SUGAR CANE AND CHILD LABOUR: REALITY AND PERSPECTIVES.

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Contents

About the contributors..............................................................p.4
About Ethical Sugar................................................................... p.5
Introduction............................................................................... p.6

I. Offending Countries........................................................................p.9
   a. Child Labour in Bolivia’s sugar cane sector.................................p.9
   b. Philippines : Sweet Hazards....................................................... p.15
   c. Kenya : children cutting cane..................................................... p.20

II. Example of a Civil society campaign............................................p.21

III. Better management Practices...................................................... p.24
   a. Interventions to eradicate child labour from the sugar cane sector in Bolivia.........................................................p.24
   b. Eradicating child labour in El Salvador, BSR................................p.31
   c. The Coca Cola / SAB Miller value chain impacts in El Salvador..........................................................................................p.35
   d. The sugar cane alcohol industry efforts in combating child exploitation in Brazil................................................................. p.36

Conclusion.................................................................................p.40

Bibliography and references................................................... p.45

Appendixes............................................................................... p.46

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Sugar cane and child labour :
Reality and perspectives

ETHICAL-SUGAR
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About Ethical-Sugar

This research was undertaken for Ethical Sugar, an NGO that seeks to enhance dialogue within the sugar-ethanol industry with a view to improving its social and environmental sustainability. Trade unions, companies, civil society activists and academics are all brought together as part of this dialogue, which allows Ethical Sugar to construct a more rounded vision of the different situations and positions that pertain in the industry.

In 2010 Ethical sugar received the maximum score for its transparency and governance from the Prometheus Foundation.

Ethical Sugar is a member of the Bonsucro (Better Sugarcane Initiative), the Roundtable for Sustainable Biofuels and the Sustainable Earth Alliance. Ethical Sugar is member of Bonsucro, since 2005. Bonsucro is a global multi-stakeholder non-profit initiative dedicated to reducing the environmental and social impacts of sugar cane production. It aims to achieve this with a Standard that measures these impacts accurately, and with the development of a system to certify that sustainable practices are being adhered to.

Ethical Sugar is member of the chamber 4 on Human rights of the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels, since 2008. The Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels (RSB) is an international initiative coordinated by the Energy Center at EPFL in Lausanne that brings together farmers, companies, non-governmental organizations, experts, governments, and inter-governmental agencies concerned with ensuring the sustainability of biofuels production and processing. Ethical Sugar is a member of the Chamber 4 on Social Rights.

Ethical Sugar is member of the sustainable Earth Alliance since 2008. The Sustainable Earth alliance is an alliance of NGOs, farmers, fishermen, researchers and other social organizations designed to help the development of more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable societies. It addresses the future of the agricultural population and fishing communities in the world; the place of food in our increasingly globalized societies; sustainable management of our natural resources and land; and the harmonious development of our territories and its inhabitants.
Both the past and the present of the sugar industry are inexorably linked to the exploitation of labour, including child labour. Today, tools to combat child labour range from international treaties to national policies and local initiatives. Debates surrounding corporate social responsibility have also highlighted the importance of abolishing child labour in the various steps of sugar cane production. What are the problems these initiatives strive to address?

Children in families of agricultural workers may take part in the planting, cultivation, harvesting and primary processing of sugar cane. Sometimes older children will be involved in the further processing of sugar cane in more industrial settings. Such work can expose children to significant hazards. These range from insect or snake bites in the fields to skin cuts from the plant itself or, worse still, long-term damage to health from contact with pesticides or herbicides, from injuries caused by sharp machetes, knives or machinery, or simply from long hours labouring in the sun. Tools and equipment built to adult specifications may present special risks to smaller, younger and less inexperienced workers. The result may be loss of fingers or limbs or even death. In addition, the severe dependency of families of poor sugar cane workers on landowners and/or crew leaders may leave children, especially adolescent girls, open to sexual exploitation. There are also nutritional repercussions for sugar cane workers, since sucking on the cane offers immediate quelling of hunger pains, but leads to longer term malnutrition and dental decay. These nutritional effects are most deleterious for children, whose growth may be stunted.

Involving children in sugar cane production often exacts yet another price: they are robbed of the chance to be adequately educated to pursue other options in life. This perpetuates poverty from one uneducated generation to the next. Aggressively tackling poverty, eliminating child labour and expanding educational opportunities necessarily go hand in hand.

Such concerns have prompted the international community to act. The almost universally ratified International Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) protects children from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development (Art. 32). States are to set a minimum age for entry into employment, have appropriate regulations of hours and conditions of employment and fix appropriate penalties or other sanctions.
Building on earlier treaties that had fixed a minimum age for engaging in employment in various sectors, the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO)\(^1\), calls for pursuit of a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labor and to raise the minimum age for admission to employment to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons. This means setting the minimum age for employment at an age that is no lower than the age at which compulsory education ends. In general the minimum age is fixed at age 15, although developing countries may opt for age 14 (and for light work, age 13). As of 23 August 2010, 155 States had ratified this Convention.

In 1999, the ILO adopted another instrument that has proved to be a formidable weapon in the battle against exploitative child labour: the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). By 23 August 2010, 172 States had ratified it. Many have used it as a platform for developing national action plans to eliminate the most severe forms of child labour. In countries where sugar operations are important, these plans should target this sector.

Convention No. 182 provides guidance for eliminating child labour in the sugar industry in several ways. First of all, it highlights the urgency of prohibiting and eliminating the worst forms of child labour. Secondly, it defines a child in the same way as the International Convention on the Rights of the Child: any person under the age of 18. Thirdly, it categorizes the worst forms of child labour in ways specifically relevant to the sugar sector. Any form of slavery or similar practice is banned; this includes debt bondage, a practice found in some sugar-producing countries, where the labour of children may be offered to repay a parent’s debt. Furthermore, the worst forms of child labour include “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.” (Convention No. 183, Art. 3(d)). States that have ratified the Convention are required to identify the types of work they consider to fall under this provision; this would include most tasks in sugar cane cultivation and processing in countries where they occur.

But identification and prohibition are only the first step. Countries are also to “design and implement programmes of action to eliminate as a priority the worst forms of child labour” (ILO Convention No. 182, Art. 6). This is to be done in consultation with relevant government institutions and employers’ and workers’ organizations, taking into account the view of other concerned groups (including children, of course). The programmes are also to take account of the importance of education in eliminating child labour, such as by preventing the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour, ensuring access to free basic education, and noting the special situation of girls (ILO Convention No. 182, Art. 7). Enhanced international cooperation, including support for poverty eradication programmes and universal education, is also foreseen (Art. 8). Projects like the Foundation for International Research on Working Children (IREWOC) have analysed the effectiveness of interventions in the sugar sector.

The supervisory mechanisms that monitor compliance with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and of ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182 provide some additional insights.

\(^1\)ILO: see appendix
into how to step up efforts to eliminate exploitative child labour in the sugar cane industry. The independent experts serving on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child have stressed that children’s rights are a shared responsibility between developed and developing countries. And while the Convention recognizes that measures are to be taken by countries “to the maximum extent of their available resources,” it imposes an immediate obligation to undertake targeted measures as a matter of priority to satisfy the core minimum content of economic and social rights. The Committee has also encouraged the development of child-specific indicators that are tied to time-bound targets to help measure progress. Such improvement would involve not just removing children from hazardous work in the sugar industry, but as well providing alternatives for families to earn sufficient income, better labour protection for adults, and greater educational opportunities for the children.

The ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, which monitors the implementation of Conventions 138 and 182 along with other ILO instruments, has similarly encouraged countries to develop indicators of this nature. It has asked countries for information on the prohibition, inspection and prosecution of cases involving the worst forms of child labour in the agricultural sector and on plantations, as well as on the penalties actually imposed. Bonded or forced labour involving children is a special concern. The ILO’s International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) has aided numerous States to design and implement stakeholder-based Time-Bound Programmes, normally with support from bilateral or multilateral international development assistance. These may encompass the removal of children from these types of activity along with rehabilitation and reintegration efforts involving the community. The IPEC Training Resource Pack on the Elimination of Hazardous Child Labour in Agriculture is targeted at smallholding farmers. The incorporation of lessons learned from such initiatives in national and rural development plans and in poverty reduction strategies is particularly important. For this reason, ILO-IPEC seeks to position child labour elimination at the macro-economic level in the context of poverty eradication, emphasizing the need to assess and monitor the extent and nature of the problem and to strengthen institutional capacities. The Resolution concerning statistics of child labour adopted by the 2008 Conference of Labour Statisticians and ILO Recommendation No. 190 provide additional practical guidance.

Furthermore, the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture brings together several international organizations and groups representing producers and workers to act towards effectively applying the minimum age for work in agriculture, prohibiting hazardous work for children, and protecting children who have reached the minimum legal age to work by improving health and safety standards in the sector. This group points out that, “A key to reducing child labour in agricul-
ture is building strong rural institutions, which include farmers’ organizations and trade unions to collectively bargain to improve adult incomes, wages and labour standards.” It also highlights programmes which transfer cash or food directly to households that send their children to school as helping to reduce child labour and increase school enrolment. Do these reach children in this industry?

In terms of corporate social responsibility, the 2008 Report of UN Special Representative recalled the State duty to protect against human rights abuses by third parties, the corporate responsibility to respect human rights and the need for more effective access to remedies. The abolition of child labour is among the human rights principles identified in the report, which is based on international instruments and cases documented on the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre website. To discharge their responsibility, companies must take due-diligence steps to become aware of, prevent and address adverse human rights impacts, looking to core ILO Conventions among other sources. The steps include adopting a human rights policy, undertaking a human rights impact assessment that is relevant to the industry, integrating human rights policies throughout the company, and monitoring and auditing performance. Among the information-sharing tools companies can use, the report mentions the Global Compact initiated by the United Nations, the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises and the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy. Taking the ILO’s cue, all of these include “the effective abolition of child labour” among the principles to which companies along the supply chain are to adhere.

The solid international foundation for the elimination of exploitative child labour in the sugar industry can serve as the basis for a check-list of practical measures for stakeholders seeking improvements.
I. OFFENDING COUNTRIES – BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, KENYA AND PHILIPPINE FOCUS

a. Child labour in Bolivia’s Sugar Cane Sector².

This part describes the situation of child labour in the Santa Cruz and Bermejo sugar cane regions in Bolivia, six years after the rapid evaluation conducted by ILO. IREWOC research was conducted in the same areas as the ILO’s rapid evaluation; it will appear that, despite a diminishment in the number of children working in the sugar cane harvest, their activities continue to be one of the worst forms of child labour because of the harmfulness of the labour activities as well as because of the living conditions and the implications of the work for health and education.

1. Children’s activities in the harvest

During the ILO research in 2002, the youngest participants in the harvest in both Bermejo and Santa Cruz were nine years old. The ILO research estimated that in Santa Cruz nearly 50% was in the 9-13 age category, while in Bermejo some 60% would belong to this group.

Of the fulltime harvesters in Santa Cruz about 10-20% are minors. In Bermejo the percentage is slightly higher; at least a quarter of the harvesters are minors, because there are more helpers who are usually under 18. The ILO report mentioned the participation of twice as many boys as girls; this remains unchanged.

In some cases, adolescent boys younger than 18 work as contracted harvesters. The work they do is the same as that of adult harvesters and consists of burning, cutting, de-topping, piling and loading the sugar cane. If contractors ignore the ages of the harvesters during the hiring process, then minors are likely to be employed on a fulltime basis. These adolescents, working fulltime as contracted harvesters, earn a salary of between 1.000 and 4.000 Bolivianos (100-400 Euro) a month.

Girls are never hired as fulltime contracted harvesters because the work is considered too heavy for women. They are expected to run the household, which wouldn’t be possible if working as a fulltime harvester.

Children and adolescents aged 12-17, girls as well as boys, work as helpers (cuartas) of the contracted harvesters; they do so on a daily basis, in Santa Cruz as well as in Bermejo. The harvester for whom the adolescent works is usually a family member or a person known from the hometown. Usually children and youths working as cuartas earn a salary between 300 and 800 Bolivianos (30-80 Euro) per month, but some of them don’t know how much they will eventually be given. Helping out family members is perceived as family work for which minors don’t need to be rewarded individually. Their family members will provide them with food and clothes, but won’t actually pay them a salary.

² See References 2
Younger boys and girls, between 7 and 12 years old, who are still in school, help their parents in the sugar cane harvest after school, in the weekends and/or during holidays. These children participate in the different harvesting activities according to their age and sex. School-going children of 11 and 12 years old participate in the same activities as older permanent helpers like cutting, de-topping and stacking sugar cane, after classes or on non-school days. In Bermejo, some of these children (only boys) also participate in the extremely heavy task of manually loading sugar cane onto the flatbed trucks.

