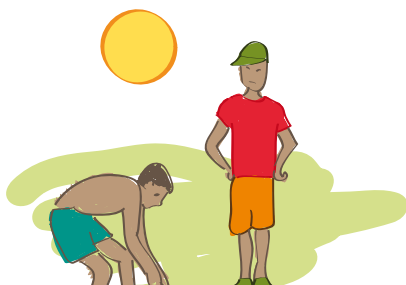


# Exercises

## 🔄 exercise 1

### Role Play



#### THE OBJECTIVE:

This exercise aims to build awareness among those in the community about the situation of children who are obliged to work instead of going to school.

#### THE EXERCISE:

Role play is defined as “the acting out of a particular role”. More specifically, a role-playing game is a game in which players take on the roles of imaginary characters.<sup>7</sup> In role plays, the participants use their own experience to act out real life situations. Role play is used in this exercise as a learning method to understand the situation and context of child labour. By acting out child labour situations, JFFLS participants have to enter into the characters, understand them and try to reproduce their feelings. Without directly discussing the children’s own situations, which can be too confrontational, children can use their own experiences with the topic. The role plays in this exercise can be done for the JFFLS children and in front of the wider community including guardians.

#### PREPARATION:<sup>8</sup>

Develop some scenarios that can be acted out by two or three participants that relate to a child engaged in child labour. Four examples are provided in boxes on the following pages. These should be **changed or adapted** to suit the local context. Alternatively, ask children to make up their own scenarios.

Remember the following important points:

- Try to avoid only portraying a negative image of work in agriculture or confirming that agriculture is only for school dropouts.
- Make sure that the messages in the role play are in line with local values about children’s roles and responsibilities, such as conveying a positive perception of children helping parents.
- A thorough debriefing must follow a role play. This will provide an opportunity for the facilitator and participants to raise new issues. Always follow the role plays with a discussion or debate with the spectators.

Other ways of preparing and introducing the topic of child labour include bringing pictures of children working and asking people to describe what is happening in the picture or introducing poems or songs that deal with the issue of child labour.

7 ILO-IPEC (2002) SCREAM Stop Child Labour Module entitled “Role play” (Author: Nick Grisewood)

8 ILO-IPEC (2005) Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture. Guidebook 2: Overview of child labour in agriculture (Author: Peter Hurst)

## Case 1: Dembe and his “uncle”

(two main role players)

Dembe is “loaned” by his parents to live and work on a relative’s farm in another part of the country.

The relatives collected him and brought him far away. He heard some discussions between his father and his “uncle” about money owed but he did not understand fully what they were saying.

Dembe does not know the relatives well, and is immediately put to work. His main task is to help prune old fronds from plantains and banana stems. He is using a small branch from a tree with a slit though it at one end, with a knife pushed through the slit at a right angle. All day long he is reaching up with the stick trying to pull downwards on the top side of the frond close to the main stem. After a few days he has pains in his back, waist and shoulders and feels so tired – this job is so tedious. He has many insect bites that itch. At certain times he also assists with cutting and carrying forage.

There is not enough water when he is out in the field. He fears the water is not so clean. He misses his home and misses going to school. He thinks often about how he would prefer to be back in school, but is afraid that he will be behind in school if he doesn’t go back to school soon. Dembe decides one day to ask his “uncle” on the farm about his future.....

**One role player acts out Dembe working**

**One role player is “his uncle” who comes along to check on what Dembe is doing**

**Dembe then talks with his Uncle about his future**

## Case 2: Danso, Lumusi and their mother and father

(four main role players)

A brother (Danso) and a sister (Lumusi) are working on their parents’ farm every day after school. They both enjoy the work and often swap stories about friends in school who seem to have made their farms more profitable by planting different crops and investing in different things. Danso and Lumusi often wonder how other families seem to cope. Danso and Lumusi have four younger brothers and sisters. Their parents are really busy and struggling to make ends meet. Their father is not convinced that Danso and Lumusi should both continue going to school as there is so much to do on the farm. They all argue and discuss this together.

Danso and Lumusi try to convince their father that they should continue going to school, and they try to get their mother also to convince him. But it is hard to argue with their father; there is so much to be done and help is needed. Food is scarce and apart from daily needs, the children realize they also need money for school.

**One role player is Danso, another is Lumusi and they are both trying to convince their father (another role player). Another person can be the mother, who finds it hard to argue with the father.**

Later, Danso is thinking of going to work on a nearby large farm to earn some cash so he does not have to ask his parents for everything he needs for school. Lumusi thinks if Danso does this he won’t have time for school at all. Lumusi tries to reason with Danso.....

### Case 3: Pranab, his father and a foreman (three main role players)

Pranab, a 12-year-old boy works alongside his dad as a wage labourer. Today they arrive at a large family-held farm with some full-time and part-time employees. A farm owner had come around to their village the evening before saying that he needed help on his farm. Pranab and his father were picked up in a vehicle provided by the farm owner and dropped at the farm.

This morning on the farm, pesticides are being mixed and will be applied later. Pranab is put to work weeding and driving away birds. Children are not allowed to mix the pesticides because they might spill or waste some of them. Pranab's father, who cannot read, is helping a full-time farm labourer handle and mix the pesticides. Pranab can see his father. Although Pranab has had little schooling he has heard that these pesticides can be dangerous and sees that his father is not wearing gloves. He knows someone who developed a bad rash from working on that farm last year. In fact, Pranab remembers small clouds or mists of vapour in the air that were blown towards where he was weeding. He remembers a feeling of suffocation. But Pranab's father is willing to spray.

Pranab goes over to where his father and the foreman are working. Pranab tries to talk quietly about the pesticides with his father, but the foreman overhears and is willing to dismiss them if they don't get on with their jobs.....

**One role player is Pranab, weeding and driving away birds**

**Another role player is Pranab's father mixing the pesticides**

**A third role player is the foreman who is angry with Pranab's interference**

### Case 4: Miremba and her grandmother (two to four main role players)

Miremba's mother died. Her daddy was a fisherman and had a lot of children. The children have not been going to school so their grandmother decided to give them to "relatives".

Miremba is only 11. She now stays with a family, with three small children. The family has a smallholding. The man of the house works somewhere in a nearby town. He makes her feel uncomfortable. His wife has a small stall. She is OK, but gives Miremba too much work to do. Every day Miremba sweeps the house, washes the dishes, does errands, does the laundry, fetches water, prepares meals and cooks. Miremba is also expected to take care of the seedlings, weed and gather snails and pests.

The household has two cows and Miremba also spends time feeding the animals, bringing them to pasture and fetching water for them. She sometimes works about 12 hours a day and never seems to have a break because there is so much to do. Sometimes when bringing the cows to pasture, she chats with a girl who lives nearby who is also a domestic worker. They often discuss the price you can get for milk in the nearby town. The girl told her about making butter from milk.

Recently, Miremba has had a constant sore head and a pain in her back and she has felt dizzy. She cut her finger by mistake with a sharp knife while preparing food and the cut hasn't healed fully yet. It hurts a lot when she lifts things and particularly when she is hoeing and weeding.

Miremba's food and lodging is her payment for all the work she does, and she knows that if she doesn't stay or if she complains, she will be out on the street.

Miremba has not been home since she arrived and she is not sure how long she has been there. Today her grandmother is coming to visit. She doesn't know what to tell her grandmother. Should she tell her about her hand? Surely her grandmother will notice. Should she tell her about the workload being so heavy? Her grandmother arrives.....

