries already have in place national and/or local child labour or child protection coordination mechanisms that will be useful to connect with or to join. For example, these include national child labour councils which bring together government ministries and sometimes civil society partners working towards the elimination of child labour. To find out if such a mechanism exists in your country, contact the Ministry of Labour or the ministry responsible for child development and protection (which could be the Ministry of Social Welfare also responsible for many of the government run social protection schemes).

Summing up, child labour integration at the design stage is mainly about assessing child labour and the potential impact of the social protection initiative in question to allow identification of safeguards and transformative interventions. Putting in place child and gender sensitive, inter-sectionally appropriate safeguards and transformative measures will often take establishing partnerships. This needs to be recognised in the design stage.

Resource materials

FAO Framework on Ending Child Labour in Agriculture
https://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/1313697/#:~:text=The%20purpose%20of%20the%20FAO's,global%2C%20regional%20and%20country%20levels.

FAO-ILO guidance on addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture
https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/33941209-d8a6-5941-ac09-273192dedc7d/

ILO Toolkit for design and implementation of National Action Plan on Child Labour
https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_568877/lang--en/index.htm

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5.3. Programme implementation

Programme implementation key questions:

- Are benefits paid in full and on time to the individuals at risk of/in child labour or members of their families?
- Is there a system in place to link individual (direct or indirect) child recipients of social protection benefits with other services, such as health care and education, to ensure their protection and prevention from child labour?
- Is data on child labour safely collected, stored and used in the best interest of individual children and for the delivery of coherent, comprehensive services?

During programme implementation, being able to address child labour cases where they occur and protect at-risk children is essential. While the standard operating procedures (SOPs) needed for this must be planned for during the programme design stage, we discuss appropriate mechanisms in the implementation section as referral systems and SOPs must continuously evolve and adapt to changing circumstances.

Some of the SOPs for addressing child labour will be inherent in the social protection protocols in place to verify eligibility. Social registers, for example, can include information on child labour status and/or child labour risk when recipients of social protection benefits are identified and verified. However, additional steps may be required. Essentially, any intervention, including social protection schemes, that may have a potentially negative impact on child labour needs to put in place mitigation measures. In the case of social protection, a deliberate effort will also allow for realisation of child labour benefits.

As discussed in Chapter 4, child labour monitoring systems (CLMS) are extremely useful for ensuring that children who need support services are identified and referred to the service providers. Social protection services may indeed be among the services that identified children can benefit from. Therefore, linking with existing child labour monitoring and/or child protection systems (CPS) in a country/rural target area can be an effective way of putting in place mitigation measures and realising the child labour transformative potential in a social protection programme.

Through the CLMS/CPS referral mechanisms, children can get easy access to social protection grants and other services that may facilitate their protection against child labour. Moreover, if a child is found in child labour as a result of increased

household labour demands on receipt of social protection income support, the CLMS/CPS mechanism can refer the child to health care, education and other complementary support services.

Establishing a functional, robust, and low cost CLMS/CPS is complex and time-consuming. For CLMS/CPS to be effective they need to take into consideration multiple factors and vulnerabilities, such as gender dynamics, socio-economic structures, ethnicity, mobility of children and families, and so on. The system must comply with fundamental child rights, such as the right to protection from abuse when receiving care and support. The system must also respect children's and families' rights to privacy and confidentiality. This impacts the way in which registers are set up and used. Experiences from social protection systems – for example on establishing safe registers – may in fact be cross-fertilised with CLMS/CPS.

It is also potentially feasible to integrate CLMS/CPS with social protection registers. Social registers that contain safely stored personal information for recipients of benefits may form the basis for referring children to other services, such as health and education services, if relevant information on labour participation, education status, and so on, is included in the social register.

Importantly, social protection systems usually include complaints mechanisms that allow recipients to raise concerns about the determination of eligibility, payment of benefits, and so on. If the systems take into account child labour-related information and facilitates referral to supportive social services, the social protection registration may also ensure that children in or at risk of child labour can raise concerns if they do not receive support to prevent or leave child labour. Aggregated, anonymised data from complaints mechanisms that recognise child labour complaints are potentially a valuable source of information, along with research, labour inspection records, etc., for evidence-based policy development and planning nationally.

While this link to the CLMS/CPS systems in place is highly recommended, child labour transformative social protection also needs to be tied to agricultural development programmes which seek to lower agricultural labour demands, especially in small scale agriculture, for example through conservation agriculture, increased mechanisation, among other things. Therefore, connecting social protection grants with agricultural development services, for example in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture's extension services or NGOs, is equally important. Again, this needs to be planned for in the programme design phase, but the system must be sufficiently agile to adapt to changing circumstances, agricultural and social developments, and unforeseen events. It is worth stressing again that the relationship between agricultural development and social protection

is reciprocal. Not only will agricultural development allow for more child labour transformative social protection. Access to social protection services (such as social insurance or crop insurance) may also stimulate farmers' interest and ability to engage in new agricultural techniques that will yield higher incomes and more stable and sustainable food systems in the longer run.

