



International
Labour
Office

Gender mainstreaming in actions against child labour

Good practices:



International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

Good practices: Gender mainstreaming in actions against child labour

**International Labour Office
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)**

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**Good Practices compiled and written by Una Murray
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Geneva, December 2002

Preface

The 2001 IPEC Gender Mainstreaming Workshop identified several areas needing more attention from IPEC and its partners. One of these priorities was the identification of good practices in gender mainstreaming during child labour interventions, policy, advocacy and research.

The fight against child labour requires an enabling environment that assists practitioners in

- integrating and mainstreaming gender in their activities; and
- replicating good practices where appropriate.

The process of identifying and documenting good practices also strengthens the existing ILO gender network by presenting positive examples while providing continuing contact with gender focal points. This report thus reflects two major needs:

- to demonstrate and document good practices in gender mainstreaming derived from IPEC programmes, projects and activities; and
- to respond to the overall ILO action plan on gender mainstreaming for gender equality that recommends the sharing of good practices in gender mainstreaming.

Overall, the report aims to share information within IPEC as well as with external audiences, both constituents and target groups, using recent good practices to show ways in which gender mainstreaming may be undertaken more effectively.

In many developing countries, a vicious cycle links persistent child labour to gender discrimination and poverty, depriving nations of their major assets for social change, human security and economic development. Gender relations and gender roles are key factors structuring the incidence and nature of child labour. Growing recognition of this fact is leading to ever-increasing requests for actions, implemented in gender-sensitive ways, that support the movement against child labour, especially its worst forms. Deliberate efforts should be made to address gender inequalities in all IPEC activities. Given this imperative, gender mainstreaming has been defined as an essential tool in the ILO/IPEC strategy for addressing inequality in the combat against the worst forms of child labour.

Gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of all staff at all levels and in all areas. Rather than representing an extra burden, mainstreaming a gender perspective should be viewed as an opportunity for more effective interventions.

Given the day-to-day pressures of development work, many excellent examples of gender-sensitive actions against child labour get buried. In this report, on the basis of specific criteria, we have selected a number of “good practices”, compiling them in one publication for the benefit of those who want to apply a gender perspective in similar activities. This compilation aims to be as user friendly as possible. The detailed table of contents, for one thing, permits different users to refer directly to those sections most relevant to them.

This is the first collection and analysis of good practices undertaken by IPEC in gender mainstreaming-related actions against child labour. It inserts itself within the priorities defined by the gender component of the ILO/IPEC-DFID (United Kingdom

Department for International Development) partnership programme. The collection of good practices was participatory, enhancing staff capacity to recognize how gender can be mainstreamed in programmes, projects and activities. This exercise has proven most fruitful and IPEC staff from both headquarters and the field have already suggested that we prepare a second volume for next year.

We would like to express our gratitude to all our IPEC colleagues and partners who contributed, through their individual and collective efforts, to the realization of this report.

Alice Ouédraogo,
Director of the Policy Branch,
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC),
International Labour Office, Geneva, 2002.

Executive summary

This report assesses recent initiatives regarding mainstreaming a gender perspective in the battle against child labour. This report can serve as a starting point and a tool in promoting gender equality while stimulating further research and action in the battle against child labour. The central prerequisite for the “good practices” included in this report is that they support equality between men and women, and between boys and girls.

This is the first report collated by the ILO/IPEC on good practices in actions against child labour and gender mainstreaming. It contains a diverse group of good gender-mainstreaming practices, addressing a range of subjects related to child labour. The report embraces issues as varied as trafficking, HIV/AIDS, football, domestic workers, commercial sexual exploitation, statistics, labour force surveys, research methodologies, targeted action programmes, non-formal education, stakeholder consultations and ILO/IPEC institutional procedures.

Specific criteria determine which activities qualify as “good practices”, in terms both of actions against child labour and of ILO gender mainstreaming goals. Each good practice is graded according to whether it has been tried and tested in many places or in just one location or setting. For ease of reference, the good practices contained in this report are categorized. The categories emerge from recognition within ILO/IPEC that actions are needed on many fronts to bring gender into the mainstreaming of all programmes, activities and policies. The report includes the following categories:

