



Social Protection Discussion Paper Series

Creating Partnerships With Working Children and Youth

Per Miljeteig

August 2000

Social Protection Unit
Human Development Network
The World Bank

Social Protection Discussion Papers are not formal publications of the World Bank. They present preliminary and unpolished results of analysis that are circulated to encourage discussion and comment; citation and the use of such a paper should take account of its provisional character. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this paper are entirely those of the author(s) and should not be attributed in any manner to the World Bank, to its affiliated organizations or to members of its Board of Executive Directors or the countries they represent.

For free copies of this paper, please contact the Social Protection Advisory Service, The World Bank, 1818 H Street, N.W., MSN G8-802, Washington, D.C. 20433 USA. Telephone: (202) 458-5267, Fax: (202) 614-0471, E-mail: socialprotection@worldbank.org. Or visit the Social Protection website at <http://www.worldbank.org/sp>.

PREFACE

If children do not have voice, they cannot be heard. And, if we are to fully understand child labor, working children and youth should speak out on their situation. While in recent years this observation (that it is necessary to include the perspective of working children and youth as well as that of their families) is increasingly accepted, the mechanisms for doing so are not well established. This paper by Per Miljetieg reviews how organisations assisting working children and youth can include working children and youth in efforts to reduce the adverse effects of child labor and child labor per se. Children's and youth organisations can support the empowerment of poor or otherwise marginalised and disadvantaged families. They can grow spontaneously even from small initiatives of local groups. At the local level, these organisations help members to handle their daily situation, and work effectively to improve their conditions both at individual and collective levels. In many cases they can influence local legislation and policymaking and go even further: working children and their organisations have also engaged in international outreach and cross-country networking including participation in the international conferences on child labour in Amsterdam and Oslo. The paper concludes with suggestions for further steps to elaborate the understanding of working children and youth as *partners* and *stakeholders*, and to develop ways to include them – whenever appropriate - in programming, planning, policies, advocacy and research concerning child labor. This paper adds an important dimension to the Bank's understanding of the issue.

Zafiris Tzannatos
Leader
The Global Child Labor Program
The World Bank

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	ADDRESSING CHILD LABOUR IN A CHILD RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE	4
II.	WORKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH ORGANISING THEMSELVES	9
	2.1. Characteristics of existing organisations	
	2.2. Achievements and impact at local level	
	2.3. Achievements and impact at international level	
III.	MOVING FROM PARTICIPATION TO PARTNERSHIP	23
IV.	WHY PARTICIPATION OF WORKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH?	26
	4.1. Being consistent with a child rights approach	
	4.2. Working children and youth as an important source of knowledge	
	4.3. Working children and youth as a resource in programmes and interventions	
V.	PRINCIPLES FOR CREATING PARTNERSHIPS	30
	5.1. Establishing a culture of listening to children’s voices	
	5.2. Children and youth must have appropriate and accurate information	
	5.3. Participation must be compatible with the actual situation of the children involved	
	5.4. Partnerships might be different at various levels – from local to global	
	5.5. Allowing for various degrees or forms of participation	
VI.	DILEMMAS AND OBSTACLES	35
VII.	FORWARD STRATEGIES – NEXT STEPS	36
	7.1. Division of labour among various groups and agencies	
	7.2. More knowledge needed – role of research and importance of information sharing	
	7.3. Reaching out to organisations of working children and youth	
	7.4. Programmes and operations	
	7.5. Advocacy and social mobilisation	
	7.6. Legislation and public policies	
	7.7. International cooperation	
VIII.	WHAT COULD THE WORLD BANK DO?	40
	8.1. Include in programmes	
	8.2. Research	
	8.3. Sensitisation and capacity building of staff and partners	
	8.4. International collaboration	
IX.	CONCLUSIONS	41
	REFERENCES	43

Creating Partnerships With Working Children and Youth Per Miljeteig¹

We shall help the youngest to organize in order to refuse the hardest work! We will also protect them if they are beaten up badly, as we have already done.

(Serge Luca, 17 years, member of African Movement of Working Children and Youth)

As children become more empowered there will be less need for them to protest discriminations. The time will come for adults to listen to the perceptions children have of society as a whole, the proposals they have for making changes. There is a distinct possibility that our children may open the door to a new world and their vision can save humanity from the ailments of the old. (Nandana Reddy, 1998)

I. ADDRESSING CHILD LABOUR IN A CHILD RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE

Influenced by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC),² the child labour discourse has become more focused on the aspect of *exploitation*, and how to *prevent* such exploitation through for instance education, social mobilisation and poverty reduction initiatives. Furthermore, it has become accepted that it is necessary to include the perspective of working children and youth as well as that of their families properly if we are to fully understand child labour situations (Miljeteig, 1999a, Woodhead, 1999). Working children have tuned in with statements such as: ‘We are against exploitation at work but we are for work with dignity with hours adapted so that we have time for education and leisure’ (Kundapur, 1996). Taken together, these developments have brought us a significant step further in understanding the complexities and realities of child labour. But we will not see a genuine child rights approach emerge until working children and youth are allowed to influence policies and programmes through active participation and partnership, and until we have fully realised the important resource they represent.

The world-wide implementation of the CRC as well as the process to establish a new ILO Convention against the worst forms of child labour³ have created a climate that is conducive to viewing child labour and work-related exploitation of children in new ways. Not only does the CRC have an article especially devoted to the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and work that is hazardous or interferes with the child’s development or education.⁴ The whole text of it - and the spirit behind it -

¹ Per Miljeteig, has been the Executive Director of Childwatch International, a global network for child research, in Oslo, Norway and is the Director, Childwatch International Research Network. Mr. Miljeteig also served as an Advisor to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on children’s rights and child labor issues and was leader for the Norwegian Forum for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author and should not be attributed to the World Bank.

² Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Document A/44/25 (1989).

³ ILO Convention No. 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999).