**One role player is Miremba, one role player is the other domestic worker and one role player is Miremba's grandmother**

**Act out the discussions between Miremba and the other girl**

**Act out the discussions between Miremba and her grandmother**

**You can also add in other characters such as the woman Miremba works for and the husband who makes Miremba feel uncomfortable**

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Introduce the concept of role play. Explain that they will be expected to act out a situation that conveys a child's despair from working. Read and carefully explain the scenarios to the groups of children. Assign roles and set up the role play. To ensure that everyone takes part, develop other characters for each scenario (e.g. employer, guardians, other labourers), even if those roles are small ones.
2. Explain that they are performing the role plays for each other and for their guardians as an audience. They must speak loudly, clearly and slowly. They must apply basic dramatic techniques such as not turning their backs to the audience. They should exaggerate all movements and actions.
3. Give the groups half an hour or more to prepare a short role play based on the scenarios that you have adopted. Allow them to develop the scenarios further if they like.
4. While the groups are working, circulate among them. Sit with each group and make sure that they develop a situation that they can reproduce through role play. Help them allocate roles and develop their script. Help them generate emotions – how do they think their characters would feel about their situation? Help them shape their characters, understand how they would behave and interpret their body language. Overall, help them to enter in to the characters' being and portray them to the best of their ability.
5. Encourage individuals in the groups. Some will be very shy and self-conscious. Try to use some humour to make them feel less self-conscious.
6. When the groups are ready to perform, assemble everyone together, including guardians, into an area that could be the stage. Establish a performance running list. Ensure that all groups watch the others perform. For the first performance, set the climate so that the others know what the situation involves. Introduce the role players in their roles.
7. Each group of players should be given from five to ten minutes to perform their role play. Manage the time.
8. Signal the end of the role play and ask the children to step out of their roles. Thank all the "actors" and ask them how they felt about the role play.
9. Ask the audience for comments. Ask for ideas on what the children in the role plays could do. Ask how the situation relates to the lives of children around them.
10. Lead a discussion about what was going on in the role plays. Summarize main points that were revealed. While the audience is attentive, move on to Exercise 2 – *What is Child Labour?*

### REFERENCE:

Adapted from ILO-IPEC (2002) SCREAM Stop Child Labour Module entitled "Role play" (Author: Nick Grisewood), and Activity Six Charades Game pp. 43-44, Gender equality and child labour, A participatory tool for facilitators. Amorim, A., Samouiller, S. Badrinath, S. & Murray, U. (2005) ILO/IPEC Geneva.

## 🔗 exercise 2:

### What is child labour?



#### OBJECTIVE:

This exercise helps children and guardians brainstorm on the topic of child labour to identify what is meant by the term “child labour”.<sup>9</sup>

#### PREPARATION:

Read *Facilitators’ Notes 1: Basic facts about child labour* (shown below) before conducting this exercise.

Locate national background information on child labour as suggested in the introductory notes section of this Module.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Begin by asking the very simple question: *Who is a child?* Follow up with: *At what age do you think a person is no longer a child?*

**Note:** Different answers will be given (e.g. when someone passes through an initiation ceremony, reaches puberty, gets married, begins work, leaves home, becomes orphaned, finishes school). It will be necessary to link to the national legal definition of a child to avoid confusion. Usually a child is defined as an individual under the age of 18 years.

Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that a “child” means every human being below the age of eighteen years, unless the law applicable to the child specifies that majority is attained earlier.<sup>10</sup> Find out what the country’s national constitution says.

2. Follow this question by asking the participants if they know of work in agriculture that children do which stops them from attending school or makes them too tired to perform well. Encourage the participants to be somewhat precise about the duration and nature of the activity (e.g. weeding every day for several hours; herding animals from dusk until dawn, scaring birds the entire day during school hours). Write the various activities on a chalkboard or flip chart.
3. Ask the participants to mention activities which are carried out by children and which make them feel very tired, weak or even sick or which can cause injuries (e.g. spraying pesticides, carrying heavy loads or weeding for long hours). List these activities separately on a flip chart or board.

<sup>9</sup> From ILO-IPEC (2005) Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture. Book 2 training course activities for farmers (Author: Peter Hurst) and ILO-IPEC (2002) SCREAM Stop Child Labour Module entitled “Basic Information” (Author: Nick Grisewood)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>

4. Ask the participants to describe activities often done by children which are good for them and from which they learn important skills. Examples could be helping parents harvest or weed for a few hours in the weekend or learning activities on the JFFLS field. Also write down these activities.
5. Review the three different lists and explain that we usually use the word child labour (or the local equivalent of the term) to describe the type of work mentioned on the first two lists. You can use the information below as well as the information in *Facilitators' Notes 1*.

**Note:** Broadly speaking, the term “child labour” refers to the engagement of children in work and activities that are socially and morally undesirable.<sup>11</sup>

**For example, work could be child labour if the child is:**

- working all the time instead of being in school;
- engaged in tasks that are overwhelming for long periods;
- working very late at night;
- working under very bad conditions (e.g. no food or water or extreme heat);
- working under duress (e.g. being beaten or forced to work);
- working but pay is being given to someone else.

For more detail, see *Facilitators' Notes 1: Basic Facts about Child Labour*.

6. Start a discussion with the children and their guardians. Use the following questions to stimulate the discussion:
  - When child labour is discussed locally, what age do people think about?
  - Do they think about boys or girls or both?
  - Where does child labour exist? In which parts of our country or in which districts or among which groups of people?
  - Are child labourers paid? Can they also do unpaid work?
7. Summarize and try to ensure that everyone is clear about what child labour is and what it is not.

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<sup>11</sup> ILO-IPEC (2008) Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture. Book 1 A trainer's guide. revised edition. Author: Peter Hurst.



## Notes about child labour

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Children carry out many different tasks and activities. Some are chores. Some are difficult and demanding. Some are more hazardous and morally wrong.

However, not all work done by children should be classified as child labour which is to be targeted for elimination.

Children's or teenagers' participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes activities such as:

- helping parents or guardians;
- assisting in a family business; or
- earning pocket money outside of school hours and during school holidays.

These kinds of activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare of their families. These activities provide children with skills and experience and help them prepare to be productive members of the community when they become adults.

The term “child labour” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, potential and dignity and that is harmful to their physical and mental development.

Child labour refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling by:

- depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;
- obliging them to leave school prematurely; or
- requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

In its most extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age.

Whether or not particular forms of work can be called “child labour” depends on:

- the child's age;
- the type and hours of work performed; and
- the conditions under which it is performed.

The answer varies among countries and among sectors within countries.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Source of information: ILO-IPEC <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm>

8. Ask the groups whether they think the following would be considered child labour situations or not:

- A 12- year-old child minds his baby sister for two hours after school. (No)
- A 9-year-old girl moves to a relative's house. She has to help out with the housework and doesn't go to school anymore. (Yes)
- A 10-year-old child spends all day working in the fields every day of the week. (Yes)
- A 13-year-old boy accompanies his father on fishing trips for 2-3 days mainly during the school holidays. (No, as long as the fishing trips do not regularly interfere with his school attendance.)
- A 15-year-old is hired to spray any type of pesticides without protective clothing and does not have nearby washing facilities. (Yes)

## 🔄 Facilitators' Notes 1:

### Basic facts about child labour<sup>13</sup>

#### What is a child?

The term child usually applies to all persons under the age of 18.

#### What is child labour?

Child labour is a worldwide phenomenon. Millions of children around the world carry out work that harms their well-being and hinders their education, development and future livelihoods. Child labour is work which, by its nature and/or the way it is carried out, harms, abuses and exploits the child or deprives the child of an education.<sup>14</sup>

Child labour takes many different forms. It is a priority to eliminate without delay the worst forms of child labour.

#### What are the worst forms of child labour?

ILO Convention 182 defines the worst forms of child labour as follows:<sup>15</sup>

- (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- (b) using, procuring or offering a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- (c) using, procuring or offering a child for illicit activities, in particular for producing and trafficking drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (d) 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. This is often referred to as hazardous child labour.