- Good practices related to gender analysis of a situation, for example, highlight the importance of disaggregating all data related to child labour. Even where disaggregated data is not readily available, requesting such information from ILO/IPEC’s partners kick-starts the gender mainstreaming process, and usually signals, at the least, that sex-disaggregated data is needed.
- Good practices in the battle against child labour may appear to relate primarily to girls, but it is important that girl-specific initiatives do not become ends in themselves. Women, men, boys and girls do not live in isolation from one other. Male and female gender identities, together with their labour, family and public-sphere behaviours, are highly interdependent. Thus, any gender-specific actions to combat child labour must also involve the other sex as partners and allies. Throughout, this report stresses that, to achieve real change, strategies must focus on men and boys as well as on girls and women, and on the relations between men, women, boys and girls.
- Gender-sensitive procedures help to incorporate a gender perspective as part of ongoing ILO/IPEC work. Routinized procedures and reminders often make it easier to mainstream gender in child labour activities. Gender activities cease to be ad hoc and largely dependent on the interests and commitment of particular staff members.
- Specific initiatives, programmes and activities are needed to make girls and women’s work more visible. Special facilitation skills and participatory approaches are required to work with marginalized girls (and boys) and women in giving them a greater voice. So too is the ability to step back from an initiative and let other people take over and hold power. The reason the focus is nearly always on giving women and girls a greater voice is that, in relation to resources and decision-making, it is women and girls who are generally excluded or disadvantaged and, as a result, many initiatives attempt to redress imbalances.

Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency virus syndrome
ILO	International Labour Organization
BAO	ILO Bangkok Area Office
DFID	United Kingdom (UK) Department for International Development
EASCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EASMAT	East Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Team
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
GECL	Gender equality in child labour
GENPROM	ILO Gender Equality Promotion Programme
HIV	Human immunodeficiency Virus
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
KIWOHEDE	Tanzanian Kiota Women's Health and Development Organization
SCREAM	Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts, and the Media
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
TBP	Time-bound programme
TICW	Trafficking in Children and Women Project
UN-IAP	United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Trafficking

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Introduction

This report presents a collection of good practices in mainstreaming gender compiled from work done by ILO/IPEC and its partners. Developed in response to requests from ILO/IPEC staff and partners, we discuss practical examples of what has worked in the past and what may be expected to help address gender issues in future.

First, we recap some basic gender concepts, providing an overview of terminology used in the report.

Gender refers to the learned social differences and relations between girls and boys and between women and men. These can vary widely within and between cultures. In some countries, for example, it is appropriate for women and girls to work on road construction, whereas in others only men and boys perform roadwork-related labour. The term gender is distinct from “sex”, which refers only to the biological/genetic differences between women and men that do not change. Only women give birth; only men get prostate cancer. Gender differences and relations between women and men can change over time and they differ from place to place. Examples are provided below:

- It may be considered “normal” for women from one ethnic group of a particular age to sell their agricultural produce at a market stall, whereas it may not be considered appropriate for women from another ethnic group in the same area to sell at a similar stall, and their husbands do the selling instead.
- It is possible to see a girl in one area of a country travelling to work by bicycle while, in a different region of the same country, it is considered unusual and inappropriate to see girls riding bicycles.
- In some countries, daughters help their mothers at work, whereas sons are sent to school.
- Women and girls may be preferred as employees in the clothing industry because girls have already learned to sew at home, developing from an early age the manual dexterity and capacity to perform the necessary tasks.
- Young unmarried women may not be allowed to participate in project activities because this would require them to mingle with men who are not relatives. Widows in the same region may be allowed to participate in project activities.
- Widows may receive more respect and confidence and have a voice in some cultures, while in others they may lose all their property to male relatives when their husband dies.

Clearly, one’s sex, combined with one’s particular social and cultural context, determines what conditions and opportunities present themselves. The many inequalities between women and men are based not only on sex, but also on such factors as socio-economic context, age, ethnicity and culture.

Equality between women and men and between boys and girls, according to ILO/IPEC, refers to the equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, treatment and valuation of women and men in employment and the link between work and life.

Projects, programmes and policies that ignore gender or are “gender-blind” risk failure. The use of a “gender lens” – filtering misleading assumptions about who does what, why and when – is vital in preventing or solving child labour problems.

Gender analysis is used to identify differences and describe relations between girls and boys/men and women. We conduct a gender analysis to avoid invalid assumptions about who does what, why and when.

What is “gender mainstreaming”?

The ILO promotes gender equality through its strategy of mainstreaming, which aims to ensure that gender equality issues will be integrated into all ILO/IPEC policies, programmes, budgets and objectives. All staff should include a systematic gender perspective in their work.

