

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Statement of Support from the Chairperson of Global March Against Child Labour

I am pleased to confirm that Global March Against Child Labour (Global March) reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organisation has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles from 2020-2021.

In pursuing our mission for a child friendly world, especially zero tolerance for child labour, child slavery and child trafficking, Global March continues to see value in collaborating with the UN Global Compact.

Sincerely yours,



Timothy Ryan
Chairperson
Global March Against Child Labour



Description of activities

1. Addressing child labour in global supply chains through local action:

Global March Against Child Labour (GMACL) is working towards addressing the issue of child labour in coffee supply chain in Uganda and Shrimp supply chain in Bangladesh with the support of Brot für die Welt with a three year long intervention on ground in the respective countries. The main goal of the project is that “Child labour-free and gender inclusive agricultural supply chains are built in Bangladesh and Uganda, by demonstrating good practices that link global and local supply chains, which are replicable”. The thematic focus of this project is addressing child labour in supply chains, specifically the agricultural sector. Using global supply chains legislation (in identified countries) as a central piece for sensitisation, advocacy, lobby, research, campaigning and pragmatic intervention on child labour along with the international framework for creating an overspill from global supply chain advocacy towards domestic supply chains. The details are as follows:

1.1 Addressing child labour in coffee supply chain in Uganda: The coffee sector in Uganda is labour intensive and informal, having a great impact on child labour. For this purpose, interventions are being carried out through our project at the community level/ district level through an area based approach among others with regards to the magnitude of child labour in supply chains of coffee plantations, thereby instilling a change of attitude and mindset amongst community members towards knowledge of child labour and its consequences for girls and boys. To effectively carry this out and to influence changes at the policy level (at the national and regional dimensions) to fill considerable legal, policy and implementation gaps; involvement of CSOs, trade unions, NGOs, UN agencies and businesses is one of the most crucial aspects of the intervention for further advocacy and lobbying with governments, and Parliamentarians as well.

The Child labour monitoring system led by the target communities and stakeholder groups in Bangladesh and Uganda will serve as the key link to monitor and ensure sustained efforts and outcomes till the end of the project period and beyond. Furthermore, a tailored intervention to fulfill the gaps of school based feeding programme and address the negative impacts of COVID-19, the “seeds for education” programme in Uganda will continue to address food security and gaps in education of children in the community through farmer and school collaboration.



Global March and its members will also continue to advocate with the government and Parliamentarians for adoption of a nationalised school feeding programme for encouraging school enrolment and retention in Uganda and for effective implementation and scaling up of National School Feeding Policy 2019 in Bangladesh.

1.2 Addressing child labour in the shrimp supply chain in Bangladesh: Under this project, Bangladesh and its shrimp sector was chosen, as shrimp is considered to be the backbone of Bangladesh's export industry, and elimination of child labour from it can impact the overall number of economically active children working in its worst forms of child labour. It can also be an entry point for advocacy on introducing minimum age to employment in aquaculture and bring about change in communities and involve civil society in this endeavour. The project targets small scale, marginal and landless shrimp farmers and fry collecting communities in the South West and South East region of coastal Bangladesh. The project aims to influence the Bangladeshi government to give its commitment for developing child friendly upazilas towards the elimination of child labour in the informal part of the shrimp supply chain where a significant number of child labourers are engaged in hazardous work.

The intervention is also engaging to address the impact of COVID -9 using saline farming with ICCO cooperation Bangladesh to train smallholder farmers in the coastal areas of Bangladesh for growing salt tolerant crops. These are natural varieties of crops that do grow on saline soil. The training enables smallholder farmers to make their salt-affected land productive again by growing saline tolerant crops. This will improve their food security as well as their income, thereby reducing the dependency on child labour.

2. Addressing child labour in the coconut oil supply chain in the Philippines

For their project "Protecting the rights of children in the coconut oil supply chain – The Philippines", GMACL is a part of a consortium of companies and organisations based in the Netherlands and the Philippines for conducting a local impact assessment on child labour in the coconut oil supply chain in the Philippines. The risk assessment's objective is to reveal the prevalence and root causes of child labour in the coconut supply chains, as well as the macro and micro risks that contribute to the vulnerability of workers, and pose as barriers to policy implementation. As a stepping stone to formulating solutions to the identified challenges, company measures to prevent child labour will be identified under the project.