#### What is hazardous child labour?

Hazardous child labour is work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions that could result in a child being killed or injured (often permanently) and/or made ill (often permanently) as a consequence of poor safety and health standards and working arrangements.<sup>16 17</sup> Types and forms of hazardous work must be determined by the relevant authorities in each country. Most countries create a legally enforceable national list that identifies where hazardous work is found and create measures to prohibit or restrict such work for children.

<sup>13</sup> ILO-IPEC (2005) Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture. Book 1 A trainer's guide, as revised in 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Trade Unions and Child Labour Pack, ILO ACTRAV, Geneva, 2000, Booklet No. 2: Union policies to combat child labour, p. 3

<sup>15</sup> As defined by Article 3 of ILO Convention 182

<sup>16</sup> Subparagraph (d) of Article 3 of ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour

<sup>17</sup> <sup>A</sup> future without child labour Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 2002 Para 26 Page 9

**Hazard** means anything with a potential to do harm. **Risk** refers to the likelihood of potential harm from that hazard being realized. Examples of **hazardous work** include:

- carrying heavy loads;
- performing heavy workloads (i.e. too much work for a child's age);
- working during night time;
- working with moving machinery;
- working with pesticides and other toxic substances.

Hazardous work must not be carried out by anyone under 18, with certain reservations. (Do you want to specify what those reservations are? The phrase raises a question in the reader's mind.)

**The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** provides a comprehensive overview of the rights of children as well as the actions of duty-bearers to guarantee these rights. Some of the rights for children set out in the CRC include: being protected from economic exploitation; being protected from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or interfere with the child's education or be harmful to the child's health and physical, spiritual, moral or social development; and having the right to education. The CRC urges state parties (those that have ratified the CRC) to take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure CRC implementation by providing for:

- a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
- appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
- appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure effective enforcement.

**The ILO Minimum Age Convention (No. 138)** obliges states that ratify the Convention to fix the minimum age for admission into employment. Three categories for minimum age are established:

- The minimum age should not be less than the age of completing compulsory school, and in no event less than 15 years of age. Countries whose economies and education facilities are insufficiently developed may initially fix the age of admission to employment at 14.
- A higher minimum age of 18 is set for hazardous work.
- A lower minimum age for light work may be set at 13. For a country that initially sets a minimum age of 14, the minimum age for light work may be set at 12.

Many countries have a minimum age requirement for admission to employment or work; it is often fixed at 14, 15 or 16 years. "Young workers" are those below age 18 who have reached the minimum legal age for admission to employment and are therefore legally allowed to work under certain conditions.

Young workers (below 18 years but above the minimum age of 14, 15 or 16) must still not be engaged in hazardous work. If they are involved in hazardous work, they would be classed as child labourers, and not as young workers. Their employment under such hazardous conditions would be in breach of the law.

**The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** outlines issues around child labour in Article 15:

1. Every child shall be protected from all forms of economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
2. States Parties to the present Charter take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures to ensure the full implementation of this Article which covers both the formal and informal sectors of employment and having regard to the relevant provisions of the International Labour Organization's instruments relating to children, States Parties shall in particular:

- a) provide through legislation, minimum wages for admission to every employment;
- b) provide for appropriate regulation of hours and conditions of employment;
- c) provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of this Article;
- d) promote the dissemination of information on the hazards of child labour to all sectors of the community.

### **National action to stop child labour:**

Many governments have agreed to design and implement programmes of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.<sup>18</sup> Various groups play different roles in eliminating child labour. These include government departments, labour inspectors, the police, the judiciary, district assemblies, community leaders, child protection committees, trade unions, NGOs, the media, parents and guardians. For child labour in agriculture, it is important that agricultural officers, agricultural extension agents and others are also involved. There is a need for improved coordination and networking among all these bodies.

### **What is not “child labour”?**

Acceptable work for children is work that does not affect children’s health and personal development or interfere with schooling. Examples include helping parents care for the home and the family, assisting in a family business or farm or earning pocket money outside school hours or during school holidays. Such work contributes to children’s development and to the welfare of their families. It provides them with skills, attitudes and experience and prepares children to be useful and productive members of society later in life.

National laws or regulations may permit employing people 13 to 15 years of age (or 12 years of age in developing countries) to do light work which:

- is not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and
- is not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in approved vocational or training programmes or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received.

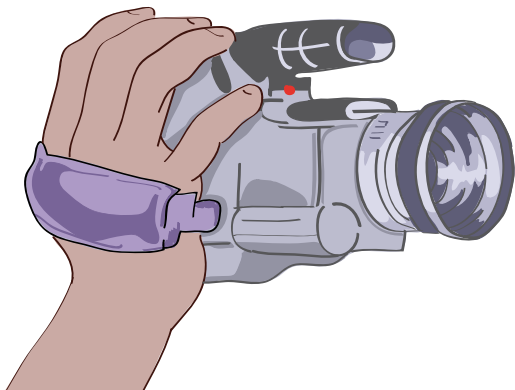
A thin line exists between allowable forms of work and child labour. Sometimes acceptable work can deteriorate into child labour depending on the child’s age, the type of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed, the objectives of the person giving the work and whether the work is supervised by an adult or not.

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18 Who have signed the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, (ILO Convention number 182)

## 🔄 exercise 3

### What do children do in agriculture?



#### OBJECTIVE:

This exercise gets children to identify agricultural tasks that could be classified as hazardous child labour; it also tries to encourage proper, safe and potentially financially rewarding work in agriculture that will help youth earn a livelihood in the future.

#### THE EXERCISE:

In this exercise, the participants imagine they are reporters for a TV station.<sup>19</sup> Through mime and imagination, children recall and identify agricultural tasks in which children are engaged and they discuss the dangers involved.

#### PREPARATION:

This exercise can only be done after facilitators have gone out to see what is happening in the nearby countryside and villages. Are there children working who could be classified as child labourers? This exercise links back to other JFFLS topics (e.g. “analysing field conditions”). However, in this exercise we stress analysing those working in the field, rather than analysing what is growing. Throughout this exercise, try to encourage the children to use their own local knowledge, referring as much as possible to agricultural work that goes on locally.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Ask the participants to think back on how they learned to analyse field conditions for growing crops. They will now analyse the conditions of those who are working in those fields, focusing on children.
2. Ensure that the participants are sitting comfortably and relaxed. Ask the participants to imagine that they are working as reporters for a TV station and are in the back of a four-wheel drive vehicle videoing local farming methods. Tell them that if they make a good film, with good close-ups and a lot of variety, they will get it screened and get paid lots of money. They must be careful to zoom in on different agricultural activities going on around them. Their producer is particularly interested in what children are doing in the fields.
3. Start by asking them to film the people they see working in the fields. If they can't see from the four-wheel drive vehicle, tell them to zoom in and move the camera slowly. After the participants settle down a bit, in a very quiet voice (to keep the tempo down in the classroom) pretend you are the driver of the four-wheel drive vehicle by asking some or all of the following questions

<sup>19</sup> If you are in an area where the children have never been exposed to TV or seen a camera, adapt this exercise to “showing a visitor around the local area”.

(the children do not have to answer out loud). The children must try to imagine what they see in the fields, but at this point they do not have to say anything about what they imagine.



### Questions to stimulate the imagination

What is the temperature like? Is it hot or cold outside? Is it hot in the nearby field?

Are there certain times of the day when it is hotter or colder? Do people go to the fields during that time? How long do they stay in the fields?

Who is working? Is it women or men, boys or girls?  
What are they wearing? Do they have footwear?

At this time of the year, what is going on in the fields (e.g. land preparation; spreading compost and manure; planting; weeding; harvesting)?

Is anyone using animal draught power? What sort of animals or carts? Are there any tractors in the location? Who is driving them?