Gender mainstreaming improves the internal structure of an organization with respect to gender, so it can better promote gender equality. It also means that gender is included as an important variable in an organization’s projects, programmes and activities.

It is useful to consider examples of gender mainstreaming in the work of the ILO/IPEC and its partners in combating child labour, highlighting the ways in which gender has already been incorporated in such efforts.

Gender mainstreaming was defined by ECOSOC (Agreed Conclusions E/1997/L.30, p. 2) and adopted by the UN member Governments in 1997:

- Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men (or boys and girls) of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programmes, in any area and at all levels.
- It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women (or girls) as well as of men (or boys) an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and societal spheres, so that women and men (or girls and boys) benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated.
- The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.

What is a “good practice” in gender mainstreaming?

A good practice, in ILO/IPEC usage, is any procedure that¹ –

- works well in terms of actions against child labour; and
- implements, whether fully or in part, the ILO strategy of gender mainstreaming.

A good practice may have implications for gender mainstreaming at any IPEC level.

A good practice in gender mainstreaming for ILO/IPEC can represent any type of practice, large or small. It must be, however – either fully or in part – a tried and proven practice. It does not have to be a project or programme. It could be a policy-level activity that broadly benefited girls and boys, or even one element of an activity – a very specific process.

¹ Definition adopted from *Framework and process for identifying, disseminating and using good practices in child labour*. Draft presented to the ILO/IPEC Design, Evaluation and Database unit by Burt Perrin, Independent Consultant, 13 October 2001.

Why are good practices useful?

Good practices in gender mainstreaming allow us to learn from the successful experiences and lessons of others, and then to apply them more broadly. These practices can stimulate new ideas or suggest adaptations. They can provide guidance on how we may more effectively prevent the worst forms of child labour while attending to gender equality issues, improving the situation of the girl child in particular.

“Gender” is a central organizing factor around which production is organized and needs are met. Development efforts that do not explicitly address gender equality issues, experience has shown, tend to make life harder rather than easier for girls and women. Documented good gender practices can show by example how some ILO/IPEC development efforts have already addressed gender equality issues, and what lessons have been learned.

What makes a practice “good”?

In determining what constitutes a “good” practice, 7 criteria were applied to each of the 19 good practices chosen for this report. Not all criteria were applied to each good practice chosen. In general, a combination of two or more criteria, minimum, was the starting point for analysis. With some ILO/IPEC activities, these 7 criteria applied more directly than others. The 7th criterion – information on whether human, financial and material resources were used in a way to maximize impact – was the least available.

Seven criteria for determining what makes a practice “good”

1. Innovative or creative

What is special about the practice in terms of action against child labour and of gender mainstreaming that makes it of potential interest to others who wish to mainstream gender into child labour activities?

2. Effectiveness/impact

What evidence is there that the practice actually has made a difference in terms of combating child labour and of gender mainstreaming or gender equality? Can the impact of the practice be documented in some way, either through a formal programme evaluation or through other means?

3. Replicability

Is this a practice that might in some way help to combat child labour and promote gender mainstreaming activities in other situations or settings? The practice does not have to be copied or “cloned” to be useful to others; some elements of a practice may in themselves be useful for other programmes.

4. Sustainability

Is the practice and/or its benefits likely to continue in some way, and to continue being effective, over the medium to long term? This, for example, could involve continuation of a project or activity after its initial funding is expected to expire. But it could also involve the creation of new attitudes towards gender equality issues in child labour, new ways of mainstreaming child labour considerations (the girl child in particular), or the creation of capacity among partners and ILO staff to address gender issues.

5. Relevance

How does the practice contribute, directly or indirectly, to action of some form against child labour? How does the practice contribute or have implications for gender mainstreaming practice elsewhere?

6. Responsiveness and ethical force

Is the practice consistent with needs identified by both girls and boys; has it involved a consensus-building approach; is it respectful of the interests and desires of the participants and others; is it consistent with principles of social and professional conduct; and is it in accordance with ILO Labour Standards and Conventions? Were girls as well as boys given a voice, by increasing their participation to ensure that their interests and perspectives were taken into account?

7. Efficiency and implementation

Were resources (human, financial and material) used in a way to maximize impact?

At what level of achievement is each good practice?

We cannot afford to wait for the perfect good practice in gender mainstreaming in actions against child labour. Nevertheless, it is useful to grade good practices at different levels – from well-developed and tested, at one end of the spectrum, to first trials at the other, even though the latter may represent imaginative, creative approaches. ILO/IPEC recommends that good practices be classed at one of three different levels (see below).

