



CHILD LABOUR

Theme: Let's act on our commitments: End Child Labour!

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

WHO IS A CHILD IN GUYANA

- **Section 2, Employment of Young Persons and Children Act, Cap. 99:01**

“Child” means a person under the age of fifteen years

- **Article 140 (2) of the Constitution of Guyana**

“No person shall be required to perform forced labour”

WHAT IS CHILD LABOUR?

- According to the International Labour Organisation's **International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)** child labour is defined as

“work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.”

- It refers to work that:

1. is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or

2. 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.

Worst Forms of Child Labour

Article 140(2) of the Constitution of Guyana accords fully with Article 3 of the ILO Convention 182 - **Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)**.

It 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.

CHILD LABOUR

Worst Forms of Child Labour



United Nations Child Work

- “Children’s or adolescents’ 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 their parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays.
- These kinds of activities contribute to children’s development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life.”

CAUSES OF CHILD LABOUR

- **Poverty – determining factor**
- **Acceptable tradition**
- **Informal Work**
- **Cheap Workforce**
- **Cultural Causes**



CAUSES OF CHILD LABOUR

1. **Poverty** – determining factor
2. Because it has been with us for so long people can start seeing child labour as an 'acceptable' **tradition** which of course it is not!
3. Very often, working children are a **cheap workforce reservoir**. In some areas, the significant availability of child workers undermines decent working conditions for adult workers, keeping wages low and making it even harder for families to meet their economic needs.
4. **Informal work** encourages the development of child labour as it lacks both regulation and inspections.
5. **Cultural causes** – certain cultural beliefs have rationalized child labour and thereby encouraged it. Sees it as good for character building and skill development of children.

CHILD LABOUR

Effects of Child Labour



Physical Abuse



Forced Maturity



Lost Childhood



Mental Health Issues



Illiteracy



Malnutrition



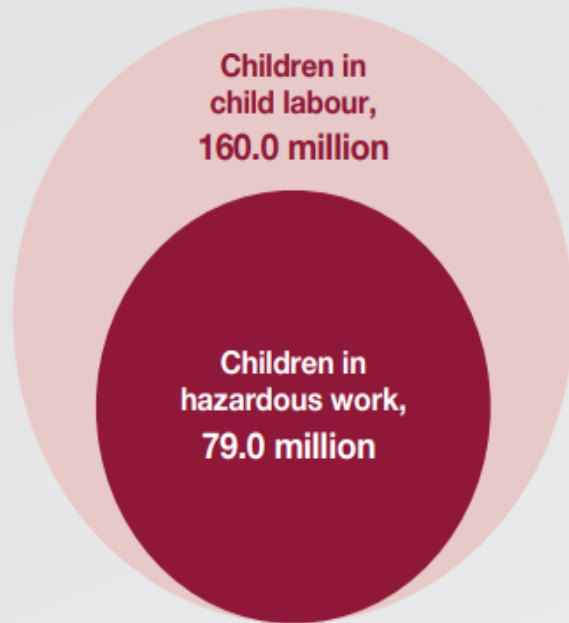
How Child Labour Affects the Nation



STATISTIC OF CHILD LABOUR - GLOBAL ESTIMATES

Worldwide, 160 million children are engaged in child labour; 79 million of them are performing hazardous work

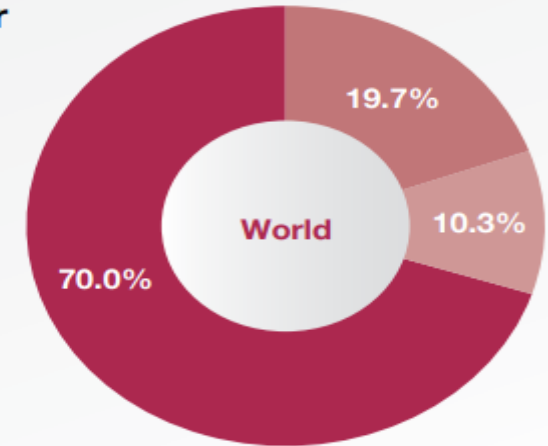
Number of children aged 5 to 17 years in child labour and hazardous work



The agricultural sector accounts for the largest share of child labour worldwide

Percentage distribution of children aged 5 to 17 years in child labour, by sector of economic activity

- Agriculture
- Services
- Industry



Child labour is more prevalent among boys than girls at every age

Percentage of children aged 5 to 17 years in child labour, by age and sex



INITIATIVES AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

1. A National Policy Towards The Elimination of Child Labour

Vision

The vision of this policy is a Guyana free of child labour in all its forms and in which all children can enjoy their right to childhood, protection, health, education, dignity and the full development of their potential.

