Five keys
to accelerating the pace of reduction of child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean

Executive summary
During the last two decades a large number of policies, programmes, plans and projects aimed at strengthening the institutional capacities of governments and social partners has been promoted and implemented in Latin America and the Caribbean with the aim of preventing and eliminating child labour and its worst forms.

Through these efforts, the incidence of child labour was reduced from 16% to 10.6%, representing around 12 million people under eighteen in this situation.

Ending child labour is a global aspiration embodied in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Goal 8, target 8.7).

26 countries in the region, along with employers’ and workers’ organizations, created the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean free of Child Labour as a response to the need to accelerate the pace of reduction of child labour towards meeting the global goal and the commitments made by each country.

The ILO, in its role as Technical Secretariat of the Regional Initiative, conducted a series of researches in order to provide a knowledge base that supports the proposed interventions to accelerate the reduction of child labour and contribute to achieving the national development goals and the global goal of eliminating all form of child labour.

To this end, dimensions such as effectiveness and impact, achieved results, efficiency, sustainability and replicability were analyzed, and the findings were presented through:

- 15 impact assessment reports of public programmes from 11 countries in the region, with objectives linked to fighting poverty, increasing and improving school enrollment and retention, and other aspects evaluated to determine their effect on prevention and elimination of child labour.

To access the full version of this study on the Web, please go to: www.iniciativa2025alc.org/sistematizacion
## Dimensions and criteria for the analysis of programmes and projects

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Effectiveness and impact</strong></td>
<td>a) Removal and prevention of children and adolescents below the minimum legal age for admission to employment;</td>
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<td>b) Removal and prevention of children and adolescents from hazardous child labour;</td>
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<td>c) Insertion of adolescent workers into decent jobs;</td>
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<td>d) Educational retention and reintegration of minors in child labour and its worst forms;</td>
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<td>e) Improvement of the conditions of employment and of family income;</td>
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<td>f) Awareness raising and change of attitude and perception of child labour among the general public and key actors.</td>
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<td><strong>Results</strong></td>
<td>a) Implementation of national and decentralized policies for the elimination of child labour;</td>
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<td>b) Existence and functioning of interinstitutional coordination mechanisms;</td>
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<td>c) Institutional capacities for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategies addressing child labour;</td>
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<td>d) Legislation about children working under the minimum legal age and its application in prevention, protection and punishment;</td>
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<td>e) Insertion of the objectives of child labour elimination in sectoral policies (education, health, agriculture, economy, etc.), including policies promoting decent work in rural and informal economies and crosscutting issues of gender and social inclusion;</td>
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<td>f) Implementation of agreements, programmes and measures targeting child labour elimination by producers and employers;</td>
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<td>g) Social mobilization against child labour.</td>
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<td><strong>Efficiency</strong></td>
<td>a) Managerial aspects that are key to enhance the results of the intervention, particularly in terms of organizational structure, funding and budget allocation, coordination and involvement of key actors, among others.</td>
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<td><strong>Sustainability and replicability</strong></td>
<td>a) Context conditions and capabilities of key actors required to ensure continuity of the actions and results and effects generated by the programme or project.</td>
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On policies on prevention and elimination of child labour and protection of work permitted for adolescents

1.1 The existence of a national policy, strategy or plan to combat child labour is not a sufficient condition for the effective elimination of child labour; however, it is fundamental to link interventions to long-term goals.

1.2 Governments should redouble their efforts to keep in effect the national policies and plans against child labour and promote the active participation of employers, workers and civil society sectors in their design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

1.3 The institutional framework must be complemented by the inclusion of child labour concerns in national development plans as well as in sectoral policies relevant to the topic.

1.4 The implementation of these policies, strategies and plans requires an organizational structure to coordinate and establish linkages among programmes and projects implemented by the various public and private institutions.

1.5 The existence of specialized committees on issues such as commercial sexual exploitation, human trafficking and smuggling of people has allowed defining responsibilities and models of care and punishment commensurate with the nature of the problem.

1.6 Decentralization of national policies is still in its infancy in most countries. Clear delineation of tasks and responsibilities among national and sub-national entities is a key success factor.

1.7 Child labour interventions implemented by social partners or with support of external cooperation partners require a solid institutional framework at national and decentralized levels in order to coordinate their actions and increase their contribution to the countries’ development objectives.

1.8 It is essential to have methodologies that will facilitate adoption of national plans by local governments, as well as a monitoring system that will provides regular, timely and relevant information to improve service performance and delivery.