Good practices at three levels

Level 1: Innovative practices

Practices at this level may not be substantiated by data or formal evaluation, but they have actually been tried and a strong empirical case can be made, in accordance with the seven criteria listed above, regarding their effectiveness towards gender mainstreaming in combating child labour activities.

Level 2: Successfully demonstrated practices

Practices at this level have been demonstrably successful in one setting, location, or situation. Although this practice is localized, it has characteristics or gender mainstreaming elements potentially transferable to other settings or situations.

Level 3: Replicated good practices

Practices at this level, both in combating child labour and with the ILO strategy of gender mainstreaming, have demonstrably worked in many locations or situations (e.g. across countries, projects, sectors, or different settings addressed by the same project – e.g. in different communities or with different groups).

Action required on five fronts

Clearly, gender must be mainstreamed in ILO/IPEC activities, given the improved outcomes when links between child labour and gender issues are more deeply explored. Action is needed on many fronts, five of which are outlined by ILO/IPEC.²

Action required on five fronts to bring gender into the ILO/IPEC mainstream

1. Conducting gender analysis of a situation to identify inequalities.
2. Implementing gender-specific actions if there are inequalities between men and women, or between boys and girls, with a view to redressing these inequalities. This means targeting girls or women exclusively in a project or, men or boys exclusively, or boys, girls, women and men individually.
3. Starting a process of institutional change within the ILO/IPEC or within partner organizations, so that gender concerns and issues are incorporated in all procedures and all aspects of programming
4. Giving girls and women (and others that are marginalized) a greater voice by increasing their participation, ensuring that their perspectives are taken into account.
5. Conducting gender budgeting and auditing.

In this report, we have sorted the good practices into four of these five action categories. At the time of this research, the relevant information regarding the fifth – addressing gender in budgeting and auditing – was not yet available.

Some good practices may be effective on more than one of these fronts, but we have classified each according to its main type of gender-mainstreaming action, or to illustrate a particular point about a given good practice.

² N. Haspels; M. Romeijn; S. Schroth: *Promoting gender equality in actions against child labour: A practical guide* (Bangkok, IPEC/ ILO, 2000 and 2003 updated version).

Effective gender mainstreaming usually requires action on all five fronts.

How this report is organized

This report contains 19 good practices. A matrix with summary details is available on pages 28-30.

Each good practice bears a title reflecting its content. As suggested above, each has also been assigned a level. The introduction to each good practice presents a gender-related concern with respect to the relevant child labour issue. This is followed by a brief description of the practice, outlining, where possible, the appropriate dates, objectives and summary facts. The main steps in conducting the practice are then summarized.

The key section which follows outlines reasons for including the particular activity, initiative, process, action, element, project, or programme in question. Only selected features of a given activity, initiative, or programme constitute the good practice in gender mainstreaming, and such practices are included because they satisfy criteria outlined above. We also outline in this section why the practice fits into one of the four action categories described above – means by which gender issues are brought into the mainstream in all IPEC policies, programmes and activities. The succeeding subsections present more detailed information regarding the specific criteria satisfied by that particular good practice.

Finally, the necessary conditions under which the good practice was conducted are summarized. This section is essential – it indicates other situations where, under similar conditions, one may be able to use or replicate the good practice. Each good practice concludes with a box containing further sources of information, including contact details for experts in the area or those with in-depth information on the case study.

Summary

We include 19 **good practices** in the report.

We apply 7 **criteria** in deciding whether a good practice is “good” in terms of both combating child labour and the ILO strategy of gender mainstreaming.

We present 3 **levels** at which we can place a good practice, depending on how often and how well the practice has been tried and tested.

We have organized the good practices into 4 **action categories** required to bring gender issues into the mainstream.

Each good practice is presented according to the following format:

- description of the gender issues and the good practice;
- key steps;
- why it is a good practice;
- which criteria classify it as “good”;
- the conditions under which it was conducted; and
- contact details and references.

Overview of good practices

We have placed the 19 good practices presented in this report into one or other of four categories corresponding to action fronts needed to bring gender into the mainstream of all policies, programmes and activities. Using these categories, it is hoped, will ensure consistent approaches to gender mainstreaming within ILO/IPEC. (Each good practice employed a variety of tactics and methods. Actions leading to an actual change for women, for example, might have paralleled a public awareness campaign or a strategy leading to a change in the policy environment.)

