

Child labour prevention in agriculture

Junior Farmer Field and Life School – Facilitator's guide



The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

ISBN 978-92-5-106707-9

All rights reserved. Reproduction and dissemination of material in this information product for educational or other non-commercial purposes are authorized without any prior written permission from the copyright holders provided the source is fully acknowledged. Reproduction of material in this information product for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without written permission of the copyright holders. Applications for such permission should be addressed to:

Chief

Electronic Publishing Policy and Support Branch

Communication Division

FAO

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy

or by e-mail to:

copyright@fao.org

Photos: © FAO/G.Bizzarri

© FAO 2010

Child labour in agriculture

Exercises and information for the integration of child labour prevention in JFFLS curricula.



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	iv
Foreword	v
Child labour: definitions and standards	vi
Aims of this JFFLS Module	viii
Important information for the JFFLS National Coordinator	ix
Important information for JFFLS Facilitators	x
Points to consider when tackling child labour issues in a JFFLS	xi
Overview of the Exercises	xiii
Child Labour Exercises	1
EXERCISE 1: Role Play	2
EXERCISE 2: What is child labour?	9
Facilitator Notes 1: Basic facts about child labour	11
EXERCISE 3: What do Children do in agriculture?	14
Facilitator Notes 1 Health and safety problems in agriculture	16
EXERCISE 4: Carrying heavy loads	22
Facilitator Notes 3: Carrying heavy loads	23
EXERCISE 5 Why agriculture can be hazardous for children?	24
Facilitator Notes 4: Why children are at greater risk than adults	27
EXERCISE 6: Comparing the situation of different children	30
EXERCISE 7: Finding out more from a Visitor	33
EXERCISE 8: A Headline for a Picture	35
EXERCISE 9: Daily schedules of both a girl and a boy	37
Facilitator Notes 5: Child domestic workers	41
EXERCISE 10: Body sculptures	42
EXERCISE 11: Issues for debate	44
Facilitator Notes 6: Why do children work?	46
EXERCISE 12: How can we promote agriculture but avoid child labour?	48
Facilitator Notes 7: Strategies to eliminate hazardous child labour	50
Further Sources of Information	52

Acknowledgements

Under the supervision of Carol Djeddah, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), this Module has been compiled and written by Una Murray for the FAO in collaboration with Peter Hurst from the International Labour Organization's Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) and Albertine de Lange from the FAO Regional Office for Africa. Comments on an earlier draft were provided by Michelle Remme from FAO Malawi and the Junior Farmer Field and Life School (JFFLS) team in FAO, Rome. Francesca DallaValle (FAO Rome) coordinated the field testing of this Module and provided valuable suggestions and direction.

Comments and suggestions for improvement to the draft version of the Module were collected following a first "testing" workshop in Bondo District in Kenya (October 2009). We would like to thank the following people for their excellent comments and feedback: David Aldinyi Opundo, Joseph Onienga, Jane K'oyanda, Dorothy Owiti, Chrispine Ayako Opiyo, Anne Caroline Anam, Tom Nyabundi, Syprose Akinyi Auma, Alex Omino, Maurice Otieno and Margaret Juma. Comments were also provided by Bernard Kiura from ILO-IPEC Kenya. Thanks to Masai Masai and Syprose Achieng, FAO Kenya for coordinating the workshop in Kenya.

A second "testing" workshop took place in Mozambique in November 2009, in collaboration with the JFFLS/FAO team in Chimoio. The following JFFLS facilitators and experts also provided invaluable feedback on the Module: Francisca Raposo, Rosario Gabungaidze Filipe, Rute Muchanga, Lizete Vilankulos, Tiago Fazenda Lole, Gabriel Bongesse Tomo, Lino Domingos, Francisco Alicet, Manuel Domingos Castigo, Julia Rafael, Adriano Madamuge Mfumo, Adriano Madamuge, Helder Moises Macamero, Leonor Quinto, Alves Nhaurire and Rogério Mavanga.

Technical information on child labour in agriculture and many of the training ideas and activities are taken from the ILO-IPEC *Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture (2005), as revised in 2009*, from the *ILO-IPEC (2002) SCREAM Stop Child Labour Modules (developed by Nick Grisewood)* and from the *ILO-IPEC Gender equality and child labour, a participatory tool for facilitators (Amorim, Badrinath & Murray, 2005)*. Case study materials come from various ILO-IPEC programmes to eliminate child labour and are referenced accordingly.

