

# 10 JUNE 2011

World day against child labour



International  
Labour  
Organization



## End child labour

# WARNING!

## Children in hazardous work

**Friday, 10 June 2011**

**10:00 – 11:00, Mexico Room (D211)**

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Agenda:

### Come to find out...

What is *hazardous* child labour in agriculture?

Why is this important for FAO?

What can we do about it?

**Most hazardous child labour is in agriculture (59%).** Hazardous work is among the worst forms of child labour, which the international community has targeted for elimination by 2016. Not all children's work is considered child labour, but that still leaves over 129 million boys and girls who are child labourers in farming, fisheries, aquaculture, livestock and forestry. Often invisible, many of them work under hazardous conditions in risky and strenuous labour.

### Video

"Hazardous child labour in agriculture"

### Presentations

"Hazardous child labour in agriculture: FAO perspective" (ESW)

"Child labour and pesticides" (AGPM)

### Discussion

"How FAO can meet the challenge"

**[www.fao-ilo.org](http://www.fao-ilo.org)**

## **Why are children generally more vulnerable than adults to agricultural hazards?**

Children are not miniature adults; Children's minds and bodies are still developing. They have a lower capacity to assess risks, often cannot read warning labels, and have a higher capacity to absorb toxic substances. Hazards can have a life-long impact on health and some effects manifest themselves only later in life.

## **What are some typical hazards for children in agricultural activities?**

Children often work long hours and in strenuous conditions. They use sharp tools, are exposed to agrochemicals and transport loads too heavy for their developing bodies. Additionally, children often lack access to safe drinking water while working. Some children work in isolation, at risk of harassment and abuse. Many girls perform both agricultural and domestic labour, adding to the number of hours worked.

### **Farming**

- Use of sharp tools designed for adults, carrying too heavy loads, operating dangerous machinery and tools
- Exposure to toxic chemicals and unsanitary conditions
- Sun and heat exposure (sun stroke and skin cancer)

### **Fishing**

- Exposure to extreme temperatures, rough seas, smoke, diseases and unsanitary conditions
- Hazardous techniques e.g. diving
- Water pollution and waterborne diseases
- Sharp tools, smoke inhalation, burns
- Long periods away from home, night work

### **Forestry**

- Falls from trees
- Injuries from cutting tools or falling fruit
- Skin abrasions and eye damage
- Musculoskeletal injuries from repetitive and forceful movements (e.g. punting poles), and lifting and carrying heavy or awkward loads
- Sun exposure and heat exhaustion
- Exposure to pesticides and herbicides

### **Livestock**

- Extreme weather, isolation
- Injury or disease transmission from livestock

### **Agrochemicals** (pesticides, fertilizers, herbicides)

- Poisoning
- Damage to brain functions, reproductive systems, behaviour and mental health

### **Tools and mechanization**

- Cuts from sharp tools,
- Chemical poisoning (e.g. pesticide or herbicide sprayers)
- Death or injury, such as loss of limbs, from heavy machinery, entanglement in moving parts, falls from tractors

### **Irrigation**

- Musculoskeletal injuries from heavy loads
- Sickness from unsafe drinking water

### **Making work safer for children of working age**

- Removing hazards from the workplace
- Substituting a less hazardous task or substance
- Training, protective gear and supervision
- Safe technologies to reduce weight of loads or number of hours to perform a task
- Health and safety education
- Graphic warning labels & instructions, literacy

ILO Recommendation No. 190 gives guidance to governments on some of the factors to be considered in determining hazardous work for children. Countries also establish National Hazardous Work Lists for children as part of their obligations under ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ratified by 173 countries). Learn more about child labour; visit [www.fao-ilo.org](http://www.fao-ilo.org) and [www.ilo.org/ipecc](http://www.ilo.org/ipecc).