1.9 Systems for assessing policies, strategies and plans have a great weakness in that there is no strategic information on the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of these tools.
On strengthening institutional capacity and the regulatory framework

2.1 Sensitization and training of public officials to address the prevention and elimination of child labour are key to improving the implementation of policies and plans.

2.2 Most countries have a regulatory framework in line with international conventions on child labour and protection of children and adolescents. However, the big challenge is to achieve effective implementation and enforcement of legislation.

2.3 Actions to improve monitoring and enforcement, enabling assistance and reporting mechanisms and awareness and information campaigns have proven to be effective in promoting a culture of compliance in the formal sector of the economy, but are ineffective in addressing situations of child labour in the informal economy or family work.

2.4 It is pertinent to continue supporting the development of baseline studies and diagnostics as an initial requirement for projects aimed at prevention and elimination of child labour.

2.5 The implementation of monitoring systems based on child labour allow for the continuous measurement of the phenomenon with a lower financial cost.

2.6 The implementation of alternative child labour monitoring systems, mainly at the local level, reveal problems of consistency in the registration criteria, lack of ownership by local actors at the expense of their sustainability, and misuse of their potential to planners and decision makers.

2.7 It is necessary that National Committees Against Child Labour establish guidelines to unify and manage national and local monitoring systems and to exploit synergies that can be generated among the different stakeholders, including international cooperation.

2.8 The mainstreaming of gender and diversity perspectives does not constitute a requirement but an essential precondition for ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions.
On the models of direct care

3.1 In addition to the targets concerning the number of children, adolescents and families served, an effective and sustainable model of direct care to address child labour should include indicators of its contribution to the creation and improvement of institutional capacity for public authorities and social actors to continue producing results.

3.2 The challenge for Governments is to implement models and strategies that emphasize the life cycle of individuals: transitions from elementary school to high school and from there to the technical or university education; or, from school to work or owning a business. Public policies must be able to assist people at different stages of their lives.

3.3 Models of direct care are a valuable source of experiences and lessons learned; however, their transfer or replication in other geographical areas with other populations must be preceded by a thorough analysis of the context and conditions for their implementation.

On awareness-raising and social mobilization

4.1 Participation and commitment of employers’ and workers’ organizations are essential components of efforts to prevent and eliminate child labour.

4.2 Awareness-raising and training aimed at employers and workers have generated good practices in the elimination of child labour; however, systematization and assessment of their effects and impacts are still pending.

4.3 The active participation of NGOs on the issue of child labour has been essential to give visibility to the issue and to demand that the State provide more effective and timely institutional responses. However, interventions have not always been adequately linked to human-rights-based approaches and to the criteria of consistency and sustainability of national policies.

4.4 Interagency coordination bodies must design mechanisms and spaces that will continue to enhance the participation of civil society organizations, so that their efforts and resources can be effectively linked up to the guidelines of the countries, without limiting their autonomy and capacity to demand that the Governments fulfill their responsibilities.

4.5 It is essential to continue efforts to raise awareness and mobilize resources so that cultural, social and economic changes to eradicate child labour are promoted from within the households and communities.
On sectoral policies and programmes to eliminate child labour

5.1
Public policies to combat poverty, improve health and protect children and adolescents are relevant to reducing child labour, but face major challenges in terms of generating proposals for intervention that leverage more effectively and creatively the existing capabilities, resources and infrastructure to achieve synergies and establish linkages.

5.2
National and local bodies for interagency coordination have a wide range of programmatic and financial resources in the public monetary and non-monetary transfer programmes, which give them ability to achieve the goals of eliminating child labour.

The challenge is to establish linkages between these programmes and the policies for reducing child labour in a coherent way.

5.3
Governments need to improve secondary education and vocational training, making it more pertinent and relevant to labour market requirements, and making it easy for adolescents to access flexible and consistent educational opportunities that evolve in line with technological developments.

5.4
The presence and relevance of the topic of prevention and elimination of child labour on the agenda, policies and programmes of the agricultural sector are minimal and insufficient in the region’s countries.

5.5
Elimination of hazardous work in agriculture and livestock activities is contingent on understanding the dynamics of production and how they affect the employment of children and adolescents, both in commercial and family agriculture.

5.6
Passive employment policies (jobseekers’ allowances, non-contributory pension schemes, etc.) should be seen as valid tools to combat child labour applicable to those situations in which families have limitations to work or generate income on their own.
Join the ILO and help build a Latin America and a Caribbean free of child labour.

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