



## **PRESS RELEASE IN COMMEMORATION OF THE WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR, 12<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2022**

The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) joins hands with all relevant stakeholders nationally and globally to commemorate this year's World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL).

In 2002, the International Labour Organization (ILO) established the WDACL to raise awareness and activism towards child labour prevention.

The ILO was created in 1919 with social justice objectives including children protection. To achieve its child-oriented objectives, the ILO adopted the Convention on Minimum Age (Convention No. 136, 1973) providing for the minimum age of employment of children. Also in 1999, there was the adoption of Convention No.182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

This year's global theme, **“Universal Social Protection to End Child Labour”** focuses on pushing for increased investment in social protection systems and schemes to ensure social protection avenues and the protection of children against child labour.

According to the ILO, as at the beginning of 2020, 1 in 10 children aged 5 and over were involved in child labour worldwide – representing an estimated 160 million children, or 63 million girls and 97 million boys. Also, it is estimated that, there are more children in child labour in Sub-Saharan Africa than in the rest of the world combined. Specifically in Ghana, there is an average of 21 percent of children aged 5 to 17 years involved in child labour, with 14 percent engaged in hazardous forms of labour.<sup>1</sup>

Ghana is a signatory to United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, ILO Convention on Minimum Age (Convention No.138, 1978), and Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (Convention No. 182,), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Palermo Protocol and relevant ECOWAS Protocols and Child Policy and Strategic Plan of Action.

---

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF

Nationally, Ghana has an extensive legal and policy framework to ensure the protection of children. The 1992 Constitution protects the rights of children against any work that threatens their development. In addition, there is the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560), the Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694), the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732), The Criminal Code, 1960 (Act 29) and the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 1998 (Act 554).

The CHRAJ also notes Ghana's comprehensive social protection framework such as the Social Protection Policy with its flagship programmes including Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), the Labour-Intensive Public Works (LIPW), the School Feeding Programme (SFP), the National Health Insurance (NHIS) Exemptions and the Basic Education Capitation Grants. These social protection initiatives have been instrumental in alleviating poverty in many Ghanaian households and helped reduced poor coping mechanism by families such as school dropout, child trafficking and child labour.

Notwithstanding all these efforts by the government to reduce child labour in Ghana, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath economic and social developments have disrupted gains made pre-pandemic period. A survey by UNICEF shows that an estimated 22 million people in Ghana, about two-thirds of the population, experienced a decrease in household income because of the pandemic. Similarly, 52.1% of households reduced food consumption as a coping mechanism in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, almost 1 child out of every 3 lived in monetary poverty, while 73 percent of children experienced multidimensional poverty suffering from multiple and overlapping deprivations. These developments highlight the importance of expanding Ghana's social protection systems to build resilience of the poor and vulnerable and to prevent poor coping mechanisms that usually lead to child labour.

As we celebrate this day, the Commission encourages the government to improve and expand on its social protection systems to be more child-sensitive such as cash transfers including child grants. This will help improve the household income of the most vulnerable and to prevent the likelihood of pushing children into hazardous work conditions.

The Commission also advises government to implement Target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goal 1 (end poverty) that calls for the implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, with substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable. In addition, CHRAJ entreats

the government to implement relevant recommendations<sup>2</sup> of the Universal Periodic Review as Ghana prepares to submit its national report to the Human Rights Council in October 2022 for the Fourth Cycle Review.



**JOSEPH WHITTAL**  
**COMMISSIONER**

---

<sup>2</sup> Recommendations 146.177, 146. 179, 146.180, 146.181, 146.182, 146.183, 146.184, 146.185, 146.186, 146.190, and 146.192