Besides these labour activities, the cuartas or those children who help their parents after school do various activities in the harvester camp. They also help their mothers in different household chores such as washing clothes, fetching water and wood, and cooking. Adolescent girls who work as cuartas are usually responsible for cooking and washing clothes of others, while their male peers are not. Girls and women often work as “pensionistas” (cooks), sometimes in addition to their harvesting work as cuartas.

The youngest working boys and girls, between 7 and 10 years old, in Santa Cruz as well as in Bermejo, help cutting, de-topping and piling sugar cane on non-school days, but don’t participate in loading sugar cane because they are too young and not strong enough yet. They usually work alongside their mothers and work from early in the morning until noon on Saturdays and during holidays. Parents take their children younger than 7 to the fields when there is no other place to leave them, for example on Saturdays and during holidays (see photo 12). These children don’t work in the harvest but hang around on the plantations playing and resting. Because of the extreme heat and burning sun, their parents will often provide shade in the form of a makeshift tent.

### 2. Reasons for children to work

The reasons to work vary according to the different groups of working children. Adolescent boys working as contracted harvesters as well as youths working as cuartas, mainly work for economic reasons. They come from poor regions with few job opportunities and the sugar cane harvest provides a more or less stable income for 4 to 6 months a year. Like 15-year-old Héctor from the Campo Grande camp in Bermejo said: “I came here with a neighbour from my community and I work as his cuarta. I earn 600 Bolivianos [60 Euro] per month but usually I only get paid what I need; at the end of the harvest I will get the rest of my money. I am the youngest of 8 brothers and sisters; they are not here. They don’t maintain me so I have to work to earn money”.

![Young sugar cane harvester in Santa Cruz Bolivia](image-url)
When boys grow up and, like Héctor, are about 14-15 years old, they are considered old enough to earn their own money and contribute to the family income. At this age, most youths don’t attend school anymore, as they often perceive primary school (until 8th grade) to be enough basic education and start to feel the need to work and earn an income. Girls as well as boys from this age group start working fulltime in the sugar cane harvest as helpers; girls also work as cooks. Sandra, a fourteen-year-old girl in the Okinawa 1 camp in Santa Cruz who had given birth to a baby 2 months earlier, used to work as her husband’s helper, cutting sugar cane, until about a month before the baby was born. She also cooked for seven other harvesters who stayed in the camp without their wives. Ever since Sandra stopped cutting sugar cane, because of her pregnancy, she has only been working as a cook: “There are seven men I have to cook breakfast, lunch and dinner for. They give me 18 Bolivianos [1.80 Euro] per day for the groceries, which is barely enough as everything has become more expensive this year, so in the end I don’t earn anything. But where else should they eat?”

For children who go to school in the sugar cane regions and help their parents on non-school days, the economic benefit of their contribution is not the main reason for their presence. They accompany their parents because they have no place else to stay during the harvest and only work on non-school days to help increase their parents’ income, because there are no other activities for them on offer. Often parents leave some of their children at home with family members so they can continue going to school. Like doña Carla from the Okinawa 1 camp in Santa Cruz explained: “My oldest three children are at home. A few days ago I went to [my hometown] Gutierrez to get my youngest daughter, she is four years old and attends a child day care but that finished last week. Now she stays with me here in the camp while the other three are still in school in Gutierrez. […] They are staying with my brother”.

When people don’t have someone they can leave their children with, they have to take them with them to the harvest. The different reasons for youths to be present in the sugar cane harvest, either working or not, explain the need for different strategies for the eradication of child labour from the sector.

3. Risks of child labour in the sugar cane harvest

The working and living conditions in the sugar cane regions of Santa Cruz and Bermejo are precarious and bring about health risks for the youths who participate in it. Especially the adolescent boys who work fulltime in the harvest, either as contracted harvesters or cuartas, are at risk for various health problems. According to 20-year-old Valentina, one of the harvester’s wives in the Chorobi camp in Santa Cruz, many accidents and illnesses occur because of the working and living conditions. She thinks women have fewer health problems: “We don’t really have health problems but the men do; they cut themselves with the machete, they faint because of the heat or fall off the truck when they are loading sugar cane. Only yesterday, one of the boys had his eye scratched by a leaf of the sugar cane. That really hurts … it happened to me once too”. 
Because cutting, de-topping, stacking and loading sugar cane are heavy tasks, extreme tiredness is the most prevalent consequence of the work. Especially in the last months of the harvest, the workers complain about their bodies becoming weaker and they themselves feeling more tired and wanting to return to their homes.

The extremely high temperatures of 35-40 degrees Celsius cause the harvesters to sweat excessively and lose too much salt, resulting in severe cramps. Harvesters seem to prefer not to drink much (cold) water because they believe this to cause the cramps. According to health workers in the region, people should be drinking clear soup or water with salt and sugar to counteract the effects of the sweating.

Apart from tiredness and cramps, the young harvesters experience different types of pain in their bodies because of the work.

Manual loading in Bermejo makes one's shoulder hurt because of the heavy pile of sugar cane one has to carry on one side. The cuartas who help loading commented that in the beginning they would feel pain in their shoulders, inside the joint as well as a raw feeling on their skin, but that after a few weeks they would get used to it and wouldn't feel it so much anymore.

Mechanical loading (see photo 13) is less heavy, but certainly not without its risks. The harvesters and cuartas standing on top of the wagon, arranging the sugar cane, have to take care that the loading machine doesn’t injure them or that the sugar cane doesn’t fall on top of them.

The most common risk of injury, when working in the harvest, is cutting oneself with the machete. Almost all youths who have been working in the harvest for a while have cut themselves at least once. Usually they cut themselves in a foot or hand; their feet are especially vulnerable because most of the youths (and adults) wear open sandals, leaving their feet unprotected. Most children leave their cuts to heal by themselves. Sometimes, more serious injuries occur. One nineteen-year-old girl in the Porcelana camp in Bermejo called Nina, for example, had cut off half her thumb a few weeks before. She mentioned: “I was working with my cuarta when just like that I cut my thumb! I had even sliced the bone! My cuarta helped me a bit although he was very shocked too, it was bleeding a lot. We put a cloth around my thumb and went to the hospital, but they couldn’t put the sliced part back on so they had to take the rest off too. Now I have to go to the hospital every two days to get clean bandages”.

Nina was very annoyed about what had happened to her because she couldn’t continue to help her husband in the harvest or do anything in the household. Her income was lost until her thumb healed again.
4. Educational situation of the children

In addition to the health and safety dangers of working in the sugar cane harvest, children and adolescents become accustomed to earning money through work and run the risk of becoming school dropouts. The current educational situation has, however, improved significantly compared to the one described by ILO in 2002. According to ILO, only 8.3% of the girls and none of the boys participating in the sugar cane harvest in Santa Cruz were in school. In Bermejo, neither boys nor girls from the migrant camps were attending classes. Currently, most children under 12 years old are attending primary school. Still, attendance depends very much on whether there is a school close to the camp. In the central sugar cane zone in Bermejo almost all children under 12 are in school; in the more remote zones of Santa Cruz, where schools are far away, young children continue to be out of school. Adolescents in the sugar cane harvest, who should be attending secondary school after having finished 8th grade, also continue to be out of school.

Like the work situation, the educational situation of the children in the sugar cane harvests of Santa Cruz and Bermejo varies per age group. One general remark is that work in the sugar cane harvest is migratory work, implying that children who accompany their parents to the harvest have to change schools frequently. They must always have their transcripts with them to prove that they are enrolled at school in their home towns. Only with these papers can they attend classes at the camp schools. Some families move from camp to camp during the harvest, and so their children move from school to school. Teachers thus have to cope with varying numbers of pupils; this number varies almost per week as the harvesting families come and go at different moments and children from different camps attend the same schools.

One teacher of the school opposite the Primero de Mayo camp in Arrozales, Bermejo mentioned: "We are three teachers during the entire year but the number of children attending classes varies all the time. Before the harvest there are 27 pupils from the community [of Arrozales] but when the harvest starts there are 80 to 90 children".

The youngest children (0-6) usually spend their time close to their mothers although some of them attend the governmental child care centers (PAN) if there is one close to the camp.

Most children of 6 years and older in the camps, go to school if there is one available close by. In Arrozales, Porcelana and Campo Grande in Bermejo there are schools close to the camps and almost all primary-school-aged children attend classes. The fact that they help their parents after school and in the weekends, however, leaves them little time to do their homework; they either help their mothers with household chores in the camp or assist parents in the fields. In the Okinawa 1 and Chorobi camps in Santa Cruz, on the other hand, the children are not in school because the parents consider the schools to be too far away.

The older children and adolescents who participate in the sugar cane harvest working as contracted harvesters and cuartas are not in school anymore. They work fulltime and have usually finished only primary school until 5th or 8th grade. Only some of them have started secondary school but
dropped out before finishing and even less of them are planning to go back to high school to graduate and maybe then continue to study at university. Most adolescents don’t perceive further study as a real opportunity because they cannot afford the enrolment fees or book costs.

Zenon, on the other hand, a sixteen-year-old boy working as a contracted harvester and staying in the Okinawa 1 camp in Santa Cruz. He has only finished primary school until 6th grade and commented: “I would like to at least finish high school and if possible go to university as well. I really don’t like to work here; the harvest is very heavy and tiring. I don’t know what I would want to study yet, whatever would be possible I guess, maybe to be a teacher or a lawyer”.

Sixteen-year-old Uriel, in the Campo Grande camp in Bermejo, is a good example of many boys who don’t desire going back to school because they have become used to working and earning money for themselves or their families. Uriel explained: “I studied until fourth grade: I left when I was eleven. I am not going to study anymore because the [higher levels] are far away and I don’t want to go anymore. I just want to work. In my hometown I also work: I grow vegetables and take care of the sheep, the goats, the pigs and the cows. […] In the harvest here, I work with my father. He doesn’t really pay me but just gives me clothes and stuff”.

Girls experience the same difficulties with continued schooling. They often accompany their relatives or husbands to work as cuartas and gradually obtain more responsibilities when becoming “pensionistas”: cooking for the harvesters. Fifteen-year-old Luisiana, however, from the Campo Grande camp in Bermejo, was very decided about her wish to continue studying the following year: “I have worked a few years as a cuarta but next year I really want to finish 8th grade and then continue studying in high school”. She reckoned that if she wouldn’t go through with it the following year, it would be too late.

**Conclusion – Worst form of child labour**

Taking into account the conditions in which children and adolescents in the sugar cane regions in Santa Cruz and Bermejo are living and working, their activities can indeed be categorized as worst forms of child labour. Although numbers seem to have gone down, the situation in which the work takes place has changed only marginally compared to the situation described by ILO in 2002; there are still many children engaged in harmful activities in the sector and facing difficulties in combining their work with school.

ILO Convention 182 explicitly prohibits any labour activity for minors that are likely to harm their health, safety or morals. Youngsters run all types of health risks and are actually injured from time to time. In addition, their right to education is violated because the school-going children who participate in the harvest experience an interruption of their school year while the older ones who work fulltime have no time to attend school. They drop out of school, start working and decrease their possibilities of learning a profession.

Although not specifically mentioned in ILO Convention 182, children’s work in the sugar cane harvest also negatively influences children’s school attendance.
Leaving the harvest and this type of work becomes more and more difficult over time as other alternatives become increasingly less likely.

b. Philippines

SWEET HAZARDS, child labor on sugarcane plantations in the Philippines

Following international policy frameworks on child labor, Terre des Hommes contributes to the elimination of the worst forms of labor performed by children through programs, advocacy and campaigning. This research, a case study on the sugarcane plantations in the Philippines, takes a closer look into the reality of working children’s lives in order to measure this reality against the international policy framework on child labor.

At a time when much attention goes to the horrors of child prostitution and trafficking of children in the Philippines, the sector where by far most children work, agriculture, is often forgotten. It is estimated that 2.3 million children are economically active in this sector. Children working on large scale plantations are in much greater risk of exploitation due to the profit-oriented approach of the commercial undertakings.

The island Leyte, part of the Visayas, lies in the middle of the Philippines. Many families live and work on the island’s eleven big sugar cane plantations. It is estimated that more than 5,000 children work there too. Leyte provides an opportunity to understand the dynamics of child work in the Filipino sugarcane plantations. That’s why this study took place in that particular area.

1. Living conditions of the sugarcane workers

The workers get paid 60 to 80 pesos per day, which is far below the minimum of 153 pesos per day that is prescribed by the government. Most plantation owners offer their workers a house on the plantation itself but there are no sanita-

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Sugar cane and child labour : Reality and perspectives

ETHICAL-SUGAR
tion facilities near the houses. The power that landowners have over the hornals is big. “If you live here, you are forced to work in the plantation,” states one worker. Due to low wages and big families, poverty is widespread among the sugarcane workers’ families. Even though the land where the families live is fertile, they are in many instances not allowed to use small plots to grow their own food. From this perspective the people on the haciendas are worse off than other rural families. But when it comes to paying education costs or buying new clothes for the children, the children need to work for it themselves. The situation has worsened during the years.