⁴ CRC Article 32.

establishes an exhaustive framework for protecting children from *any kind of exploitation*. The CRC also reiterates that persons *below* the age of 18 enjoy central civil and political rights previously laid out by other UN human rights treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The right to *freedom of expression*,⁵ the right to *freedom of thought, conscience and religion*,⁶ the right to *freedom of association*,⁷ the right to *protection of privacy*⁸ and the right to *access to information*⁹ are all included in the CRC. An important innovation brought by the CRC is the right to be *informed about the rights* established by the Convention.¹⁰

Children's rights have been an issue for the most part of this century. Eglantyne Jebb and the Save the Children Alliance started using the term in the early 1920s, and it got included in the international agenda, first at the League of Nations¹¹ and later at the United Nations.¹² The International Year of the Child in 1979, the drafting of CRC throughout the 1980s, and ultimately its adoption in 1989 and its entry into force in 1990¹³ has created a world-wide momentum for the observance of children's rights. However, the most significant break-through came with its near universal ratification.¹⁴ This creates a situation very different from that of most of the other international human rights treaties – and also in this case, relevant ILO conventions, such as Convention 138¹⁵ and the new Convention 182. Firstly, it means that CRC is to be considered solidly integrated into international customary law. By this, all countries, even those that have not formally ratified must be seen as bound by its principles and provisions without exception. Secondly, it means that it is not necessary to make it an issue whether any country is referring its policies and programmes of any relevance to children to the CRC. One could just assume that it is part of good governance to observe the obligations of the CRC. As consequence of this, it could not be assumed an interference with a country's internal, political affairs to expect – without further discussion - observance of relevant provisions of the CRC in internationally funded operations. Major international organisations, such as UNICEF and the World Bank are currently in the process of developing their positions vis-à-vis CRC, to establish appropriate ways to interpret and implement it within the frameworks of their respective mandates.¹⁶

⁵ CRC Articles 12 and 13.

⁶ CRC Article 14.

⁷ CRC Article 15.

⁸ CRC Article 16.

⁹ CRC Article 17.

¹⁰ CRC Article 42

¹¹ Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1924.

¹² UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959.

¹³ 2 September 1990, after the ratification of the first 20 countries.

¹⁴ Since 1997 Somalia and the US remain the only countries that are not State parties to the Convention.

¹⁵ ILO Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (1973).

¹⁶ See for instance, Santos Pais, 1999; Shihata, 1996.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines, for its purposes, any person below the age of 18 as a 'child' and extends its protection to all persons below that age, unless otherwise and specifically stated. This definition is followed in this paper. When talking about 'child labour', the reference might thus include persons who in many societies are considered as adolescents, or even as grown-ups. But they might still be entitled to the protection offered by CRC. When the word 'child' or 'children' is used, it should be understood as referring to any person(s) entitled to the protection of CRC.

The phrase 'child labour' should probably be seen as placed between inverted commas, to indicate that this is a phrase that the author of this paper is not completely comfortable with. There is a tendency to deal with 'child labour' as if it was a uniformly understood phenomenon. The term is used to indicate something that is mainly negative, as something that needs to be eradicated or abolished. This is a very simplistic approach. Recent developments have forced the 'child labour' discourse to become more nuanced and diversified: Among other things, it has become necessary to specify what kind of 'labour', by whom and under which circumstances, before drawing conclusions or taking action.

In order to help put focus where it should be, I will take guidance from CRC and rather use the phrases such as 'economic exploitation' or 'work-related exploitation'. This is in consistency with Article 32.1. that specifies

the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous to or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Further, I will take guidance from recent authors (Boyden et al., 1998, Myers, 1999, and White, 1999) and use the term 'child work' as a neutral term. As such, it does not have the same loaded associations as 'child labour'. It simply is used to describe one category of activity that children and young people are involved in, as compared to 'play', 'sleep', 'going to school' etc. without conveying, in itself, any value judgements. It would be a waste of energy to try and abandon the phrase 'child labour' altogether, however devalued and misused. But it might help to try and diversify our thinking about 'child labour' by using a variety of terms, depending on where the focus is meant to be (Miljeteig, 1999a). This would also be in line with current thinking within child development, which highlights the fact that different types of work actually constitute a regular part of many children's socialisation and learning of important skills (Boyden et al., 1998). In some societies, there are even concerns that the opportunity for children to get work-experience does not occur until they are in their late teens, and thus grow up completely separated from 'work'. Thus, there is a need to distinguish between the work that could be said to be part of a child's socialisation and work that is exploitative, harmful or otherwise ill suited for children. Of course, the real issue is not which word or phrase is the right one to use. Rather, that every time the terms 'child labour' or 'child work' is utilised, the user(s) must keep in mind that those are not uniformly understood concepts with a priori definitions and must be specified and operationalised.

The very vocal and visible entry onto the scene of working children and youth, who speak out on their rights, including their right to be heard in the debate has created several reactions. It has taken most of the other participants in the child labour discourse by surprise, and it has created some uneasiness because they are not really used to dealing with young people and their direct language. In some cases, young workers have caused particularly strong reactions, because they have made claims for their 'right to work' and the right to be respected as workers. Statements from international gatherings of working children and youth are very straightforward in their language and not easy to respond to with clear answers (Dakar, 1998; Kundapur, 1996).

Another significant development in the child labour discourse – also influenced by CRC – is the introduction of a *child-oriented perspective* and the combination of methods and tools for analysis from a *variety of disciplines*. For a large part, child labour has been studied within an anthropological or sociological framework, and with small-scale quantitative studies. Many of these have used inventive, participatory research methods and often carried out in close collaboration with people who are involved in programmes for working children. Typical is also a multi-disciplinary approach. Large, quantitative studies have followed, using for instance data from household surveys to indicate more specifically the prevalence of child labour and to place child labour in a larger macro-economic perspective (Grimsrud, 1999); Groetaert and Patrinos, 1998). These approaches are now also about to merge and create new synergies within data collection and research.¹⁷

What is emerging is a more diversified understanding about what work means for children both in positive and negative ways. It can no longer be single-handedly stated that *work as such* is bad or harmful for children. There is a growing understanding that work might have beneficial effects on children, in terms of teaching them important skills, giving them a sense of self-esteem and of being productive. Through their work, children can contribute to their own material wellbeing as well as that of their families. There is a growing understanding that working children are often, but not always victims of evil influences or exploitation. Finally, there is a growing understanding about what causes work-related exploitation of children and youngsters. Poverty is still considered as the main cause of children having to work under conditions that are not acceptable. But we are also gradually learning how local traditions, values or perceptions allow for work related exploitation of children to take place, or how local practices that were originally beneficial to children, have changed nature and become exploitative.¹⁸ We are also learning that children are not always unknowing victims of their families' dispositions, but act independently or together with their parents or friends within well established cultural

¹⁷ As seen for instance in the collaboration between ILO, the World Bank and UNICEF to establish a joint process on improving strategies for data collection, analysis and research concerning child labour that started in 1999 with a joint working meeting at the UNICEF International Child Development Centre in Florence.