Overall what tools are available (e.g. ploughs, ox-cultivators, row markers, planters, long- or short-handled hand hoes, axes, picks, spades, forks, pruning tools, harvesting tools, machetes, knives, scythes, sickles, rakes)?

Who uses cutting tools?

Who is manually handling, carrying, pushing, pulling and moving loads?

If it is spraying time, who is spraying?

What animals can they see?

What are these animals for?

Who is looking after these animals?

Who moves animals from one place to another?

Which “wild” animals live nearby? Are there any snakes or insects that bite?

Where are the nearby water sources (e.g. river, stream, ground water, wells, pumps, reservoirs)?

What is water used for in the fields and who collects it (e.g. irrigation, drinking, washing)?

How far does the water have to be carried and who carries it?

4. Tell the children that they must now park and report back. Ask them to think about the different tasks they filmed and what children were doing. Ask each child to give some feedback or a report.
5. What activities did they film which will help children learn valuable skills that may be helpful in the future?
6. What activities were children doing that looked like they were safe?
7. Go back to what the children said about child labour in Exercise 2. What do they think could be dangerous for children in the fields? Go around the group and ask each child to list one agricultural task that could be dangerous for children. Some children may have stories about children who were hurt. Ask them to share those stories.
8. Begin a discussion on how to avoid dangerous tasks for children.

## 🔄 Facilitators' Notes 2:

### Health and safety problems in agriculture<sup>20</sup>

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Children are more vulnerable than adult workers in performing agricultural work because of a combination of physical, psychological and social reasons. This section describes some of the potential risks and hazards and the effects of working in agriculture on children. See also *Facilitators' Notes 4: Why children are at greater risk than adults*.

Not all children are exposed to all the risks and hazardous outlined below. It is also true that children who do not work in what is defined as “child labour” still can be exposed to some of these risks.

It is always important to bear in mind that the consequences of some health and safety problems do not develop, show up, or become disabling until the child is an adult. This aspect of permanent long-term disability or incurable disease must be factored in when considering the long-term effects of working as a child labourer. Examples would be long-term musculoskeletal problems resulting from having carried heavy loads as a child and cancer or adverse reproductive effects resulting from exposure to pesticides, industrial chemicals or heavy metals as a child worker.

#### **A wide range of hazards and risks**

Child labourers are at risk from a wide variety of biological, physical, chemical, dust, machinery, ergonomic, welfare/hygiene and psychosocial hazards, and from long hours of work and poor living conditions. Although technological change has brought about a reduction in the physical drudgery of agricultural work in some areas, it has introduced new risks associated with the use of sophisticated machinery and the intensive use of chemicals, especially pesticides, without appropriate safety and health measures, information and training. Poorly designed tools, difficult terrain and exposure to the elements, combined with fatigue and, often, malnutrition, increase the risk of accidents. The levels of fatal and serious accidents and illnesses are high.

#### **Climate and geography**

Agricultural work is carried out mostly in the countryside. Child labour in rural settings is directly conditioned by the characteristics of local climate and geography. Most agricultural work is conducted in the open air and consequently agricultural workers are affected by changes in the weather. Agriculture work involves working in extreme temperatures and climatic conditions (conditions that can be hot and humid but also cold and damp). This can result in children working in extreme temperatures – ranging from hot sun to cold, wet conditions – without suitable clothing or protective equipment.

Children often lack suitable warm clothing or footwear. Low temperatures and a lack of warm, dry clothing can result in chilblains and hypothermia. Wet, swampy and soggy working conditions also increase the risk of respiratory infections and foot rots.

In hot conditions, children may get dizzy from dehydration because they do not have access to drinking water. Heat stress is greater in children because their sweat glands are developing. Expo-

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<sup>20</sup> From ILO-IPEC (2008) Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture. Book 1 A trainer's guide, revised edition (Author: Peter Hurst).



sure to sun can cause burning, premature ageing and increased likelihood of skin cancers.

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of agricultural work is that it is carried out in a rural environment where there is no clear boundary between working and living conditions. Because agricultural workers and child workers live where they work, they face extra dangers such as exposure to pesticides from spray drift and pesticide-contaminated water and food.

### **Hours of work**

Work hours can be extremely long during planting, harvesting and weeding periods. Especially during certain seasons, fieldwork can go from dawn to dusk, without even including transport time to and from the fields. The intensity of the work offers little chance for rest breaks. The length of the working day does not give children enough time for recuperation or for leisure time. Working from dawn to dusk can impact health and growth. Adolescents may need as much or more sleep than younger children (up to 9.5 hours a night). Tiredness results in poor judgement in undertaking tasks, often leading to a temptation to take dangerous shortcuts. Not having enough sleep also results in bad moods and being irritable. Even if children attend school, they will not be able to concentrate.

Children are not suited physically to long hours of strenuous and monotonous work. Children's bodies suffer the effects of tiredness because they spend energy faster than adults. Many children also suffer from malnutrition because of inadequate food intake, which lowers their resistance and makes them more vulnerable to illness.

### **Physically demanding work**

Much agricultural work is physically demanding and strenuous; it may involve long periods of standing, stooping, bending, repetitive and forceful movements in awkward body positions and carrying heavy or awkward loads (e.g. baskets, bundles of crops, water containers), often over long distances. These types of activities can harm children's musculoskeletal development and may result in permanent disability. See *Facilitators' Notes 3: Carrying heavy loads*.

### **Cutting tools**

Child labourers often use cutting tools – machetes, knives, scythes, sickles – to cut crops, hay, weeds and bush wood. The machete is the tool that is most commonly used by less-skilled workers on the farm or plantation. Many injuries are machete-related, ranging from minor cuts to severed body parts. Repetitive and forceful actions associated with cutting can also harm children's musculoskeletal development.

### **Harvesting hazards**

Child labourers are often used to harvest crops, and they may fall off ladders or even out of trees while picking high-growing fruit. Fruit pods falling from trees also may injure children. Many of the crops they work with are abrasive, prickly or irritating and children can suffer skin problems such as allergies, rashes or blistering.

### **Fall hazards**

There is a risk of falling from heights, such as working platforms, and into wells, pits or storage structures. Falls often result from climbing on or off carts or wagons or climbing trees to harvest fruit. There is also a danger of being hit by falling objects.

### **Transportation hazards**

Child labourers can be at risk of being killed by a tractor overturning or being hit by tractors, trailers, trucks and heavy wagons used to transport farm produce from the fields. In Australia and the United States, for example, boys as young as 7–9 years old are driving tractors on farms, and by those ages many more are already riding on tractors as passengers. In other cases, child labourers may be killed or injured when they climb on or off trailers or other machines while they are still in motion and then slip or miss their footing and fall under the machine.

## **Machinery**

In many countries, child labourers can work around, or even operate, powered machinery and equipment (e.g. power take-off shafts, grain augurs, balers, slurry tankers and other large farm machinery) and are at risk of being entangled or dragged into the machinery. Entanglement from walk-behind mowers can pull a child into the machine. Noisy machinery may also be a problem for child labourers, and excessive exposure to noise can lead to hearing problems in later life.

Tools, machines and equipment are often designed without considering that people of different heights, shapes, sizes and degrees of strength will be using them. Children using tools designed for adults run a higher risk of hurting themselves. Traditional agricultural tools and methods require high human energy input. Protective equipment does not fit children. However, designing tools for child workers would signal the recognition of children's work as legitimizing child labour.

## **Hazardous substances**

Pesticides, chemical fertilizers, veterinary products and general commodity chemicals are all used in agriculture. Pesticides which are commonly used in agriculture in some countries are sometimes banned or severely restricted in other, more industrialized countries.