2. Working children

There are 60,000 to 200,000 children work in the sugarcane plantations. They are both pushed and pulled into this work. Many children themselves however say it is the absolute need for additional family income that pushes them into the fields.

In his study on the causes and consequences of child labor in Leyte, De Vries states that children's educational aspirations strongly influence their decision to work, since they need money to pay their school fees. “We keep 10 or 20 pesos for ourselves, to save for school materials,” they explain. The rest goes to their mothers, who “need it to buy food”. The dilemma between the child’s wish and the family’s need does not go unnoticed by parents either. They too cite financial hardships as the first and foremost reason why their children are working.

In regards to what pulls children to work, there is an overall demand for children’s labor. However, the outdated production methods in sugarcane ask for many laborers to do the manual work. For instance, keeping the fields weeded is cheaper if done manually rather than by spraying herbicides. For this relatively simple job children are hired to replace expensive production methods. What’s more is that children are more docile than adults.

3. What kind of work?

There are big differences between amounts of work that children do on the plantations. At the age of seven or eight children start to help in the fields during school holidays and weekends.

By the time the harvest season is at its peak, a lot of children work four or five days every week;
most of them try to combine school and work by working part time. The young children (7 to 10 years old) usually start with weeding or planting the cane. Children can do the work, since it is simple and not as heavy as some other tasks, like harvesting. The children clear the fields of grasses and weeds with big cutting knives called bolos. Like 11-year old Joy-Marie: “I earn 30 pesos for clearing one line, 100 meters. I start working at six in the morning and I finish at five in the afternoon. It takes me two days to clear one line.” Applying fertilizer is another task considered to be suitable for children.

Harvest time is the time when all labor is needed to cut the cane and carry it to the trucks that will bring it to the sugar mills. During harvest most plantation owners pay per ton of cane that is cut. “Harvesting and carrying the cane is heavy, very heavy. Because I work hard I can earn 700 to 800 pesos a week. I work five days per week – Saturdays and Sundays I do not work : I need the time to sleep” tells Rocky (16 years old), who is the breadwinner of his family.

After the harvest, the fields need to be cleared in order to be able to plant new cane, work which is done by children as well.

People from job agencies from Manila or Cebu come to look for children who are willing to take their chances in the big city. Often these trips do not work out the way the families had hoped: children disappear into illegal forms of work, are exploited in city jobs and do not return nor are they able to send money back to their families.

4. Hazards

Working on the family farm does in fact expose children to a variety of risks. Furthermore, the story changes but in commercial agriculture. In the sugarcane fields of Leyte, there is no doubt that the first hazard to the children is the sun. While the work in itself is already tiring, the heat makes it almost unbearable. Taking into account that the children work eight or nine hours every day, the exposure to heat is dangerous.

They use big machetes to cut the weeds and the cane. These bolos are made for adult handling. In children's hands they become dangerous tools that cause serious wounds. Apart from injuries caused by the machetes, the sugarcane leaves themselves also cause small cuts on the children's legs and arms. Snakes and insects living between the sugarcane stalks sometimes cause deadly accidents with their poisonous bites.

A fourth hazard is carrying the heavy loads of cane during harvest time. Carrying the cane from the field to the truck and loading it on the truck can be dangerous to adults considering the weight of the cane. To children it is even more strenuous.

One last, but very important hazard is caused by the use of agrochemicals in the production of sugarcane. The exposure of the children to these pesticides is obvious. Spraying pesticides is con-
sidered to be a job for adults only, but children work on fields where pesticides have been sprayed. Prolonged exposure may result in severe respiratory problems, skin and eye irritations, reproductive problems and a general decline in health status. This hazard is particularly grave since the plantations use pesticides that are toxic and are banned in other countries for their poisonous effects on farm workers. The fact that children in the sugar cane industry are at serious risk of pesticide poisoning is too often denied.

In general, parents are aware of the dangers that their children are exposed to. But in spite of all the hazards that children encounter, child labor in the sugarcane plantations is still widespread.

5. Responses

Apart from the discussion if children should be working at all, children themselves indicate that the hazardous working conditions in the sugarcane plantations bother them. Improving working conditions seems to provide a solution to this problem. Since the worst forms of child labor are to be banned immediately, child labor on the sugarcane plantations, where they have to face many hazards, should be abolished immediately. The problem is that the hazardous classification only applies to some tasks or specific conditions at the sugarcane plantation. When asked who is responsible for protecting the children against the hazards of working on the plantations, there are different reactions. First of all, parents feel responsible. “The problem is that the parents are the ones who send their children to work. So it will be a battle between the state and the parents,” says Mrs. Soriano from the Institute of Labor Studies (ILS).

When it comes to ending child labor by not hiring children anymore, landowners claim that it is not in their power to do this even though they agree that children should not work. Another person in the line of plantation subcontractors claims that even if he would not hire children, the parents would be angry with him. With education children will be able to find better jobs, is the general feeling.

6. Government responsibility

Since the law in the Philippines is clear on what is allowable work and what is not, it is up to the government to enforce these laws and protect children from exploitation in labor⁵.

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⁵The subdivision within children’s work is clearly recognizable, for instance in the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination. Act (RA 9231), which was adopted in December 2003. The Act is meant to align national policies to the spirit of ILO C182.20
Mrs. Sorian says that “unfortunately our justice system has yet to change, they are still not prosecuting anyone for hiring child workers. The law is very strict, but the challenge now is to enforce it.”

One of the law enforcement agencies, the Bureau of Working Conditions, conducts labor inspections. These include underpayment, working conditions and minimum ages. The use of child labor should be monitored and noted by this agency. However, the inspection reports of 211 sugarcane plantations inspected between January and June 2001 do not indicate one single working child. These findings are very contradictory to the observations in this research. There appear to be two explanations for this discrepancy. Considering the amount of establishments that the 250 labor inspectors have to monitor, one can imagine their attention goes to a look at the books and not to on site inspections.

The second reason for the inefficiency of labor inspections in relation to child labor is the opinion that children working in agriculture only work on family farms. Inspection alone is not enough to guarantee the elimination of child labor. When it comes to chemical hazards it is unclear who should protect the children while they are at work. Since they are not supposed to work, existing guidelines for safe use of agrochemicals are not adjusted to children's susceptibility to poisoning.

Further restrictions on pesticides and other chemicals could limit the exposure to highly toxic substances.

**Conclusion**

Even though many NGOs and governments welcome this priority on one of the most widespread violations of children’s rights, in practice the borders between child labor and worst forms are not so easily established: there is room for interpretation on how to deal with it.

The work that children perform on the sugarcane plantations of Leyte is exemplary of this gray area between child labor and the worst forms. Children's tasks vary from weeding and planting to applying fertilizers and harvesting. Even though parents and overseers try to protect children from the most hazardous work at the plantation – spraying pesticides – children are exposed to a number of hazards while at work.

It is a responsibility of all people and institutions involved. With a new child labor law in place, law enforcement is needed and inspections should be carried out in the fields on a regular basis. Penalizing parents for child labor seems to be punishing them for their poverty. “The problem is that the parents are the ones who send their children to work. So it will be a battle between the state and the parents,” says Mrs. Soriano from the Institute of Labor Studies (ILS).

The root cause of child labor is poverty, but it also depends on the attitude of the parents. For this reason government programs try to initiate other sources of income for the parents, outside the plantation.

On 24 September, Jorge Chullen, the coordinator of the IUF global sugar program has visited the South Nyanza Sugar Company accompanied by a delegation of the Kenya Union of Sugar, Plantation and Allied Workers (KUS-PAW), as part of a 4-day program supported by the Social Justice Fund of the Canadian Auto Workers (SJF-CAW). The sugar company is located near the Kisii area, south of Kisumu, in the western region on the country; a two-and-a-half hour ride, dotted with about ten police check-points, and roads with limited capacity to handle all the transit that rides on them.

The union delegation was able to observe some agricultural operations in the cane fields of independent farmers who supply the mill. At a farm in Kelowe, four children, aged 10-12, have been seen cutting cane; and several others, even younger, hanging around in the fields.

One main reason given by the workers for the children’s presence was that some of them have finished elementary school and their families have no money to pay for high school; therefore they have no other option than to work in the cane fields. Some other said that they help their families, and one of them was an orphan of father and mother who looks after his younger siblings. One of the boys said he gives some of the money he earns (about USD 60 per month) to his parents.

The cane-cutting operations have been outsourced by the South Nyanza Sugar Company, which by legislation is prevented from doing anything else than milling cane. The outsourcing practices have worsened working conditions considerably, and, even when the cutters cut cane green and the work is heavier than with burned cane, they receive nothing in terms of protective equipment or tools for the job. Workers talk about “before” and “now”. “Now,” with the outsourced operations, they get no clothing, no cane-knife, no boots, no hats… nothing. Not even drinking water is distributed to them, they said. They bring water from home, and when it’s gone… it’s gone.

Workers complain that the agreement between the contractor and the sugar company gives the former a certain amount of money to pay them, from which he takes a cut. When asked if first aid is, one cutter said: “there is nothing of that sort.” They even have to buy their own cane-knife. And, the one which they can afford is not the best tool for cutting cane!

The delegation has visited also the living conditions of cane cutters in Owiro camp that showed to be extremely poor. A member of the company management staff, who guided the visit, explained that the company has no responsibility to ensure some decent living conditions as the cutting operations are outsourced.

The camp has also a poor-equipped room which functions as a pre-elementary school for kids.
II. EXAMPLE OF A CIVIL SOCIETY CAMPAIGN

In 2004, the US NGO Human Right Watch® (HRW) made a campaign regarding child labour social conditions in El Salvador and accusing Coca-Cola in exploring indirectly child Labour.

Available on HRW (Human Rights Watch) website:

**El Salvador: Child Labor on Sugar Plantations**

Foreign Firms Use End Product of Children’s Hazardous Work

Juin 9, 2004

**RELATED MATERIALS:**

*El Salvador: Girls Working as Domestics Face Abuses*

**Child labor is rampant on El Salvador’s sugarcane plantations. Companies that buy or use Salvadoran sugar should realize that fact and take responsibility for doing something about it.**

Michael Bochenek, counsel to the Children's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch

Businesses purchasing sugar from El Salvador, including The Coca-Cola Company, are using the product of child labor that is both hazardous and widespread, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today.

Harvesting cane requires children to use machetes and other sharp knives to cut sugarcane and

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*http://www.hrw.org/fr*
strip the leaves off the stalks, work they perform for up to nine hours each day in the hot sun. Nearly every child interviewed by Human Rights Watch for its 139-page report, "Turning a Blind Eye: Hazardous Child Labor in El Salvador’s Sugarcane Cultivation," said that he or she had suffered machete gashes on the hands or legs while cutting cane. These risks led one former labor inspector to characterize sugarcane as the most dangerous of all forms of agricultural work. “Child labor is rampant on El Salvador’s sugarcane plantations,” said Michael Bochenek, counsel to the Children’s Rights Division of Human Rights Watch. “Companies that buy or use Salvadoran sugar should realize that fact and take responsibility for doing something about it.”

Up to one-third of the workers on El Salvador’s sugarcane plantations are children under the age of 18, many of whom began to work in the fields between the ages of eight and 13. The International Labor Organization estimates that at least 5,000 and as many as 30,000 children under age 18 work on Salvadoran sugar plantations. El Salvador sets a minimum working age of 18 for dangerous occupations and 14 for most other forms of work.

Medical care is often not available on the plantations, and children must frequently pay for the cost of their medical treatment. They are not reimbursed by their employers despite a provision in the Salvadoran labor code that makes employers responsible for medical expenses resulting from on-the-job injuries.

El Salvador’s sugar mills and the businesses that purchase or use Salvadoran sugar know or should know that the sugar is in part the product of child labor. For example, Coca-Cola Co. uses Salvadoran sugar in its bottled beverages for domestic consumption in El Salvador. The company’s local bottler purchases sugar refined at El Salvador’s largest mill, Central Izalco. At least four of the plantations that supply sugarcane to Central Izalco regularly use child labor, Human Rights Watch found after interviewing workers.

When Human Rights Watch brought this information to the attention of Coca-Cola Co., the soft-drink manufacturer did not contradict these findings. Coca-Cola has a code of conduct for its suppliers, known as the “Guiding Principles for Suppliers to The Coca-Cola Company,” but it is narrowly drawn to cover only direct suppliers, which includes sugar mills but excludes plantations. The guiding principles provide, for example, that the Coca-Cola Co’s direct suppliers “will not use child labor as defined by local law,” but they do not address the responsibility of direct suppliers to ensure that their own suppliers do not use hazardous child labor.