¹⁸ The placement of children in the households of relatives in several African countries might serve as an example: This practice was originally intended to be part of young children's learning domestic skills, or as a way that the extended family could share its resources in child upbringing. It is reported that this practice has turned into what could rather be described as 'domestic labour' where the child's work is more like that of a regular domestic servant. (See for instance Letuka, 1998.)

patterns.¹⁹ Though growing, the existing body of knowledge about children and work is still not as substantial and rich and it should be. There is still too much ‘conventional wisdom’ that is being promoted, either because of lack of alternatives or because simple explanations often are preferred above those that are more nuanced and not so absolute.²⁰

The World Bank has a firmly established principle of participation of the beneficiaries of lending projects in their planning, implementation and evaluation (World Bank, 1996). In some contexts this principle has been interpreted as ‘meaningful consultation’ (Shihata, 1994). Likewise, it is becoming a recognised, but not always observed, principle in international collaboration and development assistance to consult with the beneficiaries of programmes what their best interests are. It might be claimed that this principle is still not fully understood and implemented when it comes to programmes with respect to children (Edwards, 1996; Van Beers, 1995). CRC has turned out to be inspirational and helpful here, as its ‘participation rights’ have become very much publicised and have attracted a lot of attention.²¹

If we want to address issues concerning the situation of working children and youth in a child rights perspective, it is crucial to keep in mind that it means to accept that children are capable of having opinions, that these should be listened to and taken seriously into consideration. It also implies that children can act on their own, take action to protect their own interests, and act as stakeholders or *partners* in efforts to address their situation. This would be consistent with the need, as expressed at the Oslo conference,²² to:

*view the child in its **social context**, including his/her family and general situation, and ensure that the voices of civil society, including those of the children themselves, their families and the local community, are heard in an appropriate and meaningful way when policies are developed and actions against child labour are decided (Agenda for Action, 1997).*

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the experience of organised groups of working children and youth, to examine how children and youth who are involved in various kinds of work - and thus vulnerable for exploitation - can be integrated in efforts at local and international levels to address and fight against economic exploitation of children. Defining them as partners in such efforts – be it in policy making, programming or advocacy – means to accept that their experience is an important resource in, and contribution to, the child labour discourse.

¹⁹ Camacho (1999), for instance, describes how young domestic workers in the Philippines migrate to Manila within well-established patterns and networks of family and neighbours.

²⁰ See for instance, Ennew, 1997; Boyden et al., 1998; Miljeteig, 1999a; Myers, 1999; White, 1999.

²¹ See for instance Boyden et al., 1998; Flekkøy and Kaufman, 1997; Hart, 1992; Hart et al., 1997; Johnson et al., 1995, 1998; Miljeteig, 1992, 1994, 1999b; Save the Children, 1997; Tolfree, 1998; Van Beers, 1995; White, 1996.

²² International Conference on Child Labour, Oslo 27-30 October 1997

II. WORKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH ORGANISING THEMSELVES

2.1. Characteristics of existing organisations

Working children organising themselves is not a ‘modern’ phenomenon. Actually, one hundred years ago, in 1899, the newspaper boys in New York, the ‘newsies’ organised themselves to fight for increased wages and succeeded by stopping the circulation of daily newspapers in New York for two weeks (Nasaw, 1985). Another example is the Young Christian Workers movement, which originated in Belgium in 1925, a Catholic activist movement of workers aged 15-25. Working children’s organisations as we see them today, originate back to the 1970s and emerged simultaneously in different parts of the world. However, it is only during the last few years that the existence of such groups has reached the awareness of the mainstream child labour discourse.²³

The following presentation is not meant to be an exhaustive overview of existing organisations.²⁴ The purpose is rather to draw some preliminary conclusions to indicate commonalities and emerging patterns in terms of:

- their origins and background;
- their organisational characteristics;
- their objectives and scope of activities;
- the relationship and collaboration between children and adults;
- how they perceive themselves;
- how they are perceived by others;

2.1.1. *Origins and backgrounds*

Working children’s organisations are often – directly or indirectly - the products of activities or programmes conducted by NGOs or groups of committed individuals who work at grass root level. As such, they share a strong foundation in an activist approach that primarily aims to support empowerment of poor or otherwise marginalised and disadvantaged people. They are focussing on worker’s rights and poverty reduction, and have in common a strong grassroots nature.

The African Movement of Working Children and Youth originates from the concerns that its ‘mother organisation’ ENDA Jeunesse Action had in the situation of street children. MNMMR²⁵ started with the engagement of ‘street educators’ and Christian activists working among working children in the streets of Brazil’s large cities. Bhima Sangha

²³ One of the few authors who have followed the activities of working children’s organisations over a substantial period of time is Anthony Swift. He is currently doing research for UNICEF to compile a world-wide presentation of such organisations and their experience. The main source for this chapter is his previous work for the Save the Children Alliance (Swift, 1999) and information that can be extracted from reports by Tolfree (1998), NATs International Review (1995, 1997), as well as reports from international meetings that have involved working children and youth. This has been supplemented with information collected directly from the organisations described and individuals working with and for them.

²⁴ See boxes for details about the individual organisations used as examples in this paper.

²⁵ Acronym for the name, The National Movement of Street Boys and Girls, in Portuguese.

originates from the efforts of labour union activists to organise adult workers in the local hotel and small-scale industries. It is striking to note how the young workers almost demanded to be included in the unions. Although initiated by adults, or by adults and youth in collaboration, the organisations as we see them today should be regarded as children's organisations. Regardless of their history and origins, the children who are now involved define the organisations as their own.

MANTHOC
AND THE LATIN AMERICAN MOVEMENT OF WORKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Manthoc (acronym for the full name, Movement of Working Children and Adolescents from Christian Working Class Families, as it appears in Spanish) is probably one of the best known organisations of working children and youth because it has some vocal and well-publicised leading intellectual capacities among its membership or supporters. Nelly Torres was one of the founding members in 1976 when she and other young workers were joined and supported by Alejandro Cussianovich, a Salesian priest with a background from the Young Christian Workers Movement. They aimed at combining the radical theological and pedagogical thoughts with local perceptions of work as something, which dignifies a person, and through which he or she makes a contribution to the community however poor they are.