Labour-intensive crops are extensively treated with pesticides. Many child labourers also mix, load and apply pesticides which are toxic products; some of these are extremely poisonous and potentially carcinogenic and can harm female and male reproduction later in life. Children often apply chemical fertilizers with their bare hands or by using a spoon. Some children stand in the fields where pesticides are being aerially sprayed, holding flags to guide the spray planes as they swoop low over the fields. Lack of proper pesticide storage facilities or systems for disposing of empty pesticide containers can result in child poisonings or even deaths when containers are used for other purposes (e.g. to hold drinking/cooking water or for children to play with the empty, unwashed drums and bottles).

Even if children are not involved in mixing and applying pesticides, they are at risk from contamination from spray drift or from not observing pesticide re-entry intervals. Contaminated soil and water is another health and safety risk children face. Pesticides may enter the body through the skin, by inhalation and by ingestion. Child labourers can be exposed to pesticides in a variety of ways:

- opening or handling pesticide containers;
- diluting, mixing and applying the substances;
- being exposed to spray drift from being nearby when crops are sprayed;
- being contaminated when acting as field markers for aerial spraying;
- contacting residues on plant leaves or on the soil surface during weeding, pruning and harvesting (especially if working barefooted, or if they re-enter the field before the appropriate re-entry interval);
- eating and drinking in the field;
- using water that may be contaminated for drinking, bathing, cooking or washing clothes.

Exposure to pesticides can result in immediate and long-term health effects. The impact on health of pesticide exposure depends on a variety of factors. Such factors include the type of pesticide involved, its toxicity, the dose/concentration, the timing and length of exposure and the way in which exposure occurs.

Health impacts include acute poisoning (ranging from mild to severe) including skin, eye and lung irritation, breathing difficulties, nausea, vomiting, loss of consciousness, sensory perception problems and heart symptoms. In some cases, exposure may be fatal. Generally, those poisoned will recover following medical treatment.

Long-term chronic health effects include:

- reproductive problems (e.g. birth defects, spontaneous abortions, stillbirths, lower birth weights and early neonatal deaths);
- inappropriate hormonal activity (i.e. endocrine disruption). Although there are no data to demonstrate adverse effects on normal hormonal development, there are concerns that chemical exposures can alter the delicate balance of hormones during adolescence;
- an increased risk of developing cancer during one's lifetime having been exposed to carcinogens during childhood;
- a weakened immune system, particularly in growing children, which increases the risk of infectious disease and cancer.

Other health effects include skin diseases (dermatitis), tiredness, headaches, sleep disturbances, anxiety, memory problems, blood disorders and abnormalities in liver and kidney function.

Dry, chemical fertilizers (which absorb moisture) can draw moisture from the skin and cause burns and irritation of the mouth, nose and eyes. Liquid fertilizers also need to be carefully handled because they are in a highly concentrated form. Nitrogen, a basic ingredient in artificial fertilizers, results in one of the most serious water quality problems in the world. Nitrites in the body interfere with the blood's ability to carry oxygen to the body tissues. Fire is also a risk with all types of fertilizers.

Animal medicines (or veterinary products) are often in reality pesticides and require special storage to avoid children's access. Syringes and needles, dosing guns, flutter valves and tail and ear tags all require safe storage and proper training in order to minimize risks, such as needle stick injuries.

Other commodity chemicals that come in bulk containers contain caustic materials. Powerful disinfectants used in livestock production, acids for straw and silage treatment and acids and solvents for cleaning grass and machinery can release fumes while being mixed.

More studies on the effects of pesticides and fertilizers are urgently required.

### **A lack of clean water**

A lack of clean drinking water, hand washing facilities and toilets, especially when working in the fields, pose other hazards to adult and child labourers. This increases the risk of spreading parasites, dermatitis, urinary tract infections, respiratory illness, eye disease and other illnesses. A lack of washed, clean clothing is also a problem.

### **Exposure to organic dust**

Agricultural workers, including children, are exposed to a wide variety of animal and crop dusts, fibres, mists, fumes, gases, vapours and micro-organisms which can cause respiratory, skin or eye problems.

Allergic respiratory diseases – such as occupational asthma and hypersensitivity pneumonia – result from allergic reactions to animal or crop dusts. Child labourers often are exposed to high levels of organic dust when harvesting crops or preparing feed for farm animals. Plant material produces very fine vegetable dust. Vegetable matter may contain biological contaminants (e.g. bacteria, moulds or mites) or pesticide residues. Animal material, such as feathers or wastes, may also cause similar types of diseases as plant materials. Many allergic reactions accumulate gradually and can appear weeks or even years after exposure started; they may even result in chronic lung disease.

The most common type of agriculture-related skin disease is dermatitis (i.e. irritant contact dermatitis). Skin reddens and swells, pimples or blisters may appear. A chronic form may result in thickening and hardening of the skin and severe dryness. This form of dermatitis can be caused by crop dust, vegetable and bulb plants, animal feeds, pesticides, machinery oil and grease or solvents for de-greasing.

Certain flowers produced in ornamental floriculture often cause a reaction. Exposure to certain “sensitizers” in these flowers or other vegetables can produce allergic contact dermatitis. For example, artichokes, brussel sprouts, cabbage, celery, chicory, chive, endive, garlic, horseradish, leek, lettuce, okra, onion and parsley have been reported to contain vegetable allergens and to sensitize vegetable workers. Also, chrome contained in rubber boots or gloves, veterinary antibiotics, pesticides, disinfectants and soaps cause adverse reactions in some individuals.

### **Animals**

Children frequently herd, shepherd and/or milk farm animals. Child labourers are frequently injured by being jostled, butted, gored or trampled by farm animals, especially because many child labourers work barefoot. Children in pastoral communities may spend many months in remote, isolated areas looking after the herds and doing heavy work such as watering livestock. They often cover long distances searching for water.

Children working with animals are at risk of catching diseases (zoonoses) from farm animals, wild animals or micro-organisms (e.g. rats are commonly associated with farm yards, livestock houses/enclosures and ditches). Such diseases can be contracted through contact with animals (e.g. insects, mites, parasites) or animal carcasses or by working in or near livestock houses and stabling areas. Animal disease (e.g. bacteria, fungi, viruses, protozoa and rickettsias – a bacteria carried by ticks or parasites) can pass from animals to children from contact with animals or animal products.

### **Cuts, bites and diseases**

Children who work barefoot in fields or around livestock are exposed to cuts, bruises, thorn injuries, skin disorders or even water-borne diseases, especially where soils are wet and sticky or deliberately flooded, as in the case of rice cultivation. In rural areas, there is also constant danger from insects, reptiles and other animals. Children are vulnerable to snake and insect bites, and in some cases, attacks by wild animals. Many children are bitten by snakes or stung by spiders, scorpions, centipedes, hornets, wasps, bees, mites and mosquitoes. Children are also exposed to bloodsucking creatures like leeches.

Bites, scratches, stings and thorn punctures also damage the skin and provide a way for disease to enter the body (e.g. tetanus).

### **Welfare**

Accommodations for migrant agriculture workers often are extremely basic and makeshift; they may be built from pieces of plastic, wood or cardboard or may be other forms of unheated dwellings. Children in such accommodations sleep with poor ventilation; they also have poor sanitary facilities and non-potable drinking water, which increase the spread of diseases. Child care is also an issue. Parents bring their children to the fields, so young children and toddlers are exposed to the same hazards as their parents and older siblings.

Sexual harassment (i.e. unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature) and violence at work are other dangers children face. This vulnerability to sexual exploitation/harassment also exposes them to the risk of infection by HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

### **Other hazards or risks for children**

Many agricultural workers are exposed to drug addiction because of the strenuous nature of their work. Stimulants, such as “khat”, contain a number of chemicals and, when chewed, alleviate tiredness and reduce the appetite. Overuse of such stimulants may result in manic behaviour and paranoid illnesses.