“If Coca-Cola is serious about avoiding complicity in the use of hazardous child labor, the company should recognize that its responsibility to ensure that respect for human rights extends beyond its direct suppliers,” said Bochenek.

In addition, children who work on sugarcane plantations often miss the first several weeks or months of school. For example, a teacher in a rural community north of the capital San Salvador estimated that about 20 percent of her class did not attend school during the harvest. Other children drop out of school altogether. Some children who want to attend school are driven into hazardous work because it is the only way their families can afford the cost of their education.

El Salvador is one of five countries in Latin America to participate in an International Labor Organization Time-Bound Program, an initiative to address the worst forms of child labor. But officials in the Salvadoran Ministry of Labor told Human Rights Watch that most children who cut cane are
simply their parents’ “helpers.”
Human Rights Watch urged El Salvador’s sugar mills, Coca-Cola Co. and other businesses that purchase Salvadoran sugar to incorporate international standards in their contractual relationships with suppliers and require their suppliers to do the same throughout the supply chain. They should also adopt effective monitoring systems to verify that labor conditions on their suppliers’ sugarcane plantations comply with international standards.

**Child Labor in Sugarcane Plantations in El Salvador Drops by 70%**

Septembre 16, 2009

**RELATED MATERIALS:**
**Turning a Blind Eye**

Our report exposed that the Coca-Cola company and other businesses were knowingly purchasing the product of child labor.

According to official statistics from the Ministry of Education in El Salvador, child labor in the sugarcane industry dropped by 70 percent between 2003 and 2008. Five years ago, Human Rights Watch investigated the use of child labor on El Salvador’s sugarcane plantations and found that thousands of children were working in extremely hazardous conditions.

Nearly every child interviewed by Human Rights Watch had suffered machete gashes on their arms or legs while cutting cane. Our report exposed that the Coca-Cola company and other businesses were knowingly purchasing the product of child labor.

The International Labour Organization estimated that between 5,000 and 30,000 children under age 18 were working on the plantations, making up nearly one-third of all sugarcane workers. In addition to enduring unsafe working conditions and working long hours, children engaged in sugarcane work often missed weeks or months of school during the sugarcane harvest, with one out of every five children working in sugarcane out of school.

In response to Human Rights Watch’s report, the Ministry of Labor in El Salvador directed sugar plantations to remove child workers from the sugarcane harvest. While the 2008 numbers are encouraging, Human Rights Watch has pressed the Ministry of Labor to do more to ensure that children are reintegrated into schools.

Acresce-se a esta perspectiva o envelhecimento precoce, câncer – provocado pela fuligem proveniente das queimadas, das quais derivam-se os hidrocarbonetos policíclicos aromáticos, Lesão por Esforço Repetitivo (LER) e bissinose (RUMIN; NAVARRO; PERIOTO, 2008).
III. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.

a. Interventions to Eradicate Child Labour from the Sugar Cane Sector in Bolivia.7

There are several governmental and non-governmental organisations working in the struggle against child labour in the sugar cane harvest, including Hombres Nuevos, the Prefecture, UNICEF and Child Defence, but due to time limitations, not all of them could be taken into account during the IREWOC research. This part describes the interventions of LABOR, OASI, CCIMCAT and the Ministry of Labour that work towards the eradication of child labour from the sugar cane harvest in Santa Cruz and in Bermejo using varying strategies. The contents and results of all interventions will be treated separately, resulting in a conclusion on the effectiveness of the strategies.

1. Santa Cruz

- LABOR cooperating with Federation of Sugarcane Harvesters
The project carried out by LABOR during August 2006 to July 2008 was called “Awareness raising and promotion for the progressive eradication of child labour from the sugar cane harvest in the Obispo Santistevan8 province” (department of Santa Cruz) and aimed to contribute to the eradication of child labour from the harvest. The project aimed to raise awareness about the issue of child labour in the harvest among harvesters and their families, the Federation of Harvesters, sugar cane producers, civil society and authorities. An important aspect of the project was the tripartite dialogue between sugar cane harvesters, sugar cane producers and authorities on the improvement of labour conditions for adult harvesters in order to create an adequate environment to decrease the number of children participating in the harvest. Other activities of the project included the organization of workshops in the harvester camps, strengthening the Federation of Harvesters and awareness raising among sugar cane producers, authorities and the general public9.

LABOR worked on informing the Federation of Harvesters on the topic of child labour through workshops about ILO Conventions 138 and 182 and the importance of basic education. The leaders of the Federation are well aware of the topic and seem to entirely agree with the idea of eliminating child labour from the sector. Although the Federation of Harvesters tries to visit the camps from time to time, the harvesters and other actors don’t value the Federation very highly. According to doctor Galvimonte from the OASI health brigade, the leaders of the Federation are not trained well enough for their responsibilities.

More importantly, many harvesters speak negatively about the Federation and show very little trust in their representing body. Doña Ana’s husband (Chorobi camp) expressed his mistrust in the Federation of Harvesters, after having been vice-president of the Federation for a few years. He complained: “I was vice president for the Federation for two or three years but I left because it was such a mess: a lot of corruption and the money they get never really goes to the harvesters.

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7See References 2
8In practice the project took place in both provinces of Santistevan and Warnes.
And the Federation hardly ever visits the harvester camps, just a few of the many camps during the harvest. I left fighting with some of them… that’s why I left.”

On the other hand, the radio program broadcasted by the Federation of Harvesters in Montero, called La voz del zafrero\(^\text{11}\), is quite popular among the harvesters. Many families listen regularly to the program which is a daily half-hour broadcast. According to Felipe Titirico, one of the leaders, people usually comment positively on the issues dealt with in the program because of which the program seems an effective way to reach many people about issues like child labour. Twenty-year-old Valentina (Chorobi camp) commented that she likes to listen to it: “they talk about that we should have good camps, good earnings and that children shouldn’t work in the sugar cane harvest”.

Not all reactions, however, are positive. Don Felipe once had a discussion with a harvester’s wife about the topic of child labour: “she told me that it is easy to say that children can’t work in the harvest but that she had no option because she has no money to send them to school”. The leaders of the Federation, however, do agree on having to discuss the issue with the harvester families.

LABOR held workshops in a total of 21 harvester camps about labour rights and child labour, with over 1,300 participants\(^\text{12}\). According to the former director of LABOR, Carlos Camargo, there is much less child labour in the sugar cane harvest, because people are more aware of the damaging effect of children’s work, partly because of the awareness raising workshop of LABOR. However, during IREWOC research there were still many children and adolescents to be found in the sugar cane harvest. Furthermore, few people could be found in the camps who could comment on the workshops. The nature of the workshops, in which people just have to sit and listen, does not help people to remember the message; more interactive methods, such as those applied by the CCIMCAT project (paragraph 4.2.1), usually result in more participants being able to remember the discussion.

LABOR and the Federation of Harvesters have also visited the harvesters’ places of origin, including the province of Isoso (department of Santa Cruz); this allowed the organisations to coordinate activities in the region to raise awareness about the issue of child labour and urge parents to leave their children at home instead of taking them to the camps. The visits also served to inform the people about the salaries in the sugar cane harvest and the living and working conditions.

The tripartite dialogue implemented by LABOR and in which the harvesters, sugar cane producers and authorities like the Ministry of Labour participated has lead to some agreements. For example, a harvesters’ labour contract was drafted that takes into account international agreements; a collective agreement was signed, which includes a fixed salary for the harvesters and the prohibition of child labour. Also, important relations were established through participation in the commission that elaborates the Bolivian Norm for Child Labour Free Production (LTI) in which institutions like the Bolivian Institute for External Commerce (IBCE), the Departmental Chamber of External Commerce (CADEX), the Bolivian Institute for Normalization and Quality (IBNORCA), the sugar cane processing plants Guabirá and UNAGRO, UNICEF, Foundation Hombres Nuevos and LABOR participate. These agreements between various actors provide the harvesters and their

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\(^{11}\) The voice of the harvester

\(^{12}\) Source: Notes of evaluation workshop on the project “Awareness raising and promotion for the progressive eradication of child labour from the sugar cane harvest - LABOR

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Sugar cane and child labour:
Reality and perspectives

ETHICAL-SUGAR
Organization for Social Assistance of the Church\(^{13}\) (OASI)

The Santa Cruz department of OASI carries out a health project in the sugar cane region; a medical brigade consisting of a doctor and two nurses tries to visit each of the migrant camps in the Warnes province every month during the harvest period. Warnes is one of the eleven sugar cane provinces in the Santa Cruz department. The OASI health brigade coordinates with the Departmental Health Service\(^{14}\) (SEDES); they share medication and information about the health situation in the communities and in the harvester camps.

OASI tries to visit the migrant camps various times during the harvest to give follow-up care to the patients. People are very satisfied with the medical assistance of the brigade; in different camps people mention the doctor and nurses, and seem to feel comfortable about discussing their medical issues with them. Doña Ana (Chorobi camp) seemed to feel very insecure and embarrassed about her pregnancy and didn’t want to talk about it with anybody. She did speak about it with doctor Galvimonte of OASI, when the health brigade visited the camp and he gave her advice about what she should and shouldn’t do while being pregnant. After OASI had left she told me:

“In the other camp, where we stayed for about four months, everything was worse than here; there was no electricity and no water: the contractor brought us water in tanks but we ran out of water all the time. The only good thing was that the health brigade did come to visit us there. I think they came about four times and they’ve come three times already since we’ve been here [in the new camp].”

According to the nurse, they encounter people with machete wounds from time to time, but most common health problems are skin infections caused by the heat and humidity, and stomach and head aches caused by contaminated water and the heat. According to the doctor, children mostly suffer from parasites, diarrhoea and respiratory infections. The health brigade treats children for their immediate problems and also administers vaccinations.

OASI stays in contact with the Federation of Harvesters in Montero by, for example, helping to manage a pharmacy, which is run by the Federation in a space next to their building. The OASI team supplies the Federation with information about the medicine and coordinates the administrative and organizational issues. According to the health brigade, the Federation of Harvesters should strengthen its internal organization so as to be better able to represent the harvesters.

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\(^{13}\)Organización de Asistencia Social de la Iglesia  
\(^{14}\)Servicio Departamental de Salud  

Sugar cane and child labour: Reality and perspectives

ETHICAL-SUGAR
2. Bermejo.

- CCIMCAT - Bermejo

ILO financed the CCIMCAT pilot project in four Bermejo communities\(^1\) during 2007. The project was called ‘strengthening of participative citizenship of rural women\(^2\) and aimed to eradicate child labour from the sugar cane harvest through strengthening women's economic contributions. At the time of the IREWOC research it was still unknown if the ILO would prolong their support for the project. The main objective of the project was to eradicate child labour by stimulating the migrant women and other poor women from the sugar cane communities to generate their own income. This way they might feel less need to make their children work and become aware of the importance for children’s education instead of labour. CCIMCAT believes that strengthening women's activities is the key to development of whole families or even communities. Usually, in the sugar cane harvest women work for and support their husbands; they help in the harvest, do household chores and take care of their children, but they have very little time and opportunities to develop activities of their own. During the CCIMCAT project the migrant women and the women permanently living in the sugar cane region were motivated to organise themselves, plan the production of marmalade and chancaca, rear chickens and ensure the sale of the products. Meetings were usually held in the schools to provide a neutral place to work. CCIMCAT coordinated the project with the Ministry of Labour, the Federation of Sugar Cane Producers, and the Ministry of Education, among others.

According to the director of CCIMCAT, Pedro Mariscal\(^3\), the need for the groups that participated in the project to strengthen themselves: “they are not able to work independently yet”. Although the pilot project has ended, the CCIMCAT employees have continued to visit the communities and according to the CCIMCAT director, in some places the women who participated in the project continue to raise chickens, produce chancaca or marmalade and sell the products. In other places, the women have stopped working, for example in Porcelana; the equipment used to make marmalade has been stowed, and so the women can’t continue working.

An important challenge for the project is reaching organizational sustainability. Because most of the women are migrants it is difficult to form a stable group. “The most stable group can be formed with the women who live in the communities”, mentioned the coordinator of the project, Daysi Rivera. Like her colleague Pedro Mariscal, she also stated that: “to reach organizational stability, the project needs to run five years, or two periods of three years”. This way the groups could be stable, sustainable and well enough trained to manage follow-up by themselves. The project would have to reach this level before it would have a significant impact on child labour.

Besides the productive activities with the women, the project also worked with the children of the participating women, by organizing workshops about children’s rights. In order not to bore the children the educators used games to explain the children about their rights to play, to basic health, to education, etc. Some children from the Porcelana camp, for example, recalled decorating sponges, which the CCIMCAT educators used to demonstrate proper hygiene behaviour.