The founders of Manthoc were very clear from the beginning that 'rather than organise child workers, they would enable them to organise themselves to become protagonists in their places of work and their neighbourhoods' (Swift, 1999:19). In all available material about Manthoc, it is stressed that it is a movement rather than an organisation and that the process is more important than the actual results that come out of their activities. The movement is seen as a vehicle for children, youth and their families to become more conscious about their situation as workers, to become more resilient against exploitation, and raise their sense of pride and self-esteem as workers (Arana et al., 1997; Torres, 1994).

Manthoc underlines its character as an organisation by and for children, and that it is no service-providing organisation. For those reasons, Manthoc has firstly paid great importance to sensitisation about the role of adult supporters, or 'collaborators'. They are there primarily to assist the children and to provide them with the practical support needed to sustain the movement. Secondly, realising that some working children and youth would need services beyond what they could do to meet their own basic needs, a programme which offers tailor-made services such as informal schooling and health campaigns has been established.

Manthoc originally started in Lima, but has later expanded to the rest of Peru. In 1982, it gained official recognition as a Catholic Action Movement, and by 1984, there were Manthoc groups in several other parts of the country. In 1996 Manthoc established the 'National Movement of Organised Working Children and Adolescents in Peru' (MNNATSOP) together with more than 30 local organisations.

Manthoc has inspired, and to a large extent facilitated, various forms of regional movements of working children. Already in 1979, Manthoc started to meet with related organisations in other Latin American countries, particularly in Brazil. The Latin American and Caribbean Movement of Working Children and Youth held its first meeting in 1988, and now has three defined sub-regions:

- *the Southern Cone (Argentina, Uruguay, part of Chile and Uruguay)*
- *the Andean Region (Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and the remaining part of Chile)*
- *the Central American and Caribbean Region (including Mexico, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Panama and Belize)*

Manthoc has been active in the establishment of a 'Co-ordinating Committee for the Defence of Children's Rights' in Peru together with a number of other local NGOs. This committee has had substantial influence on new national legislation concerning children and youth, as well as the establishment of a national curriculum for working children.

In addition to their involvement in the region, Manthoc has been actively participating in the international meetings of working children and youth, such the one as in Kundapur in 1996, and hosted an international gathering in Peru in 1997. Manthoc was also represented at the international conferences in Amsterdam and Oslo, in the latter as an invited NGO delegate. Members from Manthoc contributed actively to the child labour section at the Urban Childhood conference in 1997.

2.1.2. Organisational characteristics

As organisations, they have all grown gradually and spontaneously from small initiatives. Even if they now have large numbers of members, their main organisational unit consists of small, local groups. It would probably be more appropriate to label these organisations as *movements* rather than organisations in the strict sense. This is also in consistence with the way they are growing to include several communities, states and countries in a region. They share important characteristics of democratic organisations in terms of the importance paid to election to offices and to representativity of those who speak on behalf of the organisations. Some of them have introduced membership identification as a means to identify and protect its members, and to gain acceptance as workers. Bhima Sangha points out that this is an important way of installing in the young workers a sense of identity and of being protected by their organisation.

It is difficult to say exactly *who* their members are, apart from the fact that they *define themselves as workers*. Agewise, they range from 5-7 year olds to 18 year olds, the majority probably between 10 and 15. It would probably be safe to assume that these organisations primarily appeal to those working children who have the energy and the resources to participate in causes of collective concern. They belong to a wide variety of occupations, from selling things in the streets to working in factories and as domestics.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish exactly where the working children's organisations separate from their 'mother organisations'. That could be explained with reference to several factors: All the described organisations have started from small groups of working children and committed adults working very closely together at a practical level. They have grown gradually over time to transform into more structured and organisation-like units. Several people who joined as children have later become adult supporters. In some cases,²⁶ their 'mother organisations' provide important service or support functions for the organisations of working children and youth, and their members. This, of course creates the basis for very close collaboration.

²⁶ For instance, Manthoc, the African Movement, and Bhima Sangha.

MNMMR - The National Movement of Street Boys and Girls – Brazil

MNMMR was formally established in 1985, but builds on activities going back to the late 1960s (Gomes da Costa and Schmidt-Rahmer, 1991; Swift, 1991, 1999). The pioneers were activists of liberation theology, identifying with the struggles of the poor and trying to express Christian values through their actions in the community. A prominent role was played by a Salesian priest, Bruno Sechi, who worked with a group of young people in Belem. Their primary focus was on the situation of the young street vendors. Although the philosophical entry point was very much the same, MNMMR seems to be less specifically process oriented than Manthoc, and might differ significantly in working methods and organisational principles. Their mission statement was very similar to that of Manthoc in that it recognised that most children on the streets had to work for their families' and their own survival. Arbitrarily removing them from the street was no answer. A key characteristic of the relationship between activists and children was that of a 'participative democracy' and that children 'should participate as subjects of their own development and not as objects of welfare or other interventions by adults, and should be enabled to actively engage in the making of decisions affecting them' (Swift, 1999:13).

The educators decided to establish the movement in 1985, and defined it as 'a movement of educators and children and adults'. Originally, the organisational structure of the movement consisted of a National Executive Committee, with representatives from regional committees. Since then, committees at state and/or local level have emerged in 25 of Brazil's 27 states. The central unit of the movement is the local 'nucleus' where 20-30 children are given the opportunity to 'acquire, by experience the skills of participation, solidarity, organisation and learn to become key defenders of their own rights. That is where the ideas and issues, which find expression at the national meetings and inform the policy decisions and actions of the movement are first raised' (Swift, 1999:15). As of today, the movement is estimated to have 5 000 members, one third of them below the age of 12. Most of the members are between 12 and 18, and they are organised in 200 nuclei in 25 states. The number of educators is estimated to be 800. The educators have worked among themselves to develop their skills to work directly with children and to facilitate their participation. They have taken important guidance from the pedagogical thinking of Paolo Freire and his dialogue with street educators.

The First Meeting of Street Boys and Girls was held in Brasilia in 1986. This was the first time in Brazilian history that street children and youth were given a voice, a fact that had great impact on the public, and also greatly influenced the drafting of Brazil's new constitution to include children's rights. The Second National Meeting in 1989 created even more public attention, as the participants at one point 'invaded' the Congress to address the law-makers directly to influence their support for the new Statute on Children's Rights. The fourth meeting, in 1995 had the theme 'We want to be educated to be citizens' and was attended by about one thousand representatives aged 7-17 and about 200 educators. The young participants were elected to represent the nuclei they are members of, around the country.