The project is aimed at raising the bar on children's rights protection in the coconut oil supply chain from the mentioned regions, which can serve as an example for coconut oil chains from other regions. By developing child labour due diligence systems at sector level in the Netherlands, the involved Dutch companies prepare themselves for fulfilling the duties under the Dutch Child Labour Act. The Netherlands is the second largest coconut oil importer globally and hence this significantly matters.

3. Mapping and Analysis of Child Labour and Associated Stakeholders in Shrimp Fry Collection in Targeted Upazilas of Bangladesh

A Mapping and Analysis of Child Labour and Associated Stakeholders in Shrimp Fry Collection in Targeted Upazilas of Bangladesh was conducted from 2020-2021 as part of the project named 'Addressing Child Labour in Agricultural Supply Chains, Global to Local', to be implemented by Global March against Child Labour and Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) in three targeted upazilas (Paikgacha and Koira Upazila of Khulna and Soronkhola Upazila of Bagerhat District) of southern Bangladesh.

The overall objective of this mapping is to gain in-depth understanding of the various tiers of the shrimp supply chain in Bangladesh and understand the root causes of child labour from supply-side (push factors) and demand-side (pull factors) at a community level and its significant consequences to inform the project designing evidence-based advocacy strategy and interventions for engaging with the different stakeholders.

4. Training on child labour and Human Rights Due Diligence

GMACL provided training to the team of Cordaid on the topic of Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) with regards to child labour. The aim of the training was to generate awareness amongst the participants on the issue of child labour in agriculture, its various international legislations, UNGPs and remediation, with a gender lens.



5. ILO International Advisory Board

In April 2020, GMACL was appointed as one of the International Advisory Board members of ILO to guide research on child labour and forced labour. The Project International Advisory Board (IAB) offers the MAP16 and R2A projects technical and strategic advice and guidance regarding child labor and forced labor statistics and research. It is also be a platform for research cooperation and dialogue on child labor and forced labor issues and will contribute to reinforcing a world community of researchers. In particular, the IAB provides technical inputs to:

- a. The revision of the SIMPOC model child labor questionnaires
- b. Core forced labor survey questions and question catalogue
- c. Sampling strategies for surveys on child labor and forced labor.
- d. Mapping of relevant research, gaps and global research agenda.

Other IAB members include technical experts from USDOL, international organizations (ILO, IOM, UN University, UNICEF and UNODC), academia and Alliance 8.7 Pathfinder countries or other countries with expertise in research on child labor or forced labor; and the external research and development community.

6. Multi-stakeholder group on Human Rights in Food and Beverages Supply Chain

Since March 2020, GMACL has been a member of a Multi-stakeholder group on Human Rights in the Food and Beverages Supply Chain led by Oxfam. The group is emerging from Oxfam and GMACL's respective researches on the issue of child labour and human rights abuses in the sugarcane supply chain in India. The regular round table discussions under the group In the previous roundtables we have been engaging with the brands on the Sugar research that we have done in U.P. highlighting the systemic issues in the supply chains. Brands like Coca-Cola, Mars, ITC have been engaging with us.



7. International Conference - Taking next steps to end child labour in global supply chains

In January, 2020, GMACL, together with the Dutch Government and ILO, convened a global conference. Companies, governments, CSOs and employers' and workers' organizations met to share best practices, discuss challenges and lessons learned for better due diligence and policy to bring child labour in supply chains to an end. The aim of the conference was to:

- Inspire others with practical examples;
- Assess progress since IV Global Conference on child labour in Buenos Aires 2017;
- Showcase new commitments of Pathfinder Countries of Alliance 8.7;
- Share challenges and opportunities to end child labour in supply chains
- Find practical answers and innovative solutions to upscale efforts;
- Start partnerships or projects to work together to upscale efforts.

The conference resulted in various companies sharing their commitment to end child labour which can be read here: <https://takingnextsteps.nl/commitments/>

8. **Global Solutions Forum: Acting together to end child labour in agriculture**

Organised by: [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \(FAO\)](#) | **Dates:** 2 and 3 November 2021

About the forum:

In 2020, FAO launched an [online consultation](#) on the Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition. Practitioners from 41 countries shared 90 contributions, highlighting diverse issues of child labour in agriculture. The Call for Action for this consultation aimed at capturing and recognising the commitment, responsibility and efforts of agricultural stakeholders in addressing child labour in agriculture. These issues and efforts were discussed at the Global Solutions Forum for 2 days.