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\(^1\)The four communities participating in the project were Porcelana, Campo Grande, Colonia Linares and Naranjitos, all communities located in the central sugar cane zone of Bermejo.

\(^2\)Proyecto de fortalecimiento de participación ciudadana de mujeres rurales.

\(^3\)Chancaca is a sweet sauce made of raw unrefined cane sugar.

\(^4\)Chancaca is a sweet sauce made of raw unrefined cane sugar.

\(^5\)Interview held November 7 2008.
One 12-year-old boy mentioned: “They explained how we should wash ourselves and then we decorated the sponges. It was funny to make them but I don’t have the sponge anymore. They also told us about child labour and that children shouldn’t work in the sugar cane harvest and that children should go to school. I liked the workshops but I also didn’t like it because there were almost only girls participating.”

The women were rather positive about the CCIMCAT project and mentioned their wish to continue participating in it. Most positive were the reactions about raising chickens, as doña Ruth remarked: “I liked it very much when they gave us chickens to breed, but it was a pity when many of them died of pest. [CCIMCAT] did give the chickens some medicine, but still many died”. According to the coordinator Daysi Rivera, the fact that the chickens died had also to do with the fact that the migrant women took the animals with them to their hometowns and many didn’t survive the trip or died because of the change of climate.

In Porcelana a group of some 20 women participated in the project. They all got twelve baby chickens at the beginning of the project and a few more later on in the project. Together, the women learned how to produce marmalade from oranges and tried to sell it in the town of Bermejo. Selling marmalade, however, turned out to be difficult; according to Doña Mariana from the Porcelana camp, the women only earned about 18 Bolivianos (1.80 Euro) each because not all the marmalade could be sold. Despite the low earnings of the project, Doña Mariana would still like the project to continue in order to learn something more. Also doña Ruth mentioned that she would like the project to continue to keep learning, especially if it would be focussed on the production of chancaca “because it is a beautiful product,” as she mentioned.

3. Ministry of Labour

Financed by UNICEF, the Ministry of Labour implemented extra lessons, called aulas de apoyo, for primary school pupils in various migrant camps, during the harvest of 2007. Four educators were paid a type of scholarship and reimbursement of travel costs to organize the classes. The educators organized classes for the pupils in different camps in the central zone of the sugar cane region of Bermejo. For example, in the harvester camp of the sugar cane processing plant in Arrozales there were classes three afternoons per week and each Saturday morning for three different levels of pupils. In this particular camp there were 25 students divided over the three levels. Some children in the Primero de Mayo camp, who had been in the same camp the year before as well, remembered the classes. They commented that for a few months one or two women had come to the camp and that they had spent the day with them in one of the non-occupied camp buildings, doing subjects such as mathematics and drawing.

Conclusion – effectiveness of interventions

Different strategies have been implemented in the various sugar cane regions of Santa Cruz and Bermejo aiming to eradicate child labour from the sector. In general, all the separate interventions
have their own specific impact on the problem of child labour, but eradication is a long way off.

There is certainly not one type of intervention that would work best; a combination of complementary strategies is needed.

In the Warnes province in the Santa Cruz sugar cane region, for example, LABOR implemented a project that focused on creating awareness about labour rights and improving labour conditions through a tripartite dialogue. Important agreements were reached between sugar cane producers, harvesters and authorities concerning the issues of child labour and fixed incomes for adult harvesters. Together with the Federation of Harvesters, LABOR reached out to the harvesters by visiting their camps and informing them on their rights and the prohibition of child labour. Because these workshops have a rather inactive character, with people just sitting there and listening, people tend to soon forget what these workshops were about. Still the strategy of raising awareness about labour rights is an important one in stimulating harvesters to struggle for their own rights and understand the importance of youths studying instead of working. It was stated repeatedly that projects should be followed-up; until now projects have taken place for a year or two at the most, which means that projects never reach the objective of eradicating child labour. Interventions should have a duration of at least three to six years to be able to measure their impact.

The pilot project implemented by CCIMCAT in Bermejo was a more active participatory type of intervention. Migrant women together with women from the sugar cane region actively participated in the production of chancaca, marmalade and raising chickens and they claimed to like the aspect of having learned something and hope for its continuation. The women and children also learned about hygiene and the prohibition of child labour in the sugar cane sector. It is hard to measure and see whether the eradication of child labour through strengthening women’s income generating capacity actually works, also because the project has lasted for one year only. No families were found who had decided to leave their children at home because of the awareness created through the CCIMCAT project. Most of their children, however, do go to school or to a child care centre in the sugar cane region itself.

The reasons for youths to participate in the sugar cane harvest vary among the different age groups, and so interventions have to be tailored to suit the needs of each group. Because school-going children work during non-school days or periods, projects to eradicate child labour among school going children in the sector should focus on finding other pastimes for children during these periods. An intervention like the aulas de apoyo of the Ministry of Labour is a good example of alter-
native activities for school-going children on non-school days. While strengthening the children’s school performances they are kept out of the fields and away from harmful work. In order to make sure that all children participate in such activities they have to be attractive for the children; combining school activities with sports and games works well.

The most difficult group to reach directly remains the group of adolescents who work as cuartas or contracted harvesters. Because their motive to work in the harvest is economic, the alternative requires income generation as well. It would be very difficult to convince them to return to school instead, and it would require personal conviction. Some projects in the places of origin of the youths seem to have a diminishing effect on the yearly stream of adolescent migrants towards the sugar cane areas. Also, according to some testimonies, a growing awareness about the importance of education causes more youths to stay at home instead of migrating to the harvest. Still, these are mostly primary school youths.

In the meanwhile, the OASI health brigade in Santa Cruz contributes to the improvement of the health situation of entire harvester families. The intervention does not specifically contribute to the eradication of child labour, but is very much appreciated by the harvester families living in the camps and contributes to the improvement of health conditions, which is a very important aspect of childhood. People are cared for well and regularly, but, because the health brigade consists of only three people, it is not possible to attend to the harvesters in all eleven sugar cane provinces; only the camps in the Warnes province are currently attended to.

b. Eradicating Child Labour in El Salvador, BSR19

Documenting the Salvadoran Sugar Industry’s Efforts to Eradicate Child Labor in Sugar Cane Production Kimberly Ascoli under the supervision of Professor of International Political Economy Richard Feinberg, University of California, San Diego April 2010

1. Executive Summary

The Asociación Azucarera de El Salvador (AAES)20, which represents the nation’s refineries, partnered with BSR21 and FUNDEMAS22 to systematize the successful efforts of the Salvadoran sugar industry to reduce the use of child labor in sugar cane production. The project culminated with the publication of a manual intended to help other sugar producers and agricultural industries in Central America learn from the Salvadoran experience and replicate practices that may prove useful in their national environments. In 2004, El Salvador was publicly criticized for employing children on its sugar cane harvest by the non-profit organization Human Rights Watch (HRW). However, the report titled “Deaf Ears” had not considered the efforts made by the sugar industry to reduce child labor in the sugar fields. In response to HRW’s accusations, the AAES coordinated with government agencies and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to integrate and complement previous efforts and developed a strategic long-term plan to reduce and eventually

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19See references 1
20About AAES - The Asociación Azucarera de El Salvador (AAES) is the country’s sugar industry trade association. Its goal is to promote and develop a world-class sugar industry in the country. All six of the Salvadoran refineries are members. Visit www.asociacionazucarera.com for more information.
21About BSR : A leader in corporate responsibility since 1992, BSR works with its global network of more than 250 member companies to develop sustainable business strategies and solutions through consulting, research, and cross-sector collaboration. With six offices in Asia, Europe, and North America, BSR uses its expertise to guide global companies toward creating a just and sustainable world. Visit www.bsr.org for more information.
22About FUNDEMAS : Fundación Empresarial para la Acción Social (FUNDEMAS) was founded in May 2000 by a group of farsighted Salvadoran businesspeople to contribute to El Salvador’s sustainable economic and social development by promoting CSR culture, entrepreneurial behavior, and better-quality education countrywide. Visit www.fundemas.org for more information.
eradicate child labor. As a result of these continuous efforts and taking into account the data from the Ministry of Education’s annual registration census, it was observed that, by 2008, the number of children working in sugar cane fields had decreased by 72 percent vis-à-vis 2003. Furthermore, the strategic partnership between the private sector, the government, and international agencies is working successfully to increase public awareness of the effects of child labor, and has also helped unify the country’s sugar industry toward this goal. The Asociación Azucarera de El Salvador has drafted its own Code of Conduct and all of the refineries enforce a “zero tolerance for child labor clause” in their contracts with producers from whom they buy sugar cane. In the long-term, El Salvador expects to eliminate child labor in the sugar cane harvest, as well as institutionalize relevant programs and make them sustainable. Additionally, the reduction of child labor has led to an improved image and reputation abroad for El Salvador’s sugar industry.

The BSR and FUNDEMAS manual will include tips and recommendations for other agricultural industries wishing to replicate the experience, including the following principles:

- Sustainability of Efforts
- Compliance with the Law
- Developing Partnerships
- International Acknowledgment
- Industry-wide support
- Communication
- Awareness-raising.

2. Opportunity

Agriculture remains an important source of revenue for El Salvador with sugar cane cultivation and sugar production jointly representing 2.3 percent of GDP. Six large refineries in El Salvador produce refined sugar and other sugar-derived products.

The sugar industry employs more than 48,000 people, including full-time and seasonal workers. El Salvador has repeatedly been signaled out as using child labor in the sugar cane fields, both in the planting and cutting stages. The severity of the problem was confirmed in 2004 with the inclusion of a labor child module in the Registration Census administered by the Ministry of Education that found that more than 12,000 children under the age of 18 worked directly or indirectly in the sugar cane harvest while attending school. Despite threatening the sugar industry’s relationships with international buyers, these statistics warned on the need to design a broader strategy to solve the problem. Although some buyers openly stated their decision to stop buying Salvadoran sugar, others showed an interest in joining the effort to reduce this problem and their commitment to conducting audits to monitor country and sugar industry progress, as did The Coca Cola Company. In response, the AAES increased its commitment to prevent and eradicate child labor and developed numerous internal and external communication channels to publicize progress in fighting this practice together with the ILO and the Salvadoran government (specifically the Ministries of Labor, Education, and Health.).
On the other hand, the decentralization of sugar cane producers in El Salvador (approximately 7,000 counting independent producers and cooperatives) may hamper monitoring of child labor, unless industry efforts and resources are integrated with the corresponding government institutions, such as the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MTPS) through coordinated and organized work. This will ensure compliance with the labor law, international agreements, the policy of zero tolerance for child labor, and the sustainability of efforts. Based on this experience, the BSR and FUNDEMAS project has created a good practice guide for other businesses and countries to be aware of and use in their efforts to eradicate child labor in the agricultural business.

3. Strategy

The documentation of the Salvadoran sugar industry efforts demonstrates that effective elimination of child labor requires a long-term strategy that capitalizes on the knowledge and expertise of responsible agencies and institutions. The description on the left offers an overview of how the AAES, together with the Ministries of Labor and Education and the ILO, developed and implemented the country’s first comprehensive strategy for eliminating child labor in the sugar cane harvest.

The AAES communicated its commitment against child labor to all its buyers, both local and abroad, and provided details of the efforts it was making. As a result, companies that had stated their purpose to stop purchasing Salvadoran sugar reversed their decision and decided to maintain their business relationship with the country, under the condition that the country and its sugar industry would continue along the expected path. To this end, in 2006 the AAES adopted a Code of Conduct that all the country’s refineries endorsed. The code applies to all aspects of their work, including labor hiring, respect for the environment, and respect for ethical principles and regulations. In 2007 all the refineries agreed to require and enforce “zero tolerance for child labor” clauses in their contracts with sugar cane producers. These clauses clearly state that mills will not purchase sugar cane from producers that employ children under the age of 18.

4. Implementation

The joint national strategy was coordinated by the National Committee against Child Labor, which encouraged the drafting and implementation of the "National Plan to Eradicate Child Labor in El Salvador for 2006–2009". The Plan deals with the issue of child labor in several areas, including sugar cane production, fishing, and garbage collection, and identifies seven strategic action areas:

1. Strengthening of the legal framework
2. Strengthening of the institutional framework
3. Education
4. Health
5. Recreation, culture, and sports
6. Income increase
7. Communication and awareness-raising
The strength of this plan and its implementation was that it addressed both the social, cultural, and economic root causes that lead to children’s work in the sugar cane fields. Also, it approached the problem with long-term and holistic solutions under the responsibility of each of the national institutions, thus building a partnership to solve the issue.