MNMMR has been participating in the international meetings of young workers' organisations, but currently seem to be marginalised because they have taken the position (based on the situation in Brazil) that no children below the age of 14 should be allowed to work. This has created a strong reaction from other working children's organisations, particularly in other Latin American countries that do not promote any distinct age limits

2.1.3. Objectives and scope of activities

A common goal for the organisations is to support the members in their daily lives, taking their actual situation as workers as the entry point. This is typically done through small focussed discussion groups, inspired by the PRA approach²⁷ used by many NGOs in developmental work. Here, they share their thoughts about the situation they are in, what kind of problems they meet in their work situations, and how to deal with the daily hassles. Many of the members are young people who work in the informal sector – for example as domestics – and work in isolation from others of their age. These young people are particularly prone to exploitation, and need to learn about their rights and possibilities.

Bhima Sangha describes its mission with this statement:

Members of Bhima Sangha feel that they are their own first line of defence and so have the right to organise themselves. They also believe that they are protagonists and can impact on social, political and economic structures in order to mould the society closer to their vision (Bhima Sangha, 1999).

Manthoc, for instance, has paid great importance to support in the young workers a sense of dignity associated with the work, and of being able to make a living from decent work. It is assumed that those who achieve better understanding about their situation as children or adolescents, and as workers and citizens will also be better able to protect themselves from exploitation and seek less harmful types of work.

Manthoc started using the term *protagonism*²⁸ to stress the interactive and responsibility-taking aspects of participation.²⁹ Furthermore, Manthoc promotes what its members call *formación*,³⁰ an educational approach focussed on giving information about the society within which the young workers live and skills that are useful in their particular situation. Most of the organisations have paid great importance to disseminating information widely among their members and externally, with the same goal of empowering the young workers. The African Movement and Bhima Sangha both have newsletters with wide circulation. The Bhima Sangha newsletter has a format that makes it possible to read as a newspaper, or stick to a wall as a poster. The African Movement and Bhima Sangha also have started using electronic communication (e-mail and worldwideweb) to disseminate their information.

In some cases, informal training in literacy and vocational skills is organised within the smaller units of the organisations. Sometimes it is as basic as those who have reading and writing skills sharing it with those who do not. Members of the Senegalese Movement of

²⁷ Participatory Rural Appraisal, a method that is originally developed to empower local communities, and increasingly used with children and youth.

²⁸ From Spanish 'protagonismo'.

²⁹ See for instance Cussianovich, 1997; Sanz, 1997; Swift, 1999; Tolfree, 1998; Torres, 1994.

³⁰ There is no word in English that can translate *formación* properly. The way it is used here refers to creating knowledge and awareness beyond regular education.

Working Children and Youth has given importance to teaching their members French, the official language of the country, to enable them to reach beyond their local language and better understand and take part in what is going on in their society.

Working directly with the members focusing on their daily situation also results in identifying surrounding factors that influence their welfare. Thus, all organisations try to influence employers to improve working conditions or cease exploitative practices. They engage in improvement of services (health care and education, for instance) or to create access to such services. They further try to influence legislation and policy making with relevance for their situation, such as education curricula, child labour legislation. As they grow and become more established, they also reach out to like-minded organisations to join forces, for instance in advocacy for workers' rights or children's rights.

Although they have a local initial focus, the organisations of working children and youth referred to here have engaged in international outreach and networking. This international orientation is probably due to their heritage, being initiated by activists who work locally but are inspired by globally shared philosophies.

2.1.4. Relationship and collaboration between children and adults

As mentioned before, adults have often been the key inspirators and initiators of working children's organisations. They have – as far as I can see – been very conscious about their role as facilitators, and made great efforts to establish the principle that the organisations are to be led by the children and youth, and that they as adults should have only an advisory or supporting role. Most of the organisations have ongoing internal debates on the relationship between adults and the children, and what the roles of the adults should be vis-à-vis the children. In several cases, the 'adults' are actually young people who have joined the organisation at an earlier age, and who want to continue to support their younger 'colleagues'. Their experience, commitment and guidance is certainly of vital importance for the movement, but it might not always be easy for them to switch easily from one role to another, and to pass the 'ownership' of their organisation over to the younger ones. Bhima Sangha has found an apparently sound way to address at least part of this problem by establishing a separate organisation – Namma Sabha – for 'adult child workers' who want to continue to support the movement, but also look after their own interests (Kolkeri, 1997).

The relationship between Bhima Sangha and its 'mother organisation' CWC³¹ has been subject to intense scrutiny, and efforts have been made to make clear what the distinctions are. In the view of CWC, their organisational relationship is that of a trade union and a social institute. While CWC's agenda is largely based on issues raised by Bhima Sangha, the latter regards CWC as a resource centre that they can turn to for support and information. They also see CWC as a provider of capacity building for its members and elected representatives. CWC helps Bhima Sangha produce its newsletter, and also provides assistance for the Bhima Sangha home page on the Internet.

³¹ The Concerned for Working Children.

In West Africa, a programme called the 'African Programme of the Formation of Animators' (PAF) has been established, inter alia, with the aims of supporting the efforts of young people in the urban setting, and tackling, in the field, a joint thinking process in partnership with young people, about the present and the future, emphasising outcast social classes (Tolfree, 1998).

The African Movement of Working Children and Youth

Enda is an international NGO originated in Dakar, Senegal that work in close partnerships with local organisations in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America. It has no religious affiliation, and is engaged in development work and local empowerment based on the principles, 'know better, act better, act locally, think globally'.

From 1985 onwards Enda took an interest in the welfare of street children in West African cities, and was the co-organiser of a regional forum on 'Children and youth of the street' (in Grand-Bassam, Cote d'Ivoire). This represents the beginning of its deep involvement in supporting the organising of working children, the establishment of Enda Jeunesse Action and its EJT (child and youth workers) programme. The original geographical focus of the attention was Dakar, Senegal, where probably the strongest and most active groups are still to be found. The young workers are mainly coming from the informal sector, the vast majority being domestic workers. They are joined by, among others, shoe shiners, porters and tourist guides.

The EJT programme inspired and supported the formation of a large number of independent, but loosely associated 'unions' of working children and youth, and is now known as the African Movement of Working Children and Youth. Particularly strong has been the 'association' of unions in Dakar, which has staged several public rallies. The best known of them is the May Day demonstration in 1994. In this connection the young workers formulated statements relating to the lack of respect of young workers, low and erratic rates of pay, long working hours, lack of access to education and training, exposure to unsafe conditions, abuse and daily hardships.