This work and publication has been supported by UNAIDS through its United Nations System-wide Work Programme on Scaling-up HIV and AIDS Services for Populations of Humanitarian Concern and the "Legal Empowerment of the Poor" project, funded under the partnership programme between FAO, Norway and the Netherlands (FMPP).

Foreword

Children's participation in their own family farm activities helps them learn valuable skills and contribute to the generation of household income, which has a positive impact on their livelihoods. Such participation is important for children and builds their self-esteem.

Because of poverty, the breakdown of the family, the demand for cheap labour, family indebtedness, household shocks due to HIV and other reasons, many younger children end up doing work that poses a risk to their physical and psychological development or to their right to formal education. The prevention and mitigation of child labour has always been an implicit element of the JFFLS approach through its emphasis on child protection as a guiding principle and through its aim to promote decent work in agriculture for youth. Furthermore, JFFLS can reduce children's vulnerability to all forms of exploitation, through its linkages to formal school and its focus on achieving food security and by enabling better decision-making skills for participants.

The JFFLS approach so far has not included raising awareness on the harmful effects of child labour or stimulating debate about the topic among children and their communities. However, a key strategy used by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to prevent child labour is sensitization on child labour and its harmful effects on children. This Module suggests a set of exercises that can be done within the JFFLS context. Most exercises are specifically targeted at the JFFLS students, but some of the exercises have been specifically designed to involve the children's guardians.

Special attention is given to training the facilitators. Creating awareness among the JFFLS facilitators is a crucial first step in any effort to mainstream child labour concerns in the JFFLS approach. This Module contains tips for JFFLS coordinators on how to include the topic in the national facilitator's guide and in facilitators' training. It also includes special information and tips for facilitators who are introducing the topic in their JFFLS.

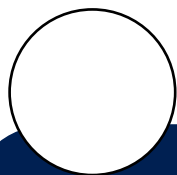
It will become clear that integrating child labour concerns in JFFLS takes more than raising awareness among the participants, or even among the people around them. It also entails consistent efforts to ensure that the JFFLS field activities provide a positive example of children's involvement in agriculture, which is clearly different from child labour. The possible consequences of long working hours, school dropout and work that may pose a hazard to children's health may be particularly relevant in projects where JFFLS promotes entrepreneurship among JFFLS participants or graduates.

Carol Djeddah

Senior Officer

JFFLS coordinator

Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division



Introduction for the facilitators

➤ Child labour: definitions and standards

International conventions and agreements define a child as a person younger than 18 years of age.

The term “child labour” refers to:

- the engagement of children in prohibited work and activities; that is, work and activities by children that are socially and morally undesirable;
- work that harms children’s health or development; stops them from attending school; does not allow them to participate in vocational or training programmes; or limits their capacity to benefit from instruction received.

The “worst forms of child labour” is an appalling category of child labour which has been defined to include all forms of slavery, child trafficking, child soldiers, commercial sexual exploitation, hazardous child labour and using children in illicit activities. Eliminating these worst forms of child labour should receive the most urgent attention, according to the 171 countries who have ratified ILO Convention 182.¹

Not all children who work in agriculture work in “child labour”. Nonetheless, child labour in agriculture is very common. Sixty instead of seventy percent of all children found in different types of child labour are found in agriculture. The number of child labourers working in agriculture is nearly ten times that of children involved in factory work such as garment manufacturing, carpet-weaving, or soccer-ball stitching. The numbers, of course, vary from country to country.

Child labour in agriculture is not confined to developing countries; it is also a serious problem in industrialized countries. All over the world, agriculture can be one of the three most dangerous sectors in which to work in terms of the numbers of work-related deaths, non-fatal accidents and cases of occupational diseases and ill health.

In order to avoid work in agriculture that can be classified as child labour, we must look to what governments internationally have negotiated and agreed about eliminating child labour.

Children under the minimum age for work in their country (14, 15 or 16 years of age depending on the country) are not allowed to work full time in agriculture or any other sector. Children under the minimum age for work should be in school being properly educated.