5. Results

• SHORT-TERM RESULTS
All involved sectors interviewed for this case agreed that the partnership among AAES, the Salvadoran government, and the ILO has been extremely successful. The outputs can be grouped into four broad categories:

1. Reduced child labor.

“If official statistics from the Ministry of Education in El Salvador, child labor in the sugar cane industry dropped by 70 percent between 2003 and 2008.” - Human Rights Watch website, September 2009

2. Increased public awareness, both with the population at large and the families in rural areas that engage in this practice.

3. Successful cross-sector partnership: joint coordination has enhanced mutual understanding and tangible collaboration among sectors as well as among government agencies.
4. Increased unity of the sugar industry in implementing zero child-labour tolerance policies.

**ANTICIPATED LONG-TERM OUTCOMES**

The long-term outcomes will depend on how well the National Plan to Eradicate Child Labor continues to be implemented, on the commitment of national institutions and agencies, and on the collaboration of international agencies. Work continues regarding six outcomes:

1. Continued reduction in child labor until eradication is attained: this is feasible in a 10-year period.

2. Increased institutionalization of the issue within government ministries. Involvement from different players to eradicate child labor has resulted in significant achievements in the country. Active involvement from government agencies is key.

3. The commitment of the sugar industry and the government of El Salvador translates into very successful results.

4. Government ministries responsible for dealing with this issue must be reinforced, both regarding the provision of basic social services to the population and the oversight and control of compliance with the laws against child labor. To do so, they must have a budget specific to support their actions.

5. Likewise, the ministries should establish multidisciplinary technical teams.

6. Increased competitiveness of the country’s sugar. In order to improved the image and reputation abroad for the Salvadoran sugar industry.

**LESSONS LEARNED AND USEFUL TIPS**

The BSR and FUNDEMAS manual will share the Salvadoran sugar industry experience with other agricultural industries of the region that seek to eradicate child labor. Specifically, the manual will detail lessons learned and will provide useful guidelines for replicating the experience in other contexts. The main recommendations are summarized below.

1. Persistence and continuity are key: Addressing child labor is a long term commitment.

2. Multi sector partnerships.

3. Adaptability and flexibility are essential.

4. It is crucial to educate and raise the awareness of the public and the responsible sectors about the issue.

5. The movement must obtain support from all members of the industry.
6. The industry should communicate its efforts and the challenges faced.
7. Gain the support of international companies.

c. Exploring the links between international business and poverty reduction

The Coca-Cola/SABMiller value chain impacts in El Salvador

By Oxfam America, The Coca-Cola Company and SABMiller

This study was conducted by Oxfam America together with Coca-Cola and SABMiller. One section is concerning child labour and is a response to the report Human Rights Watch released in 2004. In that report, it was revealed that Businesses purchasing sugar from El Salvador, including The Coca-Cola Company, are using the product of child labor that is both hazardous and widespread.

Oxfam America aims to raise awareness around corporate impacts, empower communities to engage companies effectively, and strengthen government oversight.

Social initiatives linked to public policy
SABMiller’s bottling plant, ILC, and The Coca-Cola Company regularly make social investments in El Salvador. Between 2008 and 2010, The Coca-Cola Company invested more than $1.3 million in social programs in local communities, including programs in local schools to fund environmental education and the installment of waste and sanitation facilities. In 2009, The Coca-Cola Company

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23See references 3
spent $210,000 on environmental protection and improved livelihood projects for 400 families living around the San Antonio River. The Coca-Cola Company also funds “Apuntate a Jugar,” a program to promote active, healthy living in schools that benefited over 3,000 Salvadoran children between 2008 and 2010.

d. The sugarcane alcohol industry efforts in combating child exploitation in Brazil

Joel Orlando Bevilaqua Marin

In Brazil, the sugarcane alcohol sector used to be socially perceived as a major responsible for child labor exploitation. This negative image began to change when some sugarcane agroindustries embraced the principles of corporate social responsibility and engaged the fight to eradicate child labor. By doing so, these companies joined the efforts of public authorities and society to protect children and adolescents and ensure their rights according to the Brazilian legislation.

The mobilization of entrepreneurs, government, and society to eliminate child labor is the direct result of advances in the institutionalization of laws forbidding the employment of children and valuing school as the core institution to the education and socialization of the young generations. The laws defending the rights of children were developed under the inspiration of doctrines vindicated by international organizations, specially the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations (UN). Therefore, these legislations state that children and adolescents are at a special stage of development, subject to specific rights and duties, with ensured access to adequate training and comprehensive and differentiated protection to be provided by family, society, and the state. According to these legal provisions, child labor was seen as a social problem that should be eradicated due to its harmful effects on the physical, cultural, and emotional development of children and adolescents (MARIN, MARIN, 2008).

Agribusiness linked to the sugarcane alcohol sector also engaged in fight against child labor and began to develop social actions on behalf of young people. This initiative was triggered by the introduction of the Programa Empresa Amiga da Criança (Child Friendly Company Program), created by Abrinq Foundation for Children’s Rights in 1996. The main objectives of this program are: first, to stimulate the commitment of companies to prevent children from working, and second, to encourage children’s education and vocational trainings for adolescents. Abrinq Foundation sought to develop rules of corporate ethical conduct in order to stimulate companies to perform with social responsibility in a competitive and globalized market. With the purpose of achieving the above stated objectives, three basic strategies were established by the Foundation: 1) creation of the Child Friendly Company label, 2) conducting a campaign for the inclusion of social clauses in public and private contracts which deal with the purchase and sale of goods or services, to prevent the circulation of items and services that made use of child labor, 3) social mobilization to strengthen the supervisory and regulatory capacity of state institutions and civil society (ABRINQ FOUNDATION, 2009).

By 2010, the Abrinq Foundation had granted the Child Friendly Company label to 885 companies located in Brazil. In 2007, about 76 sugar-cane alcohol industries were awarded with it, nearly 10%
of the total number of companies from all sectors that possess the label. That alone indicates the interest of entrepreneurs from the agro-alcohol sector in developing social initiatives to benefit children and adolescents in the country. However, the number of agro-alcohol companies socially engaged with the cause of young people is still small considering the total amount of 432 sugar-cane agribusiness registered in the Department of Sugarcane and Agroenergy, within the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply (BRASIL, 2010).

The Child Friendly Company label is an award granted to companies that do not employ, nor are customers of institutions exploiting child. There are several different ways in which the label can be used by the company, including on the package of their products, on promotional materials or in advertisements. To obtain the diploma and the social label, the company needs to commit itself (formally and publicly) not to use child labor, according to the legal legislation of the country; make this commitment known to their chain of suppliers and clients; develop and support any social program for children's development or for the training of adolescents. The label is valid for one year, but the company can renew the license for the use through the reaffirmation of their commitments and after being subjected to specific investigations. This way, the Abrinq Foundation sees the Child Friendly Company label as “some sort of ISO 9000”, in allusion to the set of ISO standards, an international organization responsible for establishing a System of Quality Assurance (ABRINQ FOUNDATION, 2009).

In compliance with the proposals of the Abrinq Foundation, companies of the sugarcane sector also began to insert social clauses in trade agreements for goods or services, signed by several business sectors. In essence, the social clauses now present in both trade and work agreements are commitments accepted by the sugarcane company, in order to combat the exploitation of child labor in the production chain, making use of the right of not purchasing goods or services from other companies that might have exploited children or adolescents. The inclusion of social clauses in trade agreements implicates the legal possibility of disengagement in the purchase of products and services, in case any link in the chain has made use of child labor.

Another strategy to mobilize sugarcane alcohol industries was the signing of Pacts for the Eradication of Child Labor. Since 1996, when the Abrinq Foundation launched its corporate awareness campaign, seven pacts related to the sugarcane industry (in the states of São Paulo, Goiás, Mato Grosso do Sul, Minas Gerais, Paraná, Pernambuco and Alagoas) were signed. Generally speaking, the pacts made in the sector include commitments of agribusinesses in combating the use of children as workforce, through engaging suppliers of inputs and raw materials; supporting public schools; investing in municipal funds for the rights of children and adolescents; and creating partnerships with public and private organizations for educational and vocational programs (MARIN, 2005).

The set of initiatives proposed by Abrinq mobilized some sugarcane agribusiness to develop social responsibility. From the business perspective, the primary reason for obtaining the Child Friendly Company label is the social recognition, which allows not only a higher visibility but also a greater
dissemination of programs developed on behalf of the younger. Therefore, the label acts as a sort of prize, while, at the same time, it also legitimates and disseminates the actions taken under the company’s social responsibility. The second reason is related to the purpose of improving the company’s image, especially in those productive activities that were socially associated with workforce and environmental problems, such as the sugarcane industry in Brazil. This way, the label becomes a social marketing strategy, giving publicity to actions of corporate social responsibility. The third reason has to do with fulfilling consumers’ demands. Businessmen have noted that, internationally, consumers tend to value goods produced with social and environmental responsibility, refusing those related to child exploitation or environmental degradation (MARIN, 2010).

By threatening or holding boycotts against products associated with the use of child labor or extreme exploitation of workers, consumers have contributed to substantial changes in the behavior of some sugarcane companies in Brazil. Through educational campaigns, consumers in developed countries were warned they could be consuming goods manufactured by unscrupulous employees who subject their workforce to demeaning conditions or who are careless about degrading the environment. Consequently, an official certification of products became indispensable, so that consumers would be guaranteed full respect for workers’ rights and environmental preservation. Note that consumers used their power to enforce ethical principles in trade relations to prevent the movement of goods that had somehow made use of child labor.

Refuting the theoretical ideas that associate consumption to needless or thoughtless disbursement, Canclini (2006, p. 59-63) states that “consumption is for thinking”, as there is a strong relationship between consumption and citizenship grounds. The marketplace is not simply a place for goods to be traded. It is, in fact, an area where complex sociocultural interactions take place. When it comes to consumption, citizens usually think about their role in society, reflect on the practices of the producers, as well as consider both the benefits and harms that products and services may cause to themselves, society and the environment. This intricate scenario provided by consumption is perfect for reflection and for the construction of citizenship. This way, one can understand the growing involvement of consumers who demand ethics in commodities production and their circulation, environmental conservation, respect for internationally recognized rights and, very importantly, consumers who refuse to consume products that have explored the work of children during their manufacturing.

It is also noteworthy that international trade agreements include social clauses in order to guarantee human and labor rights, as well as restrict the exploitation of child labor. Social clauses in international trade relations have forced exporters to include the issue of child labor in their agendas for economic development. These changes have been interpreted either as a protective measure for the markets of developed countries to ensure control of significant parts of the market, or as an important step towards ensuring the rights of workers and children (MARIN, MARIN, 2009).

Regardless of the real intentions, the social clauses induced entrepreneurs from the sugarcane alcohol sector to adapt to the rules laid down by international trade agreements. In the face of trade sanctions imposed by countries that make up the major economic blocs, business sectors began to adhere to the causes of childhood and to develop a sense of social responsibility. Sugarcane agribusiness sought to transform their image in society, by embracing humanitarian development and joining the fight for the eradication of child labor in their supply chains. Entre-
preneurs have set up actions of social responsibility owing to the growth of international pressure, expressed in constant threats of boycotts against goods produced through children and adolescents labor exploitation. Such initiatives give companies legitimacy in global markets, besides constituting valuable investments in social marketing. The practical result of this process is the increase in awareness and the spread of actions and programs aiming the protection and the full development of children.

Summing up, in Brazil, the issue of child labor began to integrate the agendas of nearly one hundred sugarcane alcohol agribusiness, in joint efforts to internalize the idea that sustainable development and transgenerational social responsibility necessarily assume that the rights of children to education, health, joy, and fun are preserved. As well as that, it became stronger the idea of an expansion of poverty eradication programs and the need for a better income distribution, so that all children have access to comprehensive physical, intellectual and emotional development.

In the last two decades, Brazil has accumulated successful experiences in ensuring the rights of poor young people and improving their living conditions. However, there is still a long way before achieving the complete eradication of child labor in Brazil, since official data from 2009 proved the existence of 4.3 million children and adolescents, aged between 5 and 17 years, that are still used as workforce. The government, private enterprises and society must remain together, joining efforts to accomplish the objective of eliminating this problem. Therefore, the sugarcane alcohol sector, given its importance in Brazilian economy, plays an instrumental role in the mission of eradicating child labor in the country.
“They are everywhere but invisible, (...) hidden from view in plantations.” Unicef. This simple one-liner illustrates the complexity of the child labour problem.

According to UNICEF, there are an estimated 158 million children aged 5-14 engaged in child labour around the world - one in six children. Millions of them are engaged in hazardous situations and bad working conditions, like with chemicals and pesticides in agriculture. In fact, however, nobody knows the exact number of working children as many of them are employed, or more precisely, exploited by a member of their own family.