**REFERENCES:**

Information on the specific hazards and risks to child labourers in agriculture come from the ILO-IPEC training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture. Guide Book 3: Additional resources for trainers (Author: Peter Hurst)

Health and safety risks of children involved in cocoa farming in Ghana. ILO: IPEC West Africa cocoa agriculture project (WACAP, 2005. pp. 30-34).

## 🔗 exercise 4

### Carrying heavy loads<sup>21</sup>



#### OBJECTIVE:

This exercise helps the JFFLS participants understand that carrying a heavy load might be dangerous and guides them in discussing how they can avoid harming themselves by not carrying something that is too heavy.

#### THE EXERCISE:

Through listening to a short story about a boy carrying a very heavy load, the participants will examine one type of work activity that should not be carried out by children.

#### PREPARATION:

Read through and adapt the short story below to the local context.

Read *Facilitators' Notes 3: Carrying heavy loads*.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Tell the JFFLS participants you are going to read a short story. Ask them to sit back and listen to the story below. This story can be adapted to suit the local conditions.
2. Ask the JFFLS participants how heavy they think 40 kilograms is. Would Kolawole weigh more or less than 40 kgs himself?
3. Ask them why they think Kolawole collapsed.
4. Get them to discuss why they think carrying a heavy load is risky for Kolawole. You can use *Facilitators' Notes 1: Basic facts about child labour*. Guidance for governments on hazardous child labour activities includes the transport of heavy loads.<sup>22</sup>
5. Ask them who they think is responsible for the injury to Kolawole.
6. Do they think Adeniyi carried heavy bags when he was a child?
7. Ask them to think about how to avoid carrying loads that are too heavy. Can they find ways to make the load lighter? Can they ask help from other, older youths or adults in order to share the load?

#### Story about carrying a heavy load<sup>1</sup>

There was a cocoa farmer named Adeniyi who had a 13-year-old son named Kolawole. Adeniyi took his son and went to farm to harvest his cocoa. After harvesting and breaking the pods, Adeniyi loaded cocoa beans into bags weighing approximately 40 kilos each. Adeniyi carried these bags himself and also expected Kolawole to carry them. Although the cocoa was too heavy for Kolawole, he did not complain since his father carried bags himself. He also felt he should obey his father out of respect.

After some time, Kolawole collapsed one day while carrying a load a long distance. Adeniyi picked the boy up and rushed him to the clinic. The doctor examined Kolawole and found that he had sustained a spinal injury.

<sup>1</sup> ILO-IPEC (2005) Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture. Book 2 training course activities for farmers.

<sup>21</sup> ILO-IPEC 2005 and ILO-IPEC (2002) SCREAM Stop Child Labour Module entitled "The Image" (Nick Grisewood). ILO-IPEC (2005) Training resource pack on the elimination of hazardous child labour in agriculture. Book 2 training course activities for farmers.

<sup>22</sup> Accompanying Recommendation (190) to ILO Convention No. 182.

## Facilitators' Notes 3:

### Carrying heavy loads

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agricultural labour often involves carrying heavy loads, which puts a strain on young bodies. Carrying heavy and awkward loads, doing repetitive actions, bending, stooping and being in an uncomfortable posture can cause many musculoskeletal disorders.

Musculoskeletal disorders include a group of conditions that involve nerves, tendons, muscles and intervertebral discs. Disorders can include: strains; carpal tunnel syndrome (with numbness and muscle weakness in the hand); tenosynovitis (swelling with fluid around a tendon, resulting in pain and difficulty moving the joint); tension neck syndrome; swelling of the wrist, forearm, elbow and shoulder; low back pain; hernia (i.e. when body tissue protrudes through the muscle tissue); arthritis (i.e. damage to the joints); sciatica (i.e. pain or numbness caused by general compression and/or irritation of specific nerve roots).

Adolescents often experience rapid growth spurts during a two-year period between the ages of 10 and 20 years; about 15 to 20 percent of an individual's height is gained between these ages. During this period, adolescents are at particularly high risk of injury to ligaments and to bone growth plates.

The work that children undertake in agriculture is often invisible and unacknowledged because they assist their parents or relatives on the family farm or in "piece work" or participate in a "quota system" on larger farms or plantations, often as part of migrant worker families. In these situations, it is assumed that children work, though they are not formally hired.

In the story, Kolawole was helping Adeniyi. Kolawole could be classified as a "helper" because he was doing similar work as his father.

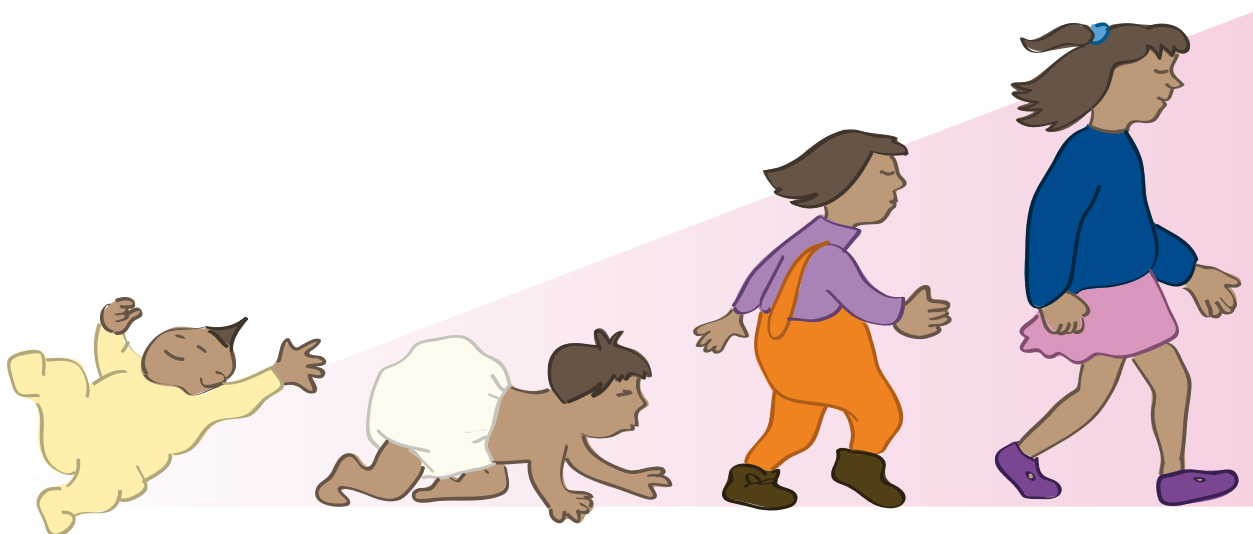
In some contexts, children may be "hired" through contractors or sub-contractors; this allows the farm and plantation owners to deny responsibility for knowing the ages of the children. Sometimes children are hired directly.

In Kolawole's case, it is clear that a 13-year-old child should not be engaged in the hazardous activity of carrying loads of 40 kilos. At 13 years of age, Kolawole should be restricted to "light work" – activities after school is over and after school work has been done. Such light work would allow Kolawole to help his father, and by being with his father he may learn some important skills and feel that he is contributing to the household in some way.

The accidents and ill health that child labourers such as Kolawole suffer at work often go unrecorded. Because certain work-related physical disabilities and health problems only develop or become fully apparent or debilitating in adult life, they go unreported and the connection with work done as a child is not made.

## 🔄 exercise 5

### Why can agriculture be hazardous for children?



#### **OBJECTIVE:**

This exercise should ideally be done with the JFFLS participants' guardians. The objective is to discuss and draw parallels between issues around caring for crops and animals and caring for children.

#### **THE EXERCISE:**

This exercise highlights some care issues for different stages of crop and animal cycles. Drawing parallels, participants discuss that children require care to grow up healthy.