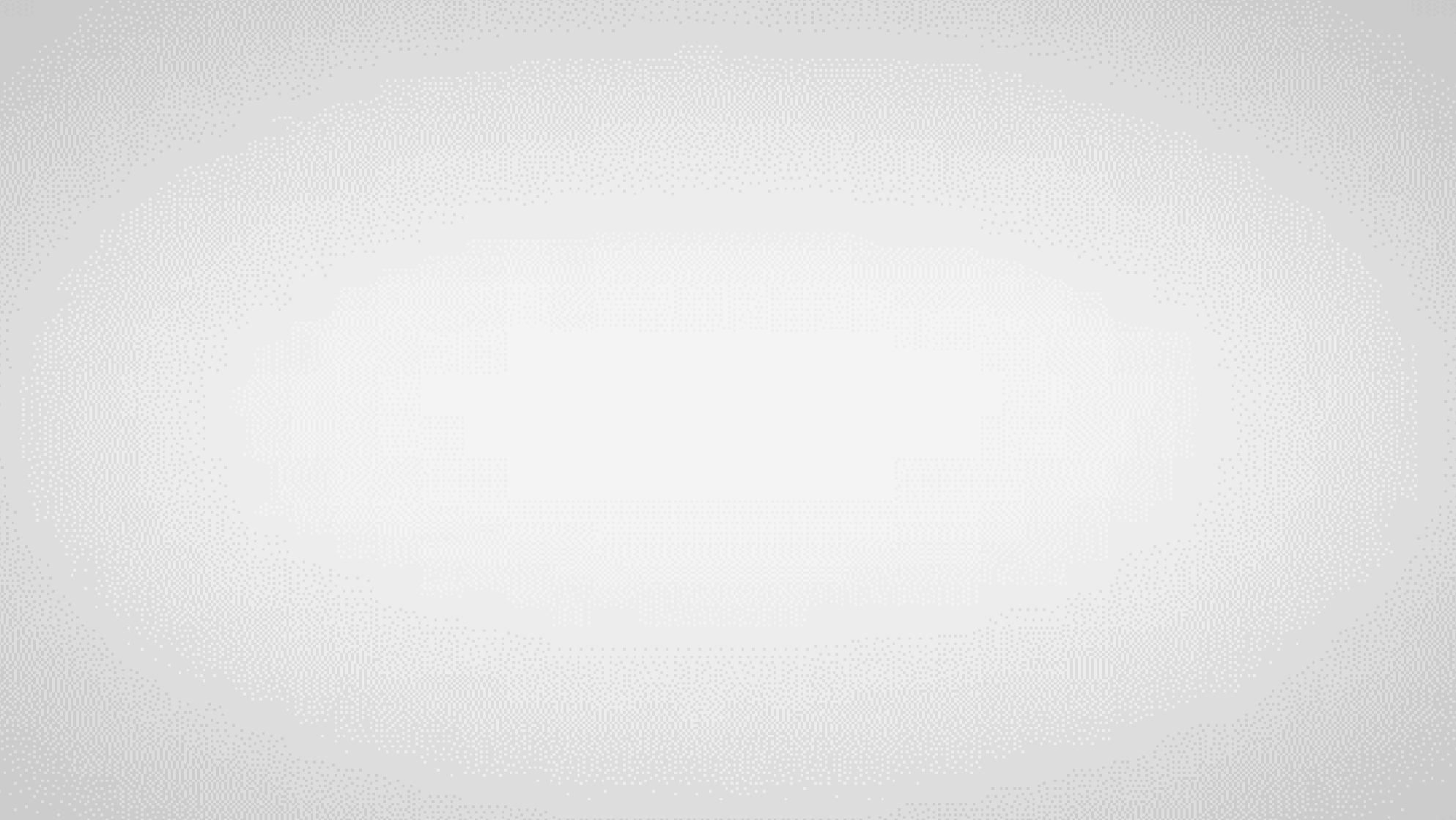
Mission

The mission of this policy is to provide a supportive environment that fosters and enables the coordination, collaboration and cooperation of all parties concerned (including child protection, education and health sectors), to effectively prevent and eliminate child labour in all its forms.

National Legislative and Policy Framework

- The fundamental rights of Guyanese, including children, are enshrined in the National Constitution. These rights ensure the access to health and social services, protection and mandatory schooling from 6 to 16 years of age and with reference to child labour, existing laws that importantly impact on same provide for:
- regulation of the relationship between employers and employees and for the settlement of differences between them – Labour Act, Cap. 98:01;
- regulation of safety and health in every sphere of industrial endeavour – Occupational Safety and Health Act, Cap.99:06;
- minimum conditions for employment of young persons and children –Employment of Young Persons and Children Act, Cap. 99:01;
- strengthen enforcement in addressing occurrences of the worst forms of child labour related to trafficking in persons – Combating of Trafficking In Persons Act, Cap.10:06;
- restrictions on children working in mining – Mining Act, Cap 65:01; and
- the right of every child to an education – Education Act, Cap. 39:01.

- This legal framework is further bolstered by vital national social programmes which addresses child labour and includes:
- National Hotlines- both for Child Protection and Human Trafficking Hotline and the provision of social response efforts.
- Shelter for Domestic Violence Survivors which houses, principally women and children and accommodates teenage girls under 16 years who are placed there at the request of the CPA.
- Social Protection Programmes that protect against economic vulnerabilities e.g. School Meals and Uniforms Program which provides hot meals to 16,000 students at schools in the interior and transportation. The program is inclusive of the issuance of vouchers to purchase school uniforms, shoes and backpacks for all students in public schools from nursery to secondary.
- Technical Vocational education and other programmes- e.g. The Board of Industrial Training works towards the deterring of early school dropouts through the provision of job skills training to at-risk youths between ages 15-17 years who may not be able to successfully complete their secondary education.



Ministry Of Labour

Advocacy Mandate

- Investigates and prosecutes errant employers.
- Conduct inspections at all workplaces
- Child Labour Sensitization Programme.
- Reporting to the ILO on cases relating to Child Labour.
- Truancy Campaigns – in collaboration with the Ministry of Education