However, many countries allow children who are aged 12-14 (or sometimes 13-15 depending on the country) to carry out “light work”, such as helping around the farm before and after school, on weekends and on school holidays. Light work is defined as work that:²

- does not harm children’s health or development;
- does not stop children from attending school;
- does not stop children from participating in vocational or training programmes approved by the national authority;
- does not limit children’s capacity to benefit from the instruction received.

Once children have attained the minimum legal age for work – 14, 15 or 16 depending on the country – they can be encouraged to enter into agricultural work and be employed full time. However, they must receive proper training, work under safe and healthy conditions and be properly supervised. Table 1 summarizes these minimum ages.

1 <http://www.un.org/children/conflict/keydocuments/english/iloconvention1828.html>

2 ILO Convention No. 138 Minimum Age for Employment, Article 7.

Young people (under 18 but over the minimum legal age for work) must not carry out work that is harmful to their health, safety, development and well-being (i.e. hazardous child labour). If the workplace is too dangerous, they are automatically classed as child labourers. In such circumstances, their employment would be illegal, because no child under 18 must carry out hazardous work. They would have to be withdrawn from this work and put into vocational training or alternative employment. The ideal situation, however, would be to keep those children in the workplace and improve their levels of health and safety protection and general working conditions.

Table 1: Minimum age for employment³

	Minimum age for admission to employment or work In general	Minimum age for admission to employment or work Developing countries
General	15 years	14 years
Light work	13 years	12 years
Hazardous work	18 years	

➤ Aims of this JFFLS Module

The exercises in this Module provide JFFLS facilitators with an opportunity to discuss the topic of children working in agriculture and provide information that could help children and their guardians avoid work that could be described as child labour. The topic of child labour should not be approached in the JFFLS without sensitizing the guardians of the JFFLS students and other members of the community.

This Module helps the JFFLS students and guardians recognize what could qualify as “child labour” and distinguish between agricultural work that helps them learn valuable skills and work that could be described as child labour. Through a series of discussions, physical exercises, role-playing exercises and case studies, various aspects of child labour are highlighted. On the other hand, appropriate agricultural work under safe and healthy conditions is encouraged and promoted throughout the Module.

The Module focuses on child labour in agriculture, not on other forms of child labour such as in the manufacturing sector, or mining and quarrying. The topic of domestic child labour is touched upon because domestic work often links with agricultural work, particularly for the girl child. However, when using this Module, bear in mind that JFFLS participants can also be recruited to work in mining, quarrying or other hazardous sectors.

The exercises can be undertaken at different points in the JFFLS cycle, although “child labour” should be included preferably in the curriculum as a special life topic. Child labour prevention can also be linked to topics such as “the importance of education”, “child protection” or “children’s rights”.

The exercises in this Module are developed for facilitators. After making any necessary adaptations and after adding the national-specific information, the JFFLS coordinators (or the people in charge of the national facilitator’s guide) should include the exercises and the facilitators’ notes in the national JFFLS guide. Tips and ideas for the JFFLS coordinators to prepare the Module for JFFLS facilitators are provided in the next section. Ideas on how JFFLS facilitators should prepare themselves before using the Modules are also provided. Sets of facilitators’ notes on child labour are included.

➤ Important information for the JFFLS National Coordinator

Preparation is required before you can integrate child labour prevention in your JFFLS programme!

It is important for facilitators to have a clear understanding of the concept of child labour before they start facilitating the topic. Facilitators' notes on child labour are included in the Module; however, the JFFLS coordinator must prepare some national-specific background information on child labour to include in the facilitator training or special "refresher" training. The JFFLS coordinator can use specific exercises in this Module to sensitize the facilitators on the topic and provide them with ideas for their sessions with the JFFLS participants and guardians. Exercises 2, 5, 11 and 12 are useful for sensitizing facilitators.

