



Group Development Pakistan

How to End CDL?

Children engaged in labour in people's homes, in South Asia and in Pakistan, are usually separated from their families, and do not access quality education, decent food, and medical care. There have been reports of physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse and economic exploitation faced by such children.

Why are children engaged in domestic labour?



Socio-economic challenges, gender inequalities and poverty¹ exacerbated by the COVID19 pandemic and the climate crisis;^{2,3}



Uncontrolled population growth⁴ currently reaching a rate of almost 2%;⁵



Intergenerational harmful practices of abuse and exploitation;⁶



Increasing market demand for cheap labour;



Bonded labour;⁷



Rural-urban migration;⁸



Lack of access to free and compulsory education till the age of 16;⁹



Lack of awareness of the relevant laws and the adverse impact of child labour on children and their families;



Absence of child protection policies at the federal and provincial levels and inadequate child protection mechanisms;¹⁰



Weak enforcement of relevant national and provincial laws.

¹<https://dailytimes.com.pk/996801/floods-washing-away-the-future-of-pakistani-children/>

²Perceptions and socio-economic conditions of children in Faisalabad district; FSSN: 1673-064X, Vol 65, issue 04/2022

³<https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/devastating-floods-pakistan-2022>

⁴<https://iips.com.pk/controlling-pakistans-increasing-population-growth-impacts-and-challenges/>

⁵<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2383016/pakistans-population-problem>

⁶ISRAD Journal of Economics, The Role of Household Wealth in Combining Child School and Child Labour: Evidence from MICS Balochistan (Pakistan), <https://doi.org/10.52131/joe.2021.0302.0036>

⁷For more information, check: <https://labour.punjab.gov.pk/bonded-labour>

⁸https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289388627_A_Comparative_Analysis_of_Rural_and_Urban_Child_Labor_in_Pakistan

⁹Housework not homework for millions of children in Malala's Pakistan, Relief Web.pdf

¹⁰<https://www.unicef.org/pakistan/child-protection-0>

How can we stop CDL?

The key recommendations provided below are in line with the National Commission on the Right of the Child's Policy Brief on Child Domestic Labour,¹¹ and the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights.¹²

To lawmakers:

- Amend the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) to criminalise Child Domestic Labour as a form of modern slavery; the offence should be cognizable, non-bailable, non-compoundable and should focus on holding exploitative employers accountable.

To the provincial and federal governments:

- Devise child protection policies in consultation with the civil society;
- Regulate, promote and facilitate adult (above 18) domestic work, and ensure the enforcement of the minimum wage to help reduce Child Domestic Labour;
- Enforce the bonded and forced labour laws and laws for home-based and domestic workers, and activate vigilance committees;
- Develop multisectoral child protection mechanisms that include systems of referral, case management, and adequate alternative care. This should involve state-led child protection institutions, and social welfare departments, in collaboration with technical experts from the civil society;
- Enhance public-private partnership to end Child Domestic Labour.

To the provincial and federal governments and lawmakers:

- Prioritize the education system in budgetary and resources allocations, particularly free and compulsory education, in accordance with article 25-A of the Constitution of Pakistan.

To the provincial and federal governments and civil society:

- Develop and institutionalize comprehensive child and gender-sensitive capacity-building programs based on real needs for law enforcement agencies including the labour department, the legal fraternity, and judicial officers on child protection, child labour and trafficking;
- Conduct regular mass media campaigns in collaboration with the state to reduce population growth;
- Expand the mandate of Labour Officers to cover Child Domestic Labour and enforce related child protection laws and policies. Engage religious leaders to raise awareness on the adverse effects of Child Domestic Labour and foster a strong public disapproval towards Child Domestic Labour.

To media professionals and civil society:

- Promote and conduct cognitive and youth-led media campaigns to prompt paradigm shifts and behavioral change among communities and galvanize public disapproval of Child Domestic Labour;
- Highlight positive examples of citizens who refuse to employ children in their homes, who pay their staff decently and treat them in a dignified manner.

To the civil society and academia:

- Build the capacity of media professionals and students, through formal and non-formal education, to report on Child Domestic Labour in a substantial and ethical manner.

¹¹<https://www.facebook.com/nrcrpakistan/posts/pfbid02DghjvQxa1WxSNgZvNHDbXuZzCVSpscqbLG3zYgWct5gLVyEjmtGDtj9pmAHxtUUkl>

¹²<https://portal.mohr.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NAP-BHR.pdf>