The movement still organises mainly domestic workers, and the large membership is consisted of girls and young women. There is no rigid age limit, as numerical age does not seem to be perceived as particularly significant. It has groups or 'unions' in 17 towns in Mali, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinee Bissau, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Guinee Conakry and Togo. It is establishing itself in several towns in these countries, as well as in other African countries such as Niger, Mauritania, Chad, Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Uganda. The movement is said to have some 10 000 members, and twice that number of supporters.

The basic unit of organisation is the 'union', a largely independent and child/youth driven entity. Unions vary in size – from 10 to several hundreds – and are allowed to develop at their own pace, depending on the situation and the common denominator, whether it is shared occupation, shared district of origin in the case of migration to the cities, or shared neighbourhood in the city. In some cases, groups of working children approach representatives of the EJT programme for assistance, or people from EJT identify groups that may want to join the movement. Activities in the groups most commonly take place as awareness raising, using but the 12 rights for child and youth workers (adopted by the African Movement at Bouake, Cote d'Ivoire, July 1994) as their entry point. They also focus on practical issues such as how to handle the work situation, to deal with the employer and or customers. Many groups also organise informal training in reading and writing skills. Individual groups of the movement, or the entire Movement have attracted substantial attention through rallies they have staged. They have also been successful in getting access to local and national authorities as well as to trade unions.

Adult supporters are in the African Movement referred to as 'animators'. The choice of word is significant, as it brings connotations to 'bringing something to life' and underlining that their main task is to support and guide but not lead or direct the young workers. The educational background and training of the 'animators' vary greatly, but Enda has organised special activities to train and sensitise them for their special role.

The African Movements has played a leading role in international cooperation between organisations of working children and youth, and has rallied for and supported participation of working children and youth at international meetings where child labour is the issue. The African Movement of working children and youth was one of the three organisations of working children that were invited to participate in NGO caucus at the Oslo conference.

CWC has taken action to promote the concept of working children's protagonism and working children's protagonism both among its own members and with other NGOs in South India. A training workshop to that effect was held in July 1998. Its programme included components such as understanding working children first as children, then as workers, their situation, gender, education, profiles of child workers in their respective states, unionisation of child workers and its benefits, enabling working children's participation in identifying their problems and working towards solving them. (Bhima Sangha, 1999)

2.1.5. How the organisations perceive themselves

Members of the various organisations are using NATs³² as a term to refer to themselves. It has been adopted as an easier way of saying 'working children and youth' which it literally means. It is also used to indicate belonging to an international movement. As mentioned above, the organisations prefer to see themselves as movements, both in the local sense, and in an international perspective. They tend to identify themselves as movements for worker empowerment or poverty reduction rather than for instance a child rights movement. The following statement from one of the young delegates to the Oslo conference underlines this approach:

*[The other delegates] said they want to abolish child labour, put children in schools because children have to go to school, have to play, and that if a child works then he or she is no more a child. While we have organised ourselves to fight against poverty and improvement of our working conditions.*³³

This should be taken as an important indicator of the perspective of many working children. They feel a responsibility for their own welfare, and for contributing to the welfare of their families. They work out of necessity, and they do not see any immediate alternatives. But they want to be respected for their efforts, and work under acceptable conditions. Thus, the working children's organisations become advocates for the *improvement of working conditions*, rather than total abolition of child labour, as their *primary goal*. It is important to understand the preconditions for such a perspective. The urgency of their situation calls for a short-term perspective: better paid work, under more reasonable conditions. (McKechnie and Hobbs, 1998) This might sound as an apparent conflict with international objectives of combating child labour, but it is worth noticing that the working children's organisations *also* see themselves as advocates for the right to education, the right to leisure and cultural activities, as well as for putting an end to work *related exploitation* of children.

³² From Spanish 'Niños y Adolescentes Trabajadores' (working children and youth). With reference to French speaking countries, the term EJT 'Enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs' is also used, having the same meaning.

³³ Dibou Faye, Dakar Working Children's Association, reporting about her experience as delegate to the International Conference on Child Labour, Oslo 27-30 October 1997 (A letter from the street, 1998).

2.1.6. How the organisations are perceived by others

‘How can they represent all working children?’ is often used against representatives from organisations of working children and youth who speak at international meetings. Another comment is ‘Some of them are not even children any longer!’ To the first one, on representativity, technically they can of course not speak on behalf of *all* working children. However, the organisations tend to go through very careful processes to identify who should represent them in the various meetings. That they sometimes use generalised phrases when they talk, should not be judged more harshly than in other instances when people make general statements. On the question of age, it is correct that some of the spokespersons for working children are above 18. Again, it should be noted that they have been elected by the organisations to speak on behalf of them. That should be acceptable, particularly when they do not pretend to be ‘child workers’. Some of them have a history as child workers, and have continued to work for the issue. The age issue has also been used the other way around: At the Oslo conference³⁴, one of the government delegates publicly accused the representative of the African Movement of Working Children and Youth to be lying on her age. He was making the point that a 13-year old would not be able to speak at an international conference the way she did.³⁵ In this context it is also worth noting that these organisations operate in contexts where biological age does not play the same importance as in Western countries. What counts is how a person defines himself or herself, or what role he or she has in society.³⁶

³⁴ International Conference on Child Labour, Oslo, Norway, 27-30 October 1997.

³⁵ This incident was duly underlined and commented upon in the children’s debriefing after the conference. See Save the Children, 1998; A letter from the street, 1998.

³⁶ Another point that has not been raised so often - but is probably the most relevant if one wants to be critical about the representativity - is that the young workers who speak at international conferences or to the media, are probably the most resourceful among the young workers. In that respect, they might not be representing all their fellow workers. This should be borne in mind, so that one does not go to the other extreme and expect that same involvement from all working children and youth.