Country-specific information on laws and national policies should be included in the national facilitator's guide and discussed during the facilitator training. A list of essential information to have at hand about national laws and policies on child labour is provided below. Specifically, the JFFLS coordinator should research answers to the following questions and share them with the facilitators:

- Is there national legislation on child labour? Is there an article in the constitution that prohibits labour that is considered injurious to the health, education or development of children?
- Is there an act or legislation that specifies at what age children and young people can or cannot work? What is the compulsory age for school attendance?
- Has your country passed its own child labour laws that address the issue of child labour and list which child labour practices are considered "hazardous"?
- Is there a national list of hazardous work and if so, does this list specify certain agricultural practices as hazardous?
- Is there a National Action Plan on child labour?
- Has your country signed key international conventions that ban certain practices of child labour? Key international conventions include the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁴ ILO Conventions No. 138 (Minimum Age Convention), ILO Convention No. 1825 (Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour) and ILO Convention No. 184 (Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention).
- What social policies in support of vulnerable children or orphans are being implemented in the districts selected for the JFFLS? Examples could be cash transfer programmes or school bursary programmes.
- What reporting systems are in place for reporting on child abuse? Are there particular confidential "telephone" numbers that can be used to report abuse?

In order to obtain this information, the JFFLS coordinator can contact the relevant authorities (such as legislatures, the government office that deals with employment or labour issues, the International Labour Office or the UNICEF office). It might be possible to invite a colleague (e.g. from the child labour programme of the ILO, an officer from the national child labour unit in the ministry of labour or ministry that deals with children's affairs or individuals who work in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that focus on child labour or children's rights) to provide input at some facilitator training sessions.

⁴ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

⁵ <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C182>

➤ Important information for JFFLS Facilitators

Preparation is required before you can integrate child labour prevention in your JFFLS!

Ensure that you have received information on your country's child labour laws and policies from your JFFLS national coordinator or master trainer. As a JFFLS facilitator, you can also do your own research with others in the community before you introduce the topic of child labour prevention.

For example:

- Read through this Module to understand what child labour is and what it is not. Background information on child labour is included and scattered throughout the exercises. Remind your coordinator to provide you with country-specific information on laws and policies if you have not already received that information. Think carefully about the positive aspects of agriculture and how to approach the child labour topic without putting people off from agriculture as a livelihood option.
- Local NGOs working on child protection issues might also be able to provide some background information. Ask around to find out who would know about these issues.
- Ask colleagues and agricultural experts to help you make a list of the types of child labour found locally in agriculture. Make a list of the types of agricultural undertakings where children work (e.g. family farms, corporate-run farms, plantations and agro-industrial complexes) and the type of work they do (e.g. scaring or eliminating pests, weeding, working with draught animals, working with agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides). This will be useful background information when using the exercises in this Module.
- Ask local agricultural officers whether programmes aimed at accelerating agricultural production recognize the issue of child labour. Find out if there are any local provisions that describe how to deal with child labour in agriculture.
- Find out if there are any programmes in your area that aim to promote youth employment in agriculture. Where are the nearest and most accessible vocational agricultural courses? What are the entrance requirements for vocational agricultural courses in agriculture?
- Try to find out who is responsible for responding to cases of child labour in your locality and who can be contacted if child labour is suspected (e.g. district/community social welfare worker).

Points to consider when tackling child labour issues in a JFFLS

- While focusing on child labour, it is important to ensure that you still encourage the JFFLS participants to consider future employment in agriculture which provides good health, safety and working conditions.
- Make sure that you set a good example about preventing child labour by ensuring that all JFFLS field activities are safe, light and in line with the age of the children who are carrying them out. Always keep the size of the learning field smaller than 1 000 m² and involve adults whenever there are heavier tasks to do, such as clearing land or digging holes. The information in this Module will help you distinguish between safe work and potentially hazardous tasks that should only be carried out by adults.
- Involve caretakers and, if possible, teachers and community leaders in raising awareness about child labour. Adults (especially parents and caretakers) often assign work to children and have authority over them; therefore, they must be aware of child labour issues.
- Many of the participants attending the JFFLS may be engaged in child labour. It is important to treat this topic sensitively.
- Your country will have a minimum age for employment for young workers. Know this age and constantly refer to it.
- Always be clear that child labour refers to children under the minimum age allowed to work (i.e. 14, 15 or 16 depending on the country) or young workers under 18 who are involved in hazardous work.
- Highlight that not all work that young children undertake in agriculture is bad for them or would qualify as work to be eliminated. Age-appropriate tasks that are of lower risk and that do not interfere with a child's health, schooling and right to leisure time are a normal part of growing up in rural areas. Children's participation in "light" family farm activities helps them learn valuable skills, build self-esteem and contribute to household livelihoods.
- Acknowledge that there often is increasing pressure for children to be allowed to work to cover living costs and pay school fees. This may affect participants in your JFFLS. You may try to assist the children involved in child labour, and their parents/guardians, by looking for alternative solutions to their financial or social problems. Support might be possible from relatives, NGOs or district authorities.
- Always stress that children are at greater risk than adults in terms of health and safety hazards in the workplace, including in agriculture. The reasons for this are summarized below and are outlined in more detail in Facilitator Notes 2 and 4:
- Agriculture work is considered hazardous for children if the work hours are extremely long and the work is physically demanding (e.g. work under extreme temperatures).
- Cutting tools are frequently used, hazardous substances may be involved and children are exposed to high levels of organic dust.
- Children can be injured by animals as well as machinery and agricultural equipment designed for adults and not for children.
- Working (often barefoot) in fields or around livestock exposes children to cuts, thorn injuries, skin disorders, bites or animal and water-borne diseases.
- A lack of clean drinking water and washing facilities in agricultural fields is another concern.

