

Fourth Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Side Event

Impact of COVID-19 on child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean: How to make further progress towards SDG target 8.7

Organizers: ECLAC - ILO

Date: Thursday, 28 October 2021

Time: 09:00 AM - 10:00 AM (Antigua and Barbuda time UTC-4)

Language: English and Spanish interpretation

Link for participants:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81972210903?pwd=NnlpNXAwUzZERFRWUVZocFE3aEJRQT09>

Event number: 819 7221 0903

Password (PC): ods87 | **Password (mobile):** 798564

Background

The health, social and economic crisis associated with COVID-19 has had devastating effects in Latin America and the Caribbean, a region characterised by historical and structural inequality that today, more than ever, shows its different faces. One of the most persistent of these, even in periods of economic growth and prosperity, is child labour.

The loss of jobs and working hours that affect many families, the low or non-existent coverage of social protection, the closure of schools, the lack of access to social security and the higher levels of poverty are conditions that have worsened in the current context and that favour the increase in child labour and, in particular, hazardous child labour.

Latin America and the Caribbean is the region that has made a progress in the eradication of child labour in the last 20 years. The joint work of governments, employers' and workers' organisations, civil society, development partners and UN agencies has achieved a significant reduction of more than 11.8 million child and adolescent workers between 2000-2020. However, the region still has a challenging 8.2 million children and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 17 in child labour, 5.5 million of whom are engaged in hazardous activities, and up to 300,000 children could be added as a consequence of the current crisis.

Ending child labour and guaranteeing fundamental rights for children and adolescents is a priority task. This is why the **International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour**, 2021, declared by the UN General Assembly¹, is a historic opportunity to reaffirm commitments, make achievements visible, take action and inspire broad partnerships to preserve the progress made on child labour and related issues such as social justice, inclusion and the reduction of inequalities.

¹ See: <https://undocs.org/en/A/73/L.101>

Given the differentiated nature of child labour for children and adolescents, and what is at stake in the current context, providing urgent and effective responses requires joint action, from government, at all levels, employers' and workers' organizations, and civil society in its broadest sense.

The Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour, a tripartite cooperation platform composed of 30 countries, 7 employers' organizations and 7 workers' organizations, seeks to advance the last mile towards the achievement of target 8.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to end child labour in all its forms by 2025.

The partnership between ECLAC and the ILO in collaboration with the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour has allowed progress to be made in strengthening local policies for the prevention and eradication of child labour through the implementation of the Child Labour Risk Identification Model, a statistical tool that provides a mapping tool that identifies different levels of child labour risk in the territories.

Objectives

1. To share the latest global and regional estimates of child labour published by ILO and UNICEF.
2. To present the estimate on the impact of COVID-19 on child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean and policy recommendations to address it.

Agenda

Side event: Impact of COVID-19 on child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean: How to make further progress towards SDG target 8.7 (60 minutes)

- **Welcoming remarks**
 - Rodrigo Martínez, Senior Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division, ECLAC (2 min.)
 - Dennis Zulu, Director of ILO Office for the Caribbean (2 min.)
- **Motion graphic projection - International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour 2021**
(2 min.)
- **New global estimates of child labour**
 - Claudia Cappa, Senior Advisor Statistics and Monitoring, UNICEF (5 min.)
 - Ana López, Technical Secretariat Coordinator of the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour, ILO Regional Office (5 min.)
- **Impact of COVID-19 on child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean: Recommendations to address it**
 - Andrés Espejo, ECLAC Senior Consultant (8 min.)
 - Iván Rodríguez, ILO Senior Consultant (8 min.)
 - Sasha Deer-Gordon, Director, Child Labour Unit, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and Focal Point of the Government of Jamaica in the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour (8 min.)
- **Q&A** (20 min.)
 - Moderator: Resel Melville, Technical Secretariat, Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour, ILO Office for the Caribbean.