#### **PREPARATION:**

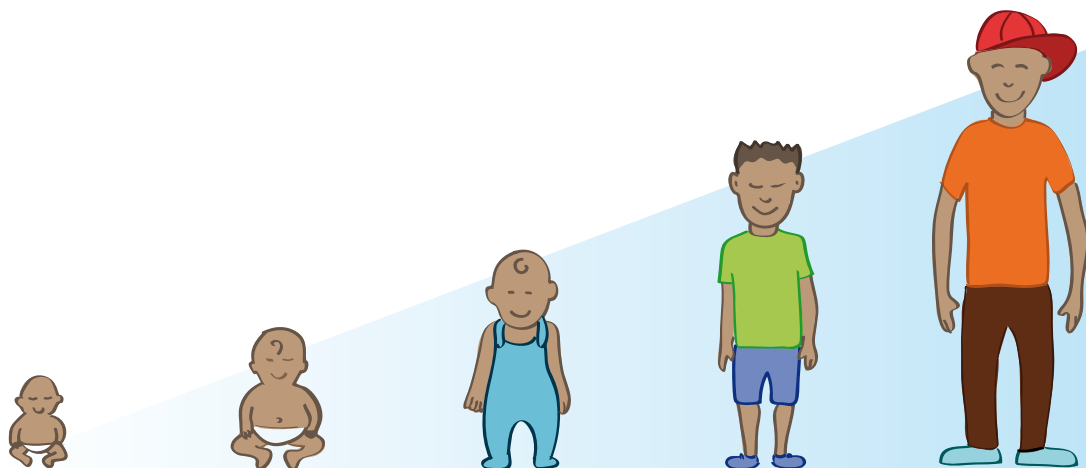
Read *Facilitators' Notes 2 and 4*.

Draw pictures on a flip chart or board of plants/crops at different stages of growth.

#### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

1. Ask participants to list the different stages children go through before becoming an adult. Ask what things a child needs to grow up healthy. Write them on a large sheet of paper(s).
2. Get everyone to draw the different stages children go through before becoming an adult. Display the pictures.
3. Explain that all living things (including crops, animals and humans) go through a number of developmental stages in their life span.
4. Allow participants to shout out everything they know about the life cycles of plants, animals and humans and note what they say on a sheet of paper or chalkboard.





5. Make a chart and draw pictures to help the discussions. See the examples below.

<u>Life cycle of Plants</u>	<u>Life cycle of animals</u>	<u>Life cycle of people</u>
<b>Seeds</b>		
<b>Vegetative phase</b>		
<b>Blooming</b>		
<b>Fruitful age (ripening period)</b>		
<b>Seeds again</b>		
<b>Death</b>		

6. Ask why it is important to learn about the different development stages of a plant before starting to grow it. (During each stage, the crop's needs differ, and we need to be able to create the proper growing conditions; at certain stages, crops need more or less water, sunshine, protection against pests, diseases and/or weeds and special fertilization).
7. Revise the different stages of crop development. Ask participants what things a plant/crop needs to grow healthy.
- Is there a stage when the crop needs less water?
  - Is there a stage when the crop cannot do with less water?
  - Are there stages when the crop needs special protection measures? From heat, from insects?
8. Move on to discussing livestock and what has already been covered regarding livestock.
- What are the advantages of having small livestock?
- What are the advantages of having large livestock?
  - What can large livestock do that small livestock cannot do?
  - Why do we protect livestock?

- What do we do to protect livestock?
  - When is livestock most vulnerable?
  - To what is livestock vulnerable?
  - What would we not do to our livestock to prevent them from being harmed?
9. Highlight again that the care animals require can be different during each stage. Summarize by stressing that it is important to understand that if crops, animals and children are to grow up healthy, they require different care at different stages of their lives.
  10. Discuss the difference between children working and children working too hard. Explain that if children work too hard, they may not grow up healthy. Use the points in the *Facilitators' Notes* 2 and 4. Highlight that although working in agriculture can help children develop skills for the future, agriculture can also be dangerous for children. Stress that we must try to reduce risk for children so that they can grow up healthy and are able to work in agriculture when they are older.



## Facilitators' Notes 4

### Why children are at greater risk than adults

Child labourers are vulnerable to the same dangers faced by adult workers; however, children can be more strongly affected by the work hazards and risks that affect adults. Also, because children are still growing, they have special characteristics which must be considered when thinking about workplace hazards and risks.

The World Health Organization's definition of child health covers the complete physical, mental and social well being of a child (not just the absence of disease or illness). Long-term health effects also must be considered because the consequences of some health and safety problems do not develop, show up or become disabling until the child is an adult. Examples include long term musculoskeletal problems which can result from carrying heavy loads as a child or cancer or adverse reproductive effects that develop later in life from exposure as a child to pesticides, industrial chemicals or heavy metals.

The reasons for children's greater vulnerability to workplace hazards and risks are outlined below.

#### General

Per kilogram of body weight, children breathe more air, drink more water, eat more food and use more energy than adults. Children drink two and a half times more water and eat three to four times more food than adults per kilogram of body weight. These higher rates of intake result in greater exposure to diseases (pathogens), toxic substances and pollutants.

Children are smaller in physical size and are at additional risk when they are asked to do tasks beyond their physical strength. Because children's tissues and organs mature at different rates, it is not possible to specify precise ages of vulnerability for specific workplace hazards and risks.

#### Skin

A child's skin area is two and a half times greater than an adult's, per unit of body weight; this can result in greater skin absorption of toxics. Skin structure is only fully developed after puberty.

#### Respiratory

The respiratory system includes airways, lungs and respiratory muscles. Children have deeper and more frequent breathing and thus can breathe in more substances that are hazardous to their health.

A resting infant has twice the volume of air passing through the lungs as a resting adult (per unit of body weight) over the same time period.

#### Brain

Maturation can be hindered by exposure to toxic substances. Metals (e.g. lead and methyl mercury) are retained in the brain more readily in childhood and absorption is greater.

#### Gastrointestinal, endocrine, reproductive and enzyme systems and renal function

Some organs are not fully matured in children. Exposure to toxic substances in the workplace can hinder the process of maturation.

The gastrointestinal system (i.e. the system of organs that are involved in digesting food, extracting energy and nutrients and expelling the remaining waste), the endocrine system (which controls release of hormones), the reproductive systems and renal (kidney) function are immature at birth. These organs mature during childhood and adolescence.

The endocrine system and the hormones it generates and controls play a key role in growth and development. The endocrine system may be especially vulnerable to disruption by chemicals during childhood and adolescence.

The enzyme system (which is important to speed up or increase the rates of chemical reactions in the body) is immature in childhood. As a result, elimination of hazardous agents is less efficient in children's bodies than in adults.

### **Temperature**

Children have increased sensitivity to heat and cold, because their sweat glands and thermo-regulatory systems are not fully developed.

### **Energy requirements**

Children require greater energy from food because they still are growing. Without adequate energy, children can have an increased susceptibility to toxins.

### **Fluid requirements**

Children are more likely to dehydrate because they lose more water per kilogram of body weight because of the greater passage of air through their lungs, the larger surface area of their skin and their inability to concentrate urine in their kidneys.

### **Sleep requirements**

Children require more sleep than adults: children from 10-18 years of age require about nine and a half hours of sleep per night for development.

### **Physical strain/repetitive movements**

Physical strain on growing bones and joints, especially combined with repetitive movements, can cause stunting, spinal injury and other life-long deformations and disabilities.

### **Noise**

In principle, the effects of excessive noise apply to children and adults. However, it is not yet clear whether children are more vulnerable to noise than adults.

### **Cognitive (processes of thought) and behavioural development**

A child's capacity to recognize and assess potential safety and health risks at work and make decisions about them is less mature than that of adults. For younger children this ability is particularly weak. The ability to look at a situation from a variety of perspectives, to anticipate consequences and to evaluate the credibility of information sources increases throughout adolescence. By mid-adolescence, most youngsters make decisions in similar ways as adults.