Objective:

The online event was organized in the context of the [International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour](#) and brought together representatives of ministries of agriculture, fisheries, livestock and forestry, producers and farmers' organizations, workers' organizations, development banks, businesses, civil society and academia, children, youth advocates, and former child labourers, among others.

The forum intended to 1) **ACT**: raise the voice and commitment of agricultural stakeholders, 2) **INSPIRE**: share game-changing solutions and identify ways to step up concerted action to prevent and end child labour in all agricultural sub-sectors and 3) **SCALE-UP**: inform the V Global Conference on Child Labour in 2022, along with other global initiatives such as the United Nations Decade of Family Farming.

Global March Against Child Labour's participation:

2 November 2021: The global event started with an opening note by Qu Dongyu, Director-General, FAO and was addressed by GMACL' founder, **Nobel Peace Laureate, Kailash Satyarthi**.

3 November 2021: GMACL's Policy Research Coordinator **Gazal Malik** participated in the session on *Cross-sectoral solution: Closing the generational gaps and supporting relevant education in rural area* along with Doaa Arafa from World Food Programme (Egypt), Elissa Alhassrouny from Plan International (Lebanon) and Dominique Marlet from Education International. The discussions were around the Global March's intervention '[Seeds for Education](#)' under the school feeding programme in Uganda towards addressing child labour in the coffee supply chains.

9. [India and sustainability standards](#): A global conference by Centre for Responsible Business **Exploring Best Practices to Eliminate Child Labour in Supply Chains | Dates**: 27-29 October 2021

About the conference:

Centre for Responsible Business CRB's annual flagship conference 'India and Sustainability Standards: International Dialogues and Conference' convenes international and Indian businesses, policymakers and all stakeholders to dialogue and develop roadmaps across issues and industry sectors – in supporting the momentum towards Sustainability.



On 28 October, [GoodWeave](#) co-hosted a session at the conference on best practices to eliminate child labour in supply chains.

Objective of the session:

- 1) Delineate challenges and priorities in mitigating child labour in supply chains.
- 2) Discuss best practices, relevant mechanisms, tools, and frameworks that can be adopted by businesses and other stakeholders for a child-labour-free value chain.
- 3) Share practical steps brands and suppliers, and other stakeholders can take to ensure supply chains are equipped to identify and remediate child labour

Global March Against Child Labour's participation:

A series published by GoodWeave on the [best practice briefs](#) explored how companies and non governmental organizations can combat child labour in supply chains. The best practice briefs focus on **1.** Standard/code of conduct setting, **2.** Supply chain monitoring; **3.** Supply chain mapping; **4.** Remediation; **5.** Prevention.

Speakers from **UNICEF, DevGiri, Floor Story, GoodWeave** and **Global March Against Child Labour** (Marco Dubbelt- Officer In Charge) exchanged their insights and recommendations on the 5 brief topics. The flow of the event covered the topics on good practices in the textile sector, remediation as well as the need for partnerships for greater impact, and **GMACL** spoke on the *good practices in additional sectors and on community-based prevention interventions*.

10. Sugarcane Research Study by Global March Against Child Labour (Uganda and India)

→ **A study on child labour and it's gender dimensions in [Sugarcane growing in Uganda](#)**

Background: The report presents major finding of the study on child labour and gender in sugarcane industry and also highlights the gender based challenges and differences with respect to lived realities among child labourers by making an investigation into the daily living experiences of the child labourers with respect to their gender. The study was commissioned by the Global March Against Child Labour and carried out in Busoga region in eastern Uganda, in Jinja, Kaliro, Kamuli and Mayuge districts.

About the study: The study investigated into the fact that despite the urgency to tackle child labour in agriculture, particularly in sugarcane, the number of children, boys and girls separately is unknown and knowledge on nuanced gendered challenges of working in this sector is scant, evidencing a lack of combined sector specific and gender inclusive research. Findings also include the genderbased challenges and differences with respect to lived realities among child labourers, remedial measures and interventions for further prevention and mitigation of child labour in the sugarcane industry, while Chapter 5 focuses on conclusion and recommendations.