Regardless of the registration and referral systems in place, it cannot be stressed too strongly that ensuring a well-functioning social protection system which delivers benefits on time and to the right person is, in and of itself, a child-labour elimination priority. If benefits are paid late or not in full, the child labour transformative impact is unlikely to materialise. Income smoothing and predictability, as discussed, are key contributions to child labour elimination that can be realised through social protection. If the cushioning effect of predictable benefits on time is absent, families are likely to continue relying on child labour. Hence, the basic requirements for effective social protection delivery, as laid out in the ISPA CODI tool, are a necessary condition for child labour transformation through social protection.

Resource materials

ISPA CODI Tools
https://ispatools.org/core-diagnostic-instrument/

ILO child labour monitoring resource site
https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Action/Childlabourmonitoring/lang--en/index.htm

International Cocoa Initiative CLMRS site
https://www.cocoainitiative.org/our-work/operational-support/child-labour-monitoring-and-remediation-systems

UNICEF child protection systems resource site
https://www.unicef.org/topics/child-protection-systems

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5.4. Programme monitoring and evaluation

It is highly recommended that social protection programmes include child-labour indicators in their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks. Monitoring progress on child labour on a routine basis is essential to be able to adapt grant size, targeting, and other design features along the way, if unintended impacts on child labour are found.

Including assessments of the impacts on child labour – both positive and negative – and collecting lessons from social protection programmes will provide a key contribution to the knowledge base on child labour and social protection. As discussed in Chapter 4, there are multiple gaps in the knowledge and understanding of the links between child labour and social protection. Gaps include, for example, the relative effects of targeting different age groups and genders on child labour. Is it true, as often assumed, that social protection grants for women are more likely to benefit children? Or is the displacement effect undercutting the positive impact in most cases? Are these dynamics different in rural, agricultural households as compared to urban households? Are the dynamics different in mobile families (e.g. pastoralist families or migrant families) than in families living in one permanent place? What are the impacts of grants targeting different life-cycle stages on child labour? The evidence on these issues is still scarce. Therefore, integrating child-labour, impact assessments with social protection evaluation will not only provide insights on the specific programme, it will also provide critical contributions to the global knowledge base on child labour and social protection.

In addition to the more common indicators on school enrolment and education participation of children in target households, it is highly recommended that baseline studies, surveys and impact evaluations also include indicators on children and young people's work participation. The indicators must be broken down by sex and age groups in accordance with international statistical classifications on child labour. These are available through the guidance materials developed by the ILO SIMPOC programme (see box on resource materials).

The FAO Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluation of Child Labour in Agriculture is particularly useful for readers of this note. It provides guidance related specifically to agriculture, and especially small-scale agriculture. The handbook suggests ways and means to integrate child labour into agricultural project baselines, monitoring intended and unintended consequences on child labour of agricultural activities, and ways to measure impacts on child labour. A link to the handbook is provided in the resources box below.

5.5. Conclusion

This guidance note has discussed the rationale for integrating child-labour concerns into social protection systems and reviewed relevant evidence. It has demonstrated that social protection can be highly effective in preventing and eliminating child labour in agriculture, provided that it is designed in a child-labour-sensitive manner. Specifically, it is essential to position social protection in a wider policy environment conducive to addressing the underlying drivers of child labour, such as through linking with national agriculture, education and health policies. The design of social protection programmes should be child-sensitive, follow a life-cycle approach and be based on a solid child labour analysis. Effective social protection delivery that is linked with existing child labour monitoring or child protection systems, as well as efforts to lower agricultural labour demand, can help prevent and reduce child labour.

It is equally important to include child-labour indicators in the monitoring and evaluation frameworks of social protection programmes, including impact assessments. The goal is to adapt the programmes and eventually contribute to the emerging evidence base of social protection's contribution to the elimination of child labour. Thus, this note should be considered as a living document that uses existing evidence to date. Considering the numerous gaps in the literature, such as on the impact of various programme design features on child labour, particularly in agricultural subsectors, as well as on the evidence relating to social insurance, regular updates should be undertaken based on the latest evidence.

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Annex 1
Overview of social protection schemes' child labour impact in the context of agriculture

The table below provides a short overview of different types of social protection and their expected impact on child labour. Some of these types of social protection are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 and this table is intended as a short overview for easy reference.

Type of social protection	Life stage	Expected impact on child labour in agriculture	Potential adverse effects and limitations
Social assistance (non-contributory schemes)			
Universal child grants/ benefits	Pre-school children, School age children	Smoothing income, increasing income in CL prone families, improved health and nutrition status (that will improve learning).	Increased labour demand with higher income, stronger children who can work more/do heavier work, social norms not prioritising education.
Targeted cash transfers for poor households (e.g. child grants)	Children and families	Addressing acute income shortages, making up for lost income when children are withdrawn from child labour, improving resilience. For targeted child grants conditional on education: Inducing education as a priority activity.	Increased labour demand with higher incomes, social norms around children's work and education.