### **Other factors:**

Other factors that increase children's levels of risk include:

- lack of work experience – children are unable to make informed judgements;
- a desire to perform well – children are willing to go the extra mile without realizing the risks;
- learning unsafe health and safety behaviours from adults;
- lack of safety or health training;
- inadequate, even harsh, supervision;
- lack of power in terms of organization and rights.

Children may be reluctant to let others know when they do not understand something. They want to show superiors and others that they are big enough, strong enough or old enough to do the job. They may fear dismissal if they fail. Children often are unfamiliar with hazards and risks and not trained to avoid them.

### **Reduced life expectancy**

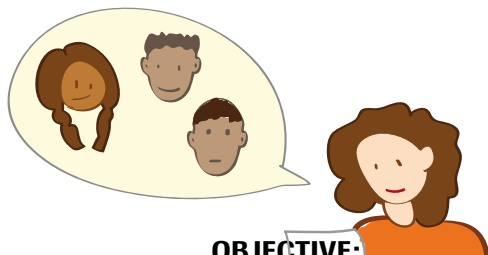
It is difficult to measure reduced life expectancy as a result of child labour; however, the earlier a person starts work, the more premature the ageing that will follow. A study based on a nationally cross-representative survey of 18-60-year-old Brazilian adults found that – after controlling for age, education, wealth, housing conditions, unemployment status and race – entry into the labour force at or below the age of nine years had a statistically significant negative effect on health in adulthood.

### **Disability and child labour**

Little is known about what happens to child labourers who become disabled as a result of their work, or about disabled children who become child labourers. Based on sketchy evidence, it is likely that disabled child labourers will face great difficulties in finding decent work as an adult. In particular, their chances of attending school are likely to be greatly reduced. Children who lack access to education and who are unable to read, write or calculate will have only slim chances of acquiring marketable skills that will enable them to rise out of poverty. Children who have lost limbs or damaged themselves physically through work usually have poor access to orthopaedic or prosthetic services.

## 🔄 exercise 6

### Comparing the situation of different children



#### **OBJECTIVE:**

This exercise will help participants evaluate and compare the situations of different children who are engaged in harmful child labour. They will discuss what can be done about children who find themselves in bad situations.

#### **THE EXERCISE:**

This exercise uses three stories to help participants understand and discuss the different reasons why children begin to work in agriculture and drop out of school.

#### **PREPARATION:**

Read the case stories of Awinja, Samson and Malik below. If these case stories do not fit the local context, change and adapt as appropriate.

#### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

1. Ensure the children are sitting comfortably. Introduce the exercise by telling the participants that you will read them some stories about children working in agriculture.
2. Ask the participants to listen and tell you afterwards what was good or bad about the child's situation in each story. What happened, and what should happen to improve the situation for each child?

#### **Case 1: Awinja**

Awinja is a nine-year-old girl who used to help her mother in the fields.

Alongside her mother, Awinja used to spend a lot of time thinning and weeding groundnuts using a hand-held hoe. Awinja also had duties babysitting her younger sister when her mother went to work in the maize fields outside her village. Awinja had never attended school and could not read or write at all. Awinja says that she did not go to school because her mother would not allow her to go and, in any case, she did not have a uniform or books.

One day an organization that tries to encourage children to go to school instead of working arrived in the area where Awinja lives. After a lot of discussions with Awinja's mother, she agreed to allow her daughter to go to school instead of working alongside her in the fields. Awinja was delighted to go to school. Luckily for Awinja, the organization bought her a new uniform and gave her free stationery.

Awinja is currently in standard four and is one of the most dedicated pupils and performs well in

class.<sup>23</sup> She enjoys working out sums. Awinja is growing fast and is worried that she is nearly too big for her uniform. Awinja's mother has to find someone else to babysit her younger sister, or else bring the baby with her to the fields. Awinja helps out as much as she can after school.

## Case 2: Samson

Samson is a 15-year-old boy working on a tobacco plantation.

Samson moved to the region near the tobacco plantation with his parents. Like his brothers and sisters, he started working on the plantation when he was nine years old, during holidays and on weekends, to pay for his school fees. Once he completed his primary education, he began to work full time.

Now Samson works 10-12 hours a day, felling trees and weeding to clear fields for cultivation; transplanting tobacco seedlings and tending the farms; and plucking and curing the leaves. Samson walks barefoot and thorns often prick him. He complains of back pain especially after carrying bags of tobacco leaves to the weighing station five kilometres away.

There is no safe drinking water on the plantation and Samson and his friends frequently suffer from diarrhoea and typhoid. The owners of the plantation deduct all medical expenses from his salary. Samson looks weak, tired and pale and has several burn scars on his hands.<sup>24</sup>

## Case 3: Malik

Malik is 15 years old and used to work on a local farm

Even though both his parents are alive, they could not support Malik to go to school because they are very poor and do not have a favourable attitude towards education. Malik dropped out at primary school before he could even learn how to read and write properly. He joined his parents in the potato fields to supplement the family income. However, Malik heard about a training institute in the next town and went over to find out more. He found out there was a course in furniture making and he enrolled.

During the training, Malik proved to be a fast learner and had a keen interest in carpentry. He was one of the first students to learn to make simple furniture. A local businessman noticed Malik's talent during one of the open days in the institute. He offered that Malik become an apprentice in his carpentry workshop after graduation. The businessman didn't specify how much he would pay Malik, but Malik was confident that the man would treat him well. Malik and his family were fully in favour of the idea because it ensured that the skills he had obtained during the course would be developed further and may lead to a better life for Malik. He graduated and was awarded a certificate. Although Malik misses being outdoors in the open air, he started an apprenticeship in the carpentry profession with the local businessman.<sup>25</sup>

23 Adapted from Chutha, Robert N. (March 2005) Good practices and lessons learned, combating child labour in commercial agricultural in Kenya.

24 Masudi *et al* (2002) Tanzania: Child labour in commercial agriculture- tobacco: a rapid appraisal.

25 Adapted from Chutha, Robert N. (March 2005) Good practices and lessons learned, combating child labour in commercial agriculture in Kenya.

3. Encourage the participants to ask questions about Awinja, Samson and Malik.
4. In groups, ask the participants to discuss:
  - What is similar about each child's situation?
  - What is different about each situation?
  - What opportunities did each child have?
  - Did the parents/guardian influence the child's situation?
  - Does the age of the child make a difference?
  - Why is it difficult to take children out of child labour?
  - What new problems may arise for each of the children?
  - Are the new situations for Malik and Awinja better than their old situations?
5. Summarize some of the main points the participants have made.

### Notes for the facilitator:

Remember that the participants in the JFFLS may experience the same situations as the children in the stories. Using stories is a way of discussing child labour with children in a non-threatening way which may be better than asking children to talk about their own real situations. This is particularly important because many children are not able to influence their own situations.

Awinja's situation has improved thanks to an organization that arrived in her village. The computation skills she is learning will help her in the future, perhaps to work out profits for selling agriculture produce. However, it is important to consider how Awinja's mother will be able to afford to buy the new uniform and books that Awinja will need when she moves into standard 5 or 6. Also, Awinja's younger sister could easily end up in the same situation that Awinja was in, because her mother seems to have no option other than to bring her younger daughter to the field with her.

Samson's situation looks bleak. There does not seem to be anyone who can help him. He is most likely over the minimum age for employment (although because of his working conditions, he would still be classed as a child labourer) and too old to go back to school. He is in a dead-end job. He urgently requires medical care. Are his employers responsible? Should they be penalized for what they are doing with their employees?

Malik was lucky to be able to enrol at a training institute. However, his future depends a lot on how well the businessman treats him when he becomes an apprentice. His situation may or may not be better in the long run. He seems to miss agriculture work and being outside. Maybe he would like to return to agricultural work, as long as it could help him earn a living.