Bhima Sangha - Karnataka, India

Events leading up to the establishment of Bhima Sangha occurred in early 1980s (Swift, 1999; Reddy, 1998; Wesley, 1995). Activists who tried to help organise adult workers in hotel and small-scale industries for the Bangalore Labour Union discovered that large numbers of children turned up at their meetings. When talking to them, the activists realised that they were confronted with a new dispossessed class of workers. The children asked very basic questions about working hours and conditions, and reported on accidents they had experienced. They also reported that the established unions did not act for children. As the law banned child labour, officially they did not exist. Two of the activists, Nandana Reddy and Damodaracharya, decided to take up the challenge represented by the child workers, and established a voluntary agency 'The Concerned for Working Children' (CWC). The declared purpose of CWC was to improve the lives of working children and their families. They took a child-centred approach and responded to the children as de facto workers. Their inspiration was a society free from exploitation. In their work with children, they took the same empowering approach they applied with adult workers, encouraging them to discuss their lives, identify problems and formulate lines of action.

After some years of activity, CWC launched a research and documentation centre. They also established a newsletter for young workers that turned out to be an effective tool in reaching out to their target group and facilitate the participation and organisation of working children. The newsletter is distributed widely by the activist and carries announcements, observations and stories by working children about their experiences. The production and distribution of the newsletter mobilised working children in Bangalore and surrounding villages. It stimulated discussion among themselves and encouraged the formation of many small groups. Some of the groups also started to take action in situations where children had been harassed, or in other ways experienced situations that they found unacceptable.

As groups formed and started to make their impact, some of the groups began thinking of establishing a larger association. CWC suggested that they start a union. Bhima Sangha was formed in 1990 and took its name from the newsletter. Its mission statement says:

Members of Bhima Sangha feel that they are their own first line of defence and so have the right to organise themselves. They also believe that they are protagonists and can impact on social, political and economic structures in order to mould the society closer to their vision (Bhima Sangha, 1999).

Bhima Sangha currently is active in Bangalore and six other districts in the state of Karnataka. It claims to have about 13 000 members, between 6 and 18 years old.

Both CWC and Bhima Sangha have engaged in influencing labour laws in India, trying to make them more tuned in to the realities. For instance, they have pointed out that it is not sufficient to have laws that regulate formal employment only, as many young workers are employed in the informal sector. They have also been engaged in establishing occupational training, to improve the skills of young workers, and to improve the occupational health prevention and care for young workers.

Also, based on its history from mobilising members to trade unions, Bhima Sangha tries to reach out to the established unions to make them more sensitive to the situation and needs of young workers. It has not sought to register as a union itself, but it has started issuing membership cards that are recognised by the police and others.

Bhima Sangha has initiated Working Children's Councils in several local communities. They are parallel local governments by, for and of working children. Their electorate consists of all working children in a village between 6 and 18, with representation for all children. These councils enable working children to participate in the local government and to raise issues concerning them. It enables children to plan their village in a way that it relieves them from their burdens and is more child centred and child friendly; and prepares children to participate in local government as adults (Bhima Sangha, 1999).

Bhima Sangha has been very active in its international engagement, and was among the convenors of the first international meeting of working children and youth, in Kundapur, 1996. This international engagement has continued, and so far culminated with participating in the International Conference on Child Labour in Oslo, 1997 and the Junior Summit in Boston, Massachusetts, November 1998.

When representatives from working children's organisations have participated in international meetings and conferences, the awkwardness in terms of including them, in a natural way, in the regular proceedings of such meetings has been very obvious. The young people are not familiar with the often-formal setting and protocol. The other participants are not used to dealing directly with young people in such settings, either. Nor do they seem to be comfortable with the language and impatience of the young people.

It has sometimes been some uncertainty about what 'status' to give working children and youth at such events. At the child labour conference in Amsterdam³⁷, there was a panel included in the programme with the young workers. At the Oslo conference, some working children's organisations were invited to participate as part of the NGO caucus. They were invited to make prepared interventions, for instance in the session on 'social mobilisation'. In other words, in Amsterdam, they were treated as 'working children' and given a special and limited space in the conference in the form of a 'working children's panel'. In Oslo, they were 'regular NGO participants' in the conference. Which was most efficient or appropriate is difficult to say.

Their participation was also very controversial, particularly in the Oslo conference, where the Cabinet Minister in charge of the planning of the conference made public statements containing strong criticisms of those who find it acceptable that children work, including their own organisations (Norheim Larsen, 1997). Such attitudes are probably based on a lack of understanding in the differences in perspectives between the working children's organisations and those of several 'adult organisations' combined with a lack of sensitivity for the nuances in the statements from working children's organisations.

2.2. Achievements and impact at local level.

From the reports that are available, it seems that many young workers have profited, at an individual level, from joining an organisation of working children and youth. It has made them more aware of the situation they are in, and how to deal with the daily hassles. This has an empowering function and helps increase their self-esteem and resilience. Joining others who are in the same situation creates a sense of belonging and group solidarity. All organisations carry out various kinds of group activities aimed at increasing the skills of the members to handle their daily situation. The direct involvement of children in the running of the organisations creates a sense of responsibility through collaborative work with others - children and adults. It is in this context that concepts such as protagonism (and *formación*) are important, for they emphasise that the exercise of active participation goes hand-in-hand with the exercise of responsibility. As suggested by Tolfree, based on his study of programmes for working children, 'it is this more active exercise of responsibility which tends to promote positive changes in working children rather than mere participation' (Tolfree, 1998:47).

³⁷ Conference on the elimination of the most intolerable forms of child labour. Amsterdam, 26-27 February 1997.

At the collective level, the group solidarity is translated for instance into informal training in literacy and vocational skills within the smaller units of the organisations, and practical arrangements such as organising collective purchase of material they need for their work, for instance as shoe shiners (Senegal).

To use some other examples from West Africa, working children's groups have successfully negotiated access to classrooms for literary classes after hours (Mali), or on a more systematic level, organised literary courses outside of working hours for their members (Côte d'Ivoire). To address health concerns, they have collaborated with local health services to set up a scheme whereby working children can seek consultation at the hospital at the same price as school children (Côte d'Ivoire), won access to the same services as public servants at the same price as them (Côte d'Ivoire) and set up a mutual savings scheme for health care (Senegal).

Both at community and national level, the organisations have worked to influence legislation relating to children and youth in general, or more specifically to child labour. Examples of this could be found in Peru and India, as the result of the activities of Manthoc and Bhima Sangha, respectively. The most striking and well-publicised example is probably how the MNMMR in Brazil significantly influenced the inclusion of a reference to children's rights in the new constitution and the drafting of a national legislation on children and youth in the late 1980s (Gomes da Costa and Schmidt-Rahmer, 1991). Working children's organisations have participated in local child rights campaigns, and established partnerships for instance with local NGOs and trade unions. In several West African countries, working children have negotiated with local labour unions to participate in their May Day manifestations. In Senegal and Mali, the national movements of working children and youth have become official partners in the local IPEC³⁸ programmes. In Mali, they are represented in its governing body on the invitation of the Ministry of Labour.