Type of social protection	Life stage	Expected impact on child labour in agriculture	Potential adverse effects and limitations
Non-contributory pension schemes	Older people (taking care of children)	Addressing acute income shortages that may push children living with older family members (e.g. children left behind) into CL.	Only effective if grants are sufficiently large.
Universal health care	Children and families	Improved health allows adults to work, reduced opportunity costs and decreases household expenses – lowers demand for CL.	Only effective if health care is accessible (e.g. clinics not too far away) and of good quality.
School feeding and take-home rations, food vouchers	Children	Reduces opportunity costs, increases education incentives through increased food security.	Labour demands may be more important to decision making (agricultural cycle). School attendance determined by social norms also (not only by labour demands) – could also be linked to wish to transfer farming skills to boys or not wanting to "waste education on girls," etc. Local delivery of produce for school feeding driving up labour demand, possibly resulting in child labour.
Education support (waivers, bursaries, etc.)	School-age children	Decreases education costs/opportunity costs.	Labour demands/ agricultural cycle, education relevance, quality and accessibility.

Type of social protection	Life stage	Expected impact on child labour in agriculture	Potential adverse effects and limitations
Social insurances (contributory schemes)			
Unemployment benefits	Working age	Income smoothing decreases need for CL.	Limited coverage in the informal sector and in rural areas – limited applicability (at least till now) in agriculture.
Contributory retirement benefits	Old age	Income shortages, income smoothing for extended families.	Usually not open to the most vulnerable families.
Accident insurances	Working age	Income smoothing/ decreasing the impact of economic shocks.	Limited availability in the informal sector, rural areas.
Health insurances	Throughout life cycle	Similar to universal health care, but organised based on contributions.	In principle mandatory health insurances should work similarly to universal health care, but possibly less likely to benefit poor people in rural areas.
Crop/asset insurances	Working age	Limiting impact of economic shocks.	So far, limited application in small-scale agriculture (and especially in small-scale aquaculture and fisheries).
Targeted social insurance for migrant workers and refugees	Children and their families	Income shortages and structural vulnerabilities due to migrant or refugee status, seasonal income smoothing.	Difficulties accessing services.
Employment/self-employment/livelihoods support			
Income-generation schemes	Working age	Economic empowerment, less need for CL.	Displacement effects (significant risk).
Agricultural input subsidies	Working age	Economic empowerment and increased resilience.	Displacement effects (significant risk).
Savings and credit schemes	Working age	Economic empowerment, less need for CL.	Displacement effects (significant risk!). Debt cycles.

Type of social protection	Life stage	Expected impact on child labour in agriculture	Potential adverse effects and limitations
Youth employment schemes	Young working age	Improving prospects for young people, making education attendance a priority.	Desirability of certain types of work may be limited – agriculture and fisheries are prime examples – labour shortages as young people transition out of the sectors – leaving room for displacement effects, e.g. using very vulnerable migrant workers. Gender roles and stereotypes.
Employment services	Working age	Economic empowerment, less need for CL.	Quality of the jobs offered by some employment services – risks of informal agents (fisheries is a prime example).
Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)	(Young) working age	Improving young people's skills and employment prospects, protection measures.	Relevance, quality and accessibility of TVET Interest in agri-based TVET/preference for white collar (include junior farmer field schools as example of measure to overcome limitations). Gender roles and stereotypes regarding who can do what.
Entrepreneurship training, soft skills training, etc.	Working age	Improving young people's skills and employment prospects, protection measures.	Quality of training, displacement effects – strong gender inequity here.
Public works programmes	Working age	Improving incomes (low season).	Displacement effects, child labour in the actual public works activities.

Type of social protection	Life stage	Expected impact on child labour in agriculture	Potential adverse effects and limitations
Complementary social care and services			
Pre-school support/ care for children	(Younger) children	Lowering demand for parents (women's) labour, freeing up mothers' time to generate income, preventing displacement effects, promoting education (enrolment).	Not widely available in rural areas in LMIC, gender stereotypes/ social norms around motherhood.
Care for older people	Old age	Lowering demand for women's community and family contributions, freeing up time, preventing displacement effects.	Social norms.
Parenting support	Young adults/working age	Psycho-social empowerment, knowledge on cc.	Social norms.
Integrated SP (grants + case management)	(Potentially) entire life-cycle	Comprehensive responses addressing both income and labour demand as well as social norms as underlying drivers of CL	More complex interventions? Sustaining interventions over time.

Elimination of **child labour in agriculture** through social protection

GUIDANCE NOTE

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