Unfortunately, child labour in agriculture is often forgotten even if the number is much higher than in other sectors such as child prostitution or trafficking of children. The main reason is that agriculture is assimilated to family size business where no risk exists. In reality, though, many children are working on large-scale plantations where they are in much greater risk of exploitation because of profit-oriented farms and businesses.

In many production areas, the sugar cane sector is the main regional, or sometimes, country employer. The logical consequence of this situation is a rise in child labour.

Child labour is part of a huge problem which cannot be treated alone. It is necessary to create an adequate environment so that children do not need to participate in the harvest. It is caused by various factors: poverty and lack of education of the parents, lack of concern of farmers and industrials for the situation, lack of political will from the governments and authorities, NGO’s which do not have the resources and capacity to handle long-term ongoing projects.

A situation which remains worrying

In most sugar producing countries, the situation remains worrying despite the efforts initiated by the social society, public authorities or companies of the sector. In Bolivia, for example, ILO’s intervention has led to a reduction in the number of children participating in different ways in the sugar cane sector. In the Philippines, though, for example, the present situation in some of the sugar cane are as shows that the actions of the organizations involved –through programs, advocacy and campaigning – are not efficient enough. Different reasons can be underlined:

• parents who choose to keep their children in the sugar cane fields instead of sending them to school for economic reasons,
• extreme mobility of the harvester’s families from one area to another, which makes long-term projects difficult,
• lack of human and financial resources to implement strategies to eradicate child labour,
• authorities without real political will to solve the problem by implementing laws,
• insufficient enforcement of the legal framework,

That is why it is necessary to keep a very close watch on the situation. Actions and campaigns, like that run by HRW in 2004 to move back child labour in El Salvador, are necessary.

No concern for bad working conditions

Child labour in the sugar cane sector is still one of the worst forms of child labour because of

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25Thomas Skaghammar
Numerous hazards, harmful work conditions, lack of protection, and poor living conditions. Indeed, it still has very negative implications for their health and education. It is essential that farmers agree to improve living and working conditions in sugar cane fields and harvesters’ camps.

%Poverty and extreme poverty: a key to understanding the problem of child labour%

The root cause of child labour is poverty or extreme poverty. Many young people have chosen to work instead of going to school for economic reasons. One solution to the problem, would be to support projects which could give other financial resources to harvesters and their family -for example micro projects for women, or even whole communities. There are long-term solutions. The sugar cane sector (sugar cane and bio-fuel) should redistribute profits to workers and communities more fairly, especially when the sugar market price is rising.

%Cooperation and multi actions on the long term are needed%

It is a multi-parties problem which concern Governments, local authorities, industries, farmers, parents, children, Unions, NGO’s, etc.

Dialogue is the first step. Education is very important too, in order to raise awareness about main issues and hazards in the sugar cane sector. Cooperation between different parties has to be implemented, like Trade Unions which work with the Federation of Sugarcane Harvesters in Bolivia. It can also be seen that workshops, like those run in Bolivia by different organizations, do not have sufficient results partly because of the mobility of the harvesters and their families. The same remark can be made about sector initiatives such as “Bonsucro” or the “Round Table on Sustainable Biofuel”

%Parents have to take responsibility%

It is parents that are sending their children to the fields. “So, it will be a battle between the state and the parents”, states Mrs Soriano from the Institute of Labour Studies (ILS) in the Philippines.

The current child labour situation in the sugar cane sector depends on the parents’ attitude. Often, they prefer to send their children to work in the fields or stay in the harvest areas to help them if they are younger, instead of sending them to school.

%Education: a key for eradicating child labour%

Labour often interferes with children’s education. Ensuring that all children go to school and that
their education is good enough are keys to preventing child labour.
It is obvious that children mostly work for economic reasons, or, for the youngest, because they have to stay with their parents as, sometimes, school is too far away from the harvest area.
To overcome this problem, the harvesters and their families need to change their attitude towards school and education. They also need other sources of income.
There is a huge need for more schools and health centres (for medication and information) closer to the harvesters’ camps.
There is a need not for one single solution but for a combination of different solutions and strategies on a long-term basis.

**Insufficient legal framework and implementation of laws**

More political concern is needed in order to stimulate more resources, for example more working inspectors who visit the sugar cane fields, mills and refineries.
In Brazil, the situation began to change when sugar cane agro industries started to agree with the principles of CSR (Corporate Social responsibility) and committed to fight to eradicate child labour. The mobilization of the Government, entrepreneurs and society to eliminate child labour is the result of advances in the institutionalisation of laws forbidding the employment of children. That is why there is an increase in social actions on behalf of young people, with a new label (Child Friendly Company) awarded to nearly 100 sugar cane alcohol companies (out of 432)
Obviously, social clauses in international trade relations are positive for the situation. Economic sanctions are very harsh as it leads to consequences such as boycotts or termination of contracts.

**Pro-action and not “re-action”**

In El Salvador, we have an example of a study which seems to be a bit too optimistic. The different partners (Asociacion Azucera de El Salvador representing the refineries, BSR -Corporate Responsibility- and Fundemases -Fundacion Empresarial por la Accion Social) explain how they produced a manual, the culminating point of the actions they have undertaken in order to reduce child labour in sugar cane production. Should this not be a starting point, especially when you know that this document was written in reaction to strong criticism of the exploitation of children in the sugar cane fields by the HRW?

**The informal agricultural sector is difficult to apprehend**

Efforts were rapidly made in the mills and refineries towards a zero tolerance of child labour, which is more easy than in the informal sector of agriculture. At the same time, the Salvadorian National Plan to eradicate Child Labour needs not only more resources but also persistence. The same limitation can be pointed out concerning the action of Coca Cola and bottler SAB Miller: their actions and subsidies are a starting point.
Growing international pressure for eradication of child labour

These actions are partly a marketing response to the international pressure of the consumers in a world size market context. Is this consumer demand enough to eradicate child labour?
In Brazil, the sugar industry market is huge. That’s why consumers play an important role in changing the situation in this huge country. The question is whether the position and role of the consumers has the capacity to change in a market place where goods are just traded without social considerations.

Questions for governments in countries involved in the sugar industry26:

Has the country identified the types of work that are likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children? Do they cover hazardous work in the sugar industry for persons under age 18? If not, what is the timetable to do so, in consultation with relevant stakeholders?
How has the government measured the extent of child labour in the sugar industry? Has the country adopted a time-bound action programme to eliminate child labour, with goals, targets, indicators and regular monitoring of progress towards the goals? If not, what is the timetable to do so? Does it include the sugar industry? How is this linked to broader development plans and strategies?
Has the government consulted organizations of employers and of workers, child advocacy groups and children to seek their ideas and involvement? If not yet, what are the specific plans to do so, by when?
Has the country explored options for international cooperation to eliminate child labour in the sugar industry? If there are barriers to this (such as donor country concerns over corruption or non-consultation of stakeholders), what measures are being taken to overcome them? What is the country doing to try to change the terms of trade that would offer better economic perspectives for domestic sugar producers and sugar workers? How is it pursuing policy coherence across various sectors?
What steps is the country taking to ensure free basic education for all girls and boys? What are the numerical results of these efforts so far in relation to children of parents in the sugar industry?
Has the country established a minimum wage in agriculture at a level that would permit parents to earn enough so that they would not feel a need to have their children work in the sugar industry? If not, how is this goal being pursued in other ways, such as through collective bargaining?

Questions for firms in the sugar industry (some adjustment would be needed along the supply chain):
How is the firm carrying out its due diligence with regard to corporate social responsibility? What steps is the firm taking to ensure that no workers under the age of 18 are engaged to work in any capacity that is likely to harm their health, safety or morals? How is this verified internally and externally?
Is the firm paying the adult workers a wage that is sufficient for them to support their families without resort to child labour? If not, what are the steps planned to remedy this situation?
If a non-fee school is not located near the area of sugar cane cultivation/production, does the firm provide free on-site education to the children of sugar cane workers who are of compulsory school age? If not, does the firm provide transport free of charge for such children to attend public schools?
What measures does the firm take to avoid the sexual exploitation of children in its operations? How are persons found to have engaged in sexual exploitation of children treated?

26Anne Trebilcock
What is done for the victim?
Posing questions like these could lead to greater awareness of the extent and dangers of child labour in the sugar industry and the urgency of eliminating them. This in turn could spur greater resolve to take the steps necessary for these practices to be relegated to the bin of history. The result could be a brighter future for children in the sugar industry whose current perspectives look rather bleak.

Thomas SKAZGGAMAR and Olivier GENEVIEVE, 07/15/2011
1. BSR Eradicating Child Labour – another world is Possible, Documenting the Salvadorean Sugar Industry’s efforts to eradicate child labor in Sugar Cane Production - Kimberly Ascoli under the supervision of Professor of International Political Economy Richard Feinberg, University of California, San Diego – April 2010


3. Exploring the links between international business and poverty reduction The Coca Cola SAB/Miller value chain impacts in Zambia and El Salvador. - Oxfam America, the Coca Cola Company and SAB/Miller – 200?


5. http://www.productsofslavery.org/version-12.1.swf A list of places where children are working in sugar cane areas.
1- International Labour Organization – ILO

The ILO is the international organization responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards. It is the only ‘tripartite’ United Nations agency that brings together representatives of governments, employers and workers to jointly shape policies and programmes promoting Decent Work for all. This unique arrangement gives the ILO an edge in incorporating ‘real world’ knowledge about employment and work.

International Labour Office

The International Labour Office is the permanent secretariat of the International Labour Organization, its operational headquarters. Administration and management are decentralized in regional, area, and branch offices in more than 40 countries under the leadership of a Director-General.

Child Labour

Today, throughout the world, around 215 million children work, many full-time. They do not go to school and have little or no time to play. Many do not receive proper nutrition or care. They are denied the chance to be children. More than half of them are exposed to the worst forms of child labour such as work in hazardous environments, slavery, or other forms of forced labour, illicit activities including drug trafficking and prostitution, as well as involvement in armed conflict. Guided by the principles enshrined in the ILO’s Minimum Age Convention No. 138 and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182, The ILO InFocus Programme on Child Labour (IPEC) works to achieve the effective abolition of child labour.

The International partnership for cooperation on child labour in agriculture

Since 2007, the International partnership for cooperation on child labour in agriculture brings together the ILO, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), (formerly) the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers’ Associations (IUF).

The Partnership supports collaboration between labour and agriculture stakeholders to better address child labour in agriculture. Knowledge exchange and policy collaboration between labour
The Partnership aims to:

• promote cooperation and programme and policy coherence on child labour among the Partners, especially at national level
• mainstream child labour into existing activities of agricultural organizations and help raising awareness on how child labour elimination contributes to achieving organizational mandates of agricultural organizations;
• promote action and cooperation to improve rural livelihoods and alternative income-generating activities, and to ensure that children do not carry out hazardous work in agriculture;
• promote opportunities for decent youth employment in agriculture and in rural areas.

Further information is available at: http://www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-child.

**Future harvests without child labour**

The vast majority of the world’s working children are not toiling in factories and sweatshops or working as domestics or street vendors in urban areas. They are working on farms and plantations, often from sun-up to sundown, planting and harvesting crops, spraying pesticides and tending livestock. More…


**Lifelong learning in the Philippines**

Lifelong learning is defined by the ILO as “all learning activities undertaken throughout life for the development of competencies and qualifications” where “competencies” cover the knowledge, skills, and know-how applied and mastered in a specific context, and “qualifications” mean a formal expression of the vocational or professional abilities of a worker which is recognized at international, national or sectoral levels. More…


**Definition of Child Labour**

UNICEF defines child labour as work that exceeds a minimum number of hours, depending on the age of a child and on the type of work. Such work is considered harmful to the child and should
therefore be eliminated.

- Ages 5-11: At least one hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week.
- Ages 12-14: At least 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week.
- Ages 15-17: At least 43 hours of economic or domestic work per week.

**Child Labour**

- ILO Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999)
- ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age for Workers (1973)
  

*Accelerating action against child labour - ILO Global report on child labour 2010*

ISBN 978922-121873-9 Date 5/2010 Type de support Rapport

Langue(s) Anglais Français Espagnol


*Joining forces against child labour - Inter-agency report for The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010*

ISBN 9789221234586 Date 5/2010 Type de support Rapport interagences

Langue(s) Anglais Espagnol Français

An interagency report by the Understanding Children’s Work programme (ILO, the World Bank and UNICEF) calls for child labour to be placed at the forefront of national development agendas and presents a range of evidence indicating that child labour constitutes an important impediment to national development.

Supporting the time bound programme in El Salvador and combating child labour through education

More…


Children in hazardous work – What we know – What we need to do.