Sensitizing on child labour issues in agriculture programmes⁶

Raising awareness about child labour begins with a clear message about the difference between child labour and acceptable work for children. Understanding the distinction between the two is often difficult at first. Parents, guardians and families of working children often think that working on farms from a young age is the only way to transfer farming skills to children and prepare them to eventually take over the management of the farms; however, they are ignorant of the harmful effects of child labour on the physical and emotional development of children. A key message to portray is that education is one of the best ways to break the poverty cycle in families.

- Using drama to raise awareness is highly effective. Dramatic scenes and narratives can connect with the everyday reality faced by parents and guardians.
- Using role models (i.e. former child labourers who once worked on farms but have advanced within their communities through education) appeals to both child labourers and their parents/guardians.
- Sensitizing should focus on the community as a whole, rather than solely on JFFLS participants or their guardians.
- Involve important people in the community such as religious authorities, leaders and legislators. These people must be on board for others to follow and may also be able to influence others.
- If children's guardians see school as a threat to the income-generating activities of child labourers, it may be necessary to integrate income-earning activities in the JFFLS. This allows schools to help particular families and to provide incentives in the form of food or school uniforms.

⁶ COMAGRI Project Synthesis Paper on Good Practices (ILO-IPEC) Unpublished July 2005

➤ Overview of the exercises

None of the exercises contained in this Module require the participants to be able to read or write. You can adapt all exercises to the local situation, using local agricultural practices and local knowledge.

Exercises for children and their guardians:

- In **Exercise 1**, role play is used to introduce child labour. Four different child labour scenarios are presented for the JFFLS participants to act out, with or in front of their guardians.
- **Exercise 2** gets the participants to brainstorm about when a child is no longer a child and what child labour is and what it is not.
- **Exercise 5** (see below)

Exercises for children:

- **Exercise 3** allows the participants to pretend that they are reporters identifying and filming local situations of child labour in agriculture.
- **Exercise 4** presents a short story about a boy who collapses from having carried 40 kilos; this story can be used for discussion with the participants.
- In **Exercise 5**, we try to draw parallels between the special care that children require with what is already known about caring for animals and plants. This exercise is especially relevant for guardians, but can also be undertaken with the JFFLS participants.
- **Exercise 6** uses three short stories to allow the JFFLS participants to appreciate that situations and opportunities for children are very different and often depend on chance and opportunity.
- A visitor (either an ex-child labourer or an activist working to stop child labour) is invited to talk to the JFFLS participants in **Exercise 7**. The participants are encouraged to prepare questions in advance of the visit.
- In **Exercise 8**, JFFLS participants are encouraged to create a caption for a picture of a child working.
- **Exercise 9** involves using the imagination to document what a typical day would be like for a girl child labourer and a boy child labourer. The focus is on domestic work linked to agricultural work. Gender-related differences can be highlighted during this exercise.
- **Exercise 10** allows the JFFLS participants to mould themselves into “statues” that illustrate hazardous activities and the injuries to which they may lead.

Exercises for facilitators and guardians:

- In a very physical way, **Exercise 11** allows participants to demonstrate whether they agree or disagree with certain statements about children working.
- **Exercise 12** allows facilitators and/or guardians to exchange ideas and information on what can be done to address concrete cases of child labour among their JFFLS participants and/or how to promote children’s interest in agriculture as a decent future work option.