KUNDAPUR DECLARATION

11. We want recognition of our problems, our initiatives, proposals and our process of organisation.
12. We are against the boycott of products made by children.
13. We want respect and security for ourselves and the work that we do.
14. We want an education system whose methodology and content are adapted to our reality.
15. We want professional training adapted to our reality and capabilities.
16. We want access to good health care for working children.
17. We want to be consulted in all decisions concerning us, at local, national or international level.
18. We want the root causes of our situation, primarily poverty, to be addressed and tackled.
19. We want more activities in rural areas and decentralisation in decision making, so that children will no longer be forced to migrate.
20. We are against exploitation at work but we are for work with dignity with hours adapted so that we have time for education and leisure.

First International Meeting of Working Children, Kundapur, India
27 November-9 December 1996.

The first thing to mention here is the effective international networking among working children's organisations. Starting with their first gathering in Kundapur in 1996,³⁹ there have been several, international gatherings of representatives from the various movements. There is also an embryonic International Movement of Working Children and Youth.⁴⁰ The young workers who got together in these meetings gave coherent presentations of their own situations, what have led them into the work that they are doing, the problems and hassles that they face on a daily basis, and how they are trying to relate to all of this. Furthermore, they presented ideas and opinions about what needs to be done, as seen from their various perspectives. They expressed concerns about well intended, but not carefully thought out efforts from the international community to 'solve' the 'child labour problem'. They negotiated their positions vis-à-vis international organisations came up with strong recommendations. The essence of their message is reflected in the declarations that are the official outcomes of their meetings,⁴¹ and signals that child workers want to be consulted and involved in the development of initiatives to assist them.

Although surrounded by controversy, representatives of organised working children and youth have found their way into 'adult' fora, in a process that probably cannot be reversed. The 'working children's panel' in Amsterdam, the inclusion of representatives from three working children's organisations⁴² as fully accredited delegates to the Oslo conference, participation in a research conference with focus on child labour,⁴³ meetings of working children and representatives for the ILO⁴⁴ rest as prominent examples. Interventions made by the young representatives at the Oslo conference were often quoted or referred to by the other delegates, and featured prominently in the media coverage from the conference.

The fact that working children and youth have made themselves visible on the international arena has added a new dimension to the child labour discourse. In addition to giving first-hand information about their situation, they have given momentum to a child-oriented perspective that some NGOs, activists, and researchers have tried to introduce for a while.⁴⁵ As a result, they are about to be included among those who need to be consulted and involved in the development of measures to assist them, and consequently seen as partners.

³⁹ First International Meeting of Working Children, Kundapur, India, 27 November - 9 December 1996.

⁴⁰ International Movement of Working Children, meeting in Dakar, Senegal, March 1998. See also, Sanz, 1997.

⁴¹ See boxes with full text of Kundapur declaration and Dakar declaration.

⁴² Bhima Sangha, Latin American Movement of Working Children and Youth, African Movement of Working Children and Youth

⁴³ Urban Childhood conference, Trondheim, Norway, 9-12 June 1997.

⁴⁴ Such meetings took place in connection with the annual International Labour Conference, both in 1998 and 1999.

⁴⁵ See for example the report on the child labour section, Urban Childhood conference (Urban Childhood, 1997)

DAKAR DECLARATION

Debate on the new convention:

- We will ask the ILO to give us a chance to speak during its coming Conference in Geneva so that we can express ourselves on the convention on the 'intolerable forms' of child labour.
- We are against prostitution, slavery and drug trafficking by children. These are CRIMES and not WORK. The decision-makers should distinguish between work and crime.
- We are fighting every day against hazardous work and against exploitation of child work. We are also fighting for the improvement of life and working conditions of all children in the world.
- We want all the children in the world to have, one day, the right to make a choice between working and not working.
- Work should be in accordance with the capacity and development of each and every child and not depend on his/her age.

1. Initiatives and politics on child labour

- The Working Child and Youth Movements should always be consulted in decisions on child work. If a decision has to be taken, we should take it all together.
- We will not participate in the Global March Against Child Labour because its organisers refused to involve us and because we cannot march against our own work.

2. Our Movements

We have decided to create an International Co-ordination of Working Children Movements so as to:

- reinforce our solidarity;
- make known our ten points decided upon in Kundapur against poverty, to address the basic causes which force us to work and for the improvement of our life and working conditions;
- always make clear our point of view in debates on child work.

We are sending this appeal to all Movements of Working Children so that they all can join us.

Adopted by representatives of the Movements of Working Children and Youth of Africa, Latin America and Asia, at their meeting in Dakar, Senegal, March 1998.

Media, both international and national, have picked up on this development. In fact, it could be claimed that the public appearance of working children and youth has helped to give child labour 'a face' and contributed to a more nuanced and diversified understanding of what 'child labour' is. They have demonstrated that, despite being in extremely vulnerable situations, they have resources to make informed decisions about their lives, and that they are not passive *victims* of exploitation, or passive *recipients* of protection and special services, only.

III. MOVING FROM PARTICIPATION TO PARTNERSHIP

What makes the experience of organised working children so interesting is that these young people are not waiting for an invitation to ‘participate’. They act on their own, and implement their own rights in their own way, including their right to freedom of association, a right that is normally not attributed to children. Organisations of working children and youth have developed according to the needs of the people involved as defined by themselves – and could be described as living laboratories for participation, popular involvement and democracy.

In this light it is interesting to see how ‘participation’ has been defined in the literature. The probably most widely used definition comes from Hart’s groundbreaking essay:

[Participation is] the process of sharing decisions which affect one’s life and the life of the community in which one lives. It is the means by which a democracy is built and it is a standard against which democracies should be measured. Participation is the fundamental right of citizenship (Hart, 1992:5).

Another definition that elaborates a bit further comes from Van Beers:

[Participation is] listening to children, giving them space to articulate their own concerns and, taking into account the children’s maturity and capacities, enabling them to take part in the planning, conduct and evaluation of activities, within or outside the family sphere, which may imply involving them in decision making (Van Beers, 1995:4).

It is interesting how these definitions – although stressing participation in decision making - very much present participation as a ‘one-way process