More…

Bonsucro Production Standard
Including Bonsucro EU Bonsucro Production Standard

Better Sugar Cane Initiative Ltd ("Bonsucro") *
Principles and Criteria

Members recognize that there are sound business reasons to identify and adopt sustainable sugarcane production and processing practices and these Principles and Criteria (P&C) provide a framework within which such practices can be demonstrated. The P&C address sugarcane production in the field and processing issues in the mill, including all sugarcane derived products, as they incorporate economic, financial, environmental and social dimensions and reflect good industry practices for the sugarcane sector.

We believe that adoption of these P&C’s will generate business benefits and opportunities, as well as providing safe and secure employment and protection of the environment. To be effective the P&C’s need to be delivered in the context of long term economic and financial viability for individual companies and the sector as a whole, and through timely and transparent disclosure of information on company environmental and social performance to stakeholders.

We further believe that the implementation of these P&C’s across the sugarcane industry is an important undertaking given the significance and growth of sugarcane and all its derived products.

Specific tools will be developed in order to detail the procedures that producers will have to follow to proceed to a self-assessment of their performances against the production standard.

The standard is intended to constitute an auditable document and not merely a reporting framework, according to ISO 85. All Indicator Notes have been amplified in the accompanying Bonsucro Standard Audit Guidance document.

Accordingly, Members undertake to:

PRINCIPLE 1. Obey the law.
PRINCIPLE 2. Respect human rights and labour standards.
PRINCIPLE 3. Manage input, production and processing efficiencies to enhance sustainability.
PRINCIPLE 4. Actively manage biodiversity and ecosystem services.
PRINCIPLE 5. Continuously improve key areas of the business.
In addition, the Production Standard contains Chain of Custody requirements in Section 7. These are a set of technical and administrative requirements for enabling the tracking of claims on this sustainable production of Bonsuoro sugarcane and all sugarcane derived products in the cane supply area and in the milling operations including the transport of cane to the mill. The Chain of Custody requirements contained in this Production Standard are identical to the requirements of the Bonsuoro Mass Balance Chain of Custody Standard.

In order to achieve compliance with Bonsuoro Standard and therefore be entitled to Bonsuoro certificates, 80% of the indicators contained in principles 1 to 5 must be satisfied and 60% of the criteria contained in the chain of custody chapter must be satisfied. In addition, there are a number of core criteria which must be fully satisfied before compliance will be considered. The core criteria are:

1.1 To comply with relevant applicable laws.
2.1 To comply with ILO labour conventions governing child labour, forced labour, discrimination and freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.
3.4 To provide employees and workers (including migrant, seasonal and other contract labour) with at least the national minimum wage.
4.1 To assess impacts of sugarcane enterprises on biodiversity and ecosystems services.
5.7 For greenfield expansion or new sugarcane projects, to ensure transparent, consultative and participatory processes that address cumulative and induced effects via an environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA).

All abbreviations used are listed in Appendix 1.

Updated on 7th March 2011

* Bonsuoro is a not for profit company limited by guarantees, registered in the United Kingdom
### PRINCIPLE 2. Respect Human Rights and Labour Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERION</th>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>Processing &amp; Milling</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Verifier</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 To comply with ILO labour conventions governing child labour, forced labour, discrimination and freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.</td>
<td>Minimum age of workers</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>15 for hazardous work. 15 for non-hazardous work.</td>
<td>Definition of child labour in Appendix 1 &amp; Appendix 2 (Convention 138 and C182). As per ILO Art 3 C 138 and C182, the minimum age for admission to any type of employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons shall not be less than 18 years (see also art 16, Convention 184 Health and Safety in Agriculture). Work by children on family small holdings is only acceptable under adult supervision and when work does not interfere with the child’s schooling and does not put at risk his or her health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absence of forced or compulsory labour</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Forced or compulsory labour as defined per ILO Convention 29 and ILO 105. The major forms of forced or compulsory labour are defined in Appendix 1. Verification shall address all male and female workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absence of discrimination</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Discrimination as defined by ILO C111 (see full definition in Appendix 1). Verification to be done by interviewing workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respect the right of all persons to form and join trade unions and/or to bargain collectively in accordance with the law.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Employers should respect such rights and should not interfere with workers’ own efforts to set up representational mechanisms in accordance with the law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 To apply Bonsucro human rights and labour standards to suppliers and contractors.</td>
<td>Percentage of contractors and major suppliers who have demonstrated compliance with human rights and labour standards</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>&gt;50</td>
<td>Labour contractors and major suppliers to the mill and to cane growers shall demonstrate compliance with basic human rights (e.g. no forced labour, no child labour, no discrimination, freedom of association and labour standards, etc.). Effective compliance will be verified by auditors by sampling at mill and farm level. The existence of codes of conduct in contracts will be considered as proof of compliance. Sampling method based on volume provided by supplier to the mill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 1. Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supplier/contractor</td>
<td>A business entity which provides the company with goods and/or services integral to, and utilized in or for, the production of the company’s goods and/or services.</td>
<td>SA 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcontractor/sub-supplier</td>
<td>A business entity in the supply chain which, directly or indirectly, provides the suppliers with goods and/or services integral to, and utilized in or for, the production of the suppliers and/or company’s goods and/or services.</td>
<td>SA 8000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Agricultural Worker Categories

There is a lack of clear-cut distinctions between different categories of workers. Consequently, there are numerous types of labour relations and different forms of labour force participation. The different categories of workers also vary within each country and, in certain cases, a single farmer may be grouped in more than one category. Many smallholders supplement their income with wages earned by working in large commercial farms during harvesting periods.

#### Summary of broad categories of agricultural workers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON WAGED</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>ILO. Safety and health in Agriculture document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large and Middle-scale farmers</td>
<td></td>
<td>ILO. Safety and health in Agriculture document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small-scale farmers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsistence farmers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid Family Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective farmers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenants and Share Croppers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WAGED</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary and Seasonal Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcontracted Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFORMAL SECTOR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squatters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landless workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Child

Any person less than 15 years of age, unless local minimum age law stipulates a higher age for work or mandatory schooling, in which case the higher age would apply. If, however, local minimum age law is set at 14 years of age in accordance with developing country exceptions under ILO convention 138, the lower age will apply.

The ILO Minimum Age Convention, No. 138 (1973) states that the minimum age of employment should not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15 years. However, a Member country whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed, may under certain conditions initially specify a minimum age of 14 years.

### Child Labour

Any work by a child younger than the age (s) specified in the above definition of a child, except as provided by ILO recommendation 146.

### Young Worker

Any worker over the age of a child as defined above and under the age of 18.

### Word forms of child labour

Whilst child labour takes many different forms, a priority is to eliminate without delay the worst forms of child labour as defined by Article 3 of ILO Convention 182.

### Hazardous child labour

Hazardous child labour is defined by Article 3 (d) of the ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, 1999 (182) 3D work which, by its nature or its circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

### Occupational accident

An Occupational accident is an unexpected and unplanned occurrence, including acts of violence, arising out of or in connection with work which results in one or more workers incurring a personal injury, disease or death. Included in occupational accidents are travel, transport or road traffic accidents in which workers are injured and which arise out of or in the course of work, i.e., while engaged in an economic activity, or at work, or carrying on the business of the employer. Occupational Injury: any personal injury, disease or death resulting from an occupational accident; an occupational injury is therefore distinct from an occupational disease, which is a disease contracted as a result of an exposure over a period of time to risk factors arising from work activity.

### Occupational disease

A disease contracted as a result of an exposure to risk factors arising from work activity.
### APPENDIX 2: List of Relevant International Conventions

ILO Core Conventions cover the following issues: Abolition of Child labour (C 182 and C 183), Elimination of forced or compulsory Labour (C 29 and 105), Equal remuneration (C 100) and elimination of discrimination in occupation and employment (C 111), Freedom of Association (C 87) and right to collective bargaining (C 98).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>International Standards</th>
<th>Key provisions</th>
<th>Summary of protections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No forced labour</td>
<td>ILO Convention 29 (1930) Forced Labour</td>
<td>Article 5</td>
<td>No concession to companies shall involve any form of forced or compulsory labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of children</td>
<td>ILO Convention 105 (1957) Abolition of forced Labour</td>
<td>Article 1</td>
<td>No make use of any form of forced or compulsory labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILO Convention 138 (1973) Minimum Age</td>
<td>Article 1-3</td>
<td>Abolition of child labour and definition of national minimum age for labour not less than 15-18 years (depending on occupation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILO Convention 182 (1999) Worst Forms of Child Labour</td>
<td>Articles 1-7</td>
<td>Abolition of child slavery, debt bondage, trafficking and procurement for prostitution; suitable methods to monitor and enforce compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UN declaration on Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (2007)</td>
<td>Articles 17 (2), 21, 22 (2)</td>
<td>No exploitation or exposure to hazard or discrimination against indigenous women and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining</td>
<td>ILO Convention 87 (1948) Freedom of Association and Protection of Right to Organise</td>
<td>Articles 2-11</td>
<td>Freedom to join organisations, federations and confederations of their own choosing, with freely chosen constitutions and rules; measures to protect the right to organise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILO Convention 98 (1949) Right to organise and collective bargaining</td>
<td>Articles 1-4</td>
<td>Protection against anti-union acts and measures to dominate unions, established means of voluntary negotiation of terms and conditions of employment through collective agreements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)</td>
<td>Article 3</td>
<td>Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination and to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non discrimination and equal remuneration</td>
<td>ILO Convention 100(1951) Equal Remuneration</td>
<td>Articles 1-3</td>
<td>Equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILO Convention 111 (1968) Discrimination (Employment and Occupation)</td>
<td>Articles 1-2</td>
<td>Equality of opportunity and treatment in respect to employment and occupation; no discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)</td>
<td>Articles 2, 8 (2c), 9, 15 (2), 18 (1), 21 (2), 22, 24 (1), 29 (1), 46 (3)</td>
<td>No discrimination based on origin or identity; free to express identity based on custom; special attention to full protection of rights of indigenous women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just employment of migrants</td>
<td>ILO Convention 97 (1949) Migration for Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of information; no obstacles to travel; provision of health care; non discrimination in employment, accommodation, social security and remuneration; no forced repatriation of legal workers, repatriation of savings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of small holders</td>
<td>ILO Convention 117 (1962) Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards)</td>
<td>Article 4</td>
<td>Alienation with due regard to customary rights, assistance to form cooperatives, tenancy arrangements to secure highest possible living standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just land acquisition</td>
<td>ILO Convention 169 (1989) on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples</td>
<td>Article 13-19</td>
<td>Respect and safeguard rights to lands and natural resources traditionally occupied and used; respect for customs of inheritance, no forced removals; compensation for loss and injury</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3- Roundtable on sustainable Biofuels principle and criteria version 2

Principle 4: Human and Labor Rights

Principle 4. Biofuel operations shall not violate human rights or labor rights, and shall promote decent work and the well-being of workers.

Criterion 4.a Workers shall enjoy freedom of association, the right to organize, and the right to collectively bargain.

Operators who must comply: Feedstock Producer, Feedstock Processor, and Biofuel Producer.

Minimum requirements

- In countries where the law prevents collective bargaining or unionization, operators shall not interfere with workers' own efforts to set up representational mechanisms in such cases, and shall provide a mechanism for workers to engage with employers without breaking the law.

Criterion 4.b No slave labor or forced labor shall occur.

Operators who must comply: Feedstock Producer, Feedstock Processor and Biofuel Producer.

Criterion 4.c No child labor shall occur, except on family farms and then only when work does not interfere with the child's schooling and does not put his or her health at risk.

Operators who must comply: Feedstock Producer, Feedstock Processor and Biofuel Producer.

Minimum requirements

- Schooling age limit is that defined in the national legislation or 14, whichever is higher.
- Hazardous child labor as defined by ILO Convention 138 is not allowed.
- Work by children on family small holdings is only acceptable under adult supervision and when work does not interfere with the child’s schooling nor puts at risk his or her health.

Criterion 4.d Workers shall be free of discrimination of any kind, whether in employment or opportunity, with respect to gender, wages, working conditions, and social benefits.

Operators who must comply: Feedstock Producer, Feedstock Processor, and Biofuel Producer.

Minimum requirements

- Employees, contracted labor, small outgrowers, and employees of outgrowers shall all be free of discrimination as per ILO Convention 111.
- Career development shall be encouraged for all workers.
- Work sites shall be safe for women; free from sexual harassment and other discrimination and abuse; and promote access to jobs, skills training, recruitment and career development for women to ensure more gender balance in work and career development.
Sucre Ethique France - 6, allée de la Malletière 69600
Oullins. Lyon, France

Ethical Sugar Switzerland - Rue des terreaux 8, 1003. Lausanne,
Switzerland

Ethical Sugar UK - 2 Wigley Cottages - The Hollow Ravensthorpe
NN6 8EN. Northampton, Great Britain

For a sugar which respects human beings and its environment