The research study is divided into **five** chapters:

- Chapter 1: Introduction to the study, covering the study objectives.
- Chapter 2: Presents the approach and methodology used. This includes the methods of data collection, analysis and control, ethical considerations, document review, area of study and limitations.
- Chapter 3: Presents the literature review on child labour in the sugarcane industry.
- Chapter 4: Covers the study findings. These include the prevalence of child labour in the production and supply chain of sugarcane, in Busoga region, the push and pull factors as well as the consequences of child labour.

Objective of the research study:

❖ General Objectives:

- To identify and document the prevalence of child labour in the production and supply chain of sugarcane, from farm to factory level in Uganda, focusing on the Busoga region (Eastern region).
- To identify and analyse push and pull factors as well as consequences (both direct and indirectly) of child labour in the production and supply chain of sugarcane with a gender lens that takes into account the various intersectionalities of the issue, affecting boys and girls differently.
- To recommend feasible measures to mitigate and prevent the practice of child labour in the production and supply chain of sugarcane – both at the policy level and practice (programme) level.

❖ Specific Objectives:

- Understanding the various tiers of sugar production, i.e. from farm level to factory/homebased/informal work level in order to analyse the differences in labour and other practices and the grey areas of child labour, child work, hazardous work and forced labour.

- Identifying and covering the existing knowledge gaps on child labour in the sugarcane industry or sugar as an agricultural commodity with a gender lens.
- Analysing gender-based challenges and differences with respect to lived realities among child labourers e.g. invisibility of combination of agricultural and domestic labour, different access to/value for education, risk of GBV for both girls and boys.

→ **Paradox of the sweetest crop - India**

Background: The report highlights that the sugarcane supply chain employs child labour, both paid and unpaid during seasonal harvesting. Children can be categorised as seasonal workers who migrate every year for 5 to 6 months with their parents to the neighbouring states and districts. Children are pushed into hazardous labour due to reasons such as structural poverty amongst the harvesters, most of whom are Tribals/ Adivasi and Dalit.

About the study: The report provides an overview of the situation of child labour with a gender lens that has existed for decades in sugarcane harvesting in India. The report is based on the field work from 4 states namely, *Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh*. The focus of this report is to use evidence-based information to highlight the issue of child labour in the sugarcane sector within its key socio-economic intersections such as gender, caste, migration and structural inequalities in the Indian agriculture sector.

The research study is divided into **five** chapters:

- Chapter 1: Includes introduction to child labour in agriculture in India, objectives and research methodology.
- Chapter 2: Focuses on key findings of the study i.e. girl child marriage, the condition of women in the sugarcane industry, rootcauses of sugarcane harvesting and the impact of migration in the sugarcane industry and child labour.
- Chapter 3: Working conditions and labour rights, access to govt. Schemes and loss of identity.
- Chapter 4: Sustainability in sugarcane and supply chain
- Chapter 5: Recommendations around adopting gender responsive approach

Objective of the research study: The objectives of this research are focused at both policy as well as practice level and are based on the key pre-existing gaps, challenges and recommendations from relevant civil society members as well as the assessment derived from Global March's own analysis collectively with its various regional partners.



- To identify, assess and reevaluate the practice of child labour and its related issues in the sugarcane supply chain in India through a sampled child labour analysis in sugarcane sector hotspots of India. This also includes studying the differences in labour practices in various states in order to analyse the grey areas of child labour, child work, hazardous work and forced labour along with their root causes.
- To identify and analyse the issue of child labour in sugarcane growing with a gender responsive approach by focusing on the nuances i.e. differences in situations of girls and boys such as the invisibility of combination of agricultural and domestic labour done by girls and access to education for girls/gender analysis of child labour in sugarcane. Additionally, exploring gender-based challenges and differences with respect to lived labour realities among child labourers.
- To identify and cover the existing knowledge gaps on child labour in the sugarcane industry or sugar as an agricultural commodity with a gender as a cross-cutting issue.

11. Knowledge sessions within the International Responsible Business Conduct Agreements

For creating awareness on child labour and what the companies who promote child labour can do, we shared solutions and opportunities to address child labour within the companies supply chain. We focused on small, medium enterprises and multinational companies as well. This was in collaboration with the 'Fund against child labour' and 'Social and economic council of Netherlands'.