Category 1: Gender analysis

Four good practices

A gender analysis correlates sex-disaggregated data with other variables to reveal gender-based disparities in social and economic development. Such data, if it is to inform policy, needs to be analysed and interpreted. A gender analysis should tell us why there are differences between girls and boys. Since 1998, the ILO/IPEC Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) has encouraged the collection of reliable quantitative and qualitative gender-sensitive data on child labour in all its forms. Within SIMPOC, this has become an institutional norm, a development that facilitates effective gender analyses by competent staff.

Good practices that conducted gender analyses included two studies of national child labour force surveys. *Child domestic workers in South Africa: A national report* is based on findings of the 1999 SIMPOC survey in South Africa, while *A gender analysis of a child labour force survey – Turkey* includes an account of a comprehensive analysis of the 1994 child labour force survey which focused in part on domestic chores and gender roles.

Our gender-analysis category also includes a report on combating commercial sexual exploitation of boys and girls in Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Analysis of cross-cutting gender issues clarified the reasons for female poverty, which ultimately leads girl children into sexual exploitation. This good practice also highlighted the fact that a gender analysis was required to discover more about how boys were being sexually exploited as well. A gender analysis thus firstly helped to understand the root causes of both female and male poverty while, secondly, it determined exactly who was being commercially sexually exploited, as well as when and where it occurred.

The gender analysis category also includes a rapid assessment that investigated the situation of children in prostitution in Jamaica. Here, the researchers further disaggregated girls and boys in prostitution into nine categories, depending on the type of activity engaged in. Disaggregating is the key to planning high-impact target interventions for each category.

Category 2: Gender-specific or gender-sensitive actions

Four good practices

Gender-specific actions are needed whenever girls or women, or men and boys, are in especially disadvantageous positions. Gender-specific action may include one or a

combination of the following elements: positive, or affirmative, action; women/girl-specific activities; and/or men-specific activities.

Those good practices that conducted gender-specific and gender-sensitive actions included projects targeting girls exclusively, such as the *Art rehabilitation for working street girls in St. Petersburg, Russia* and the *Integrated approach that targeted girls involved in rural and domestic labour – East Turkey*. Both these action programmes proved effective, the former in keeping girls off the streets, the latter in providing vocational training for girls.

The good practice on *HIV/AIDS and child labour in Tanzania, South Africa and Zambia: A gender perspective* targeted male attitudes and behaviour. It is important to remember that explicitly targeting men is also a gender-specific action. The latter good practice is of interest to those who, in their efforts to include gender issues in their programmes, wish to consider the role of male attitudes and behaviour. Effective strategies that combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, especially information campaigns targeting men, must take into account men's gender identities and behaviour.

“MainSCREAMing” gender through education, the arts and the media is a good practice that focused on raising awareness among both male and female youth regarding child labour issues in a gender-sensitive way. The overall aim of the good practice was the mobilization of teenage girls and boys to “scream out” about child labour issues.

Category 3: Institutional change

Five good practices

A good starting point for mainstreaming gender in child labour issues: conduct a gender review of the organization that is implementing programmes to combat child labour. *Getting the development agency ready for gender equality issues: A gender review* outlines a process undertaken by the ILO/IPEC wherein it considered itself as an “institution”. The review examined the ILO/IPEC's own frameworks, cultures and procedures, highlighting what changes were needed if ILO/IPEC were to promote gender equality more effectively.

Incorporating gender issues into routine procedures is important in starting a process of institutional change with respect to gender. The widely used manual described in *A practical guide for promoting gender equality in action against child labour* was developed in the ILO (Bangkok), and ensures gender is included in child labour initiatives. Another example of gender becoming part of institutional internal processes at ILO/IPEC is the recently prepared guidelines described in the good practice *Gender mainstreaming in the design and preparation of project documents at ILO/IPEC*. These guidelines have made it difficult for staff engaged in project design to “forget” to factor in gender analysis.

Every boy and girl counts: Global child labour estimates, meanwhile, is the result of a committed effort, at the ILO/IPEC institutional level, to ensure coverage of gender differences in child labour and child economic activity statistics.

Thematic evaluations that systematically include a gender perspective throughout their analysis have contributed, in terms of actions against child labour, to institutional memory of what works and what does not. They contain recommendations on what should be done to integrate gender in future, adding to an organizational culture that addresses gender-based inequalities in development work. We have included here two examples of thematic evaluations under one good practice, entitled *Integrating gender issues into thematic evaluations*. One thematic evaluation focused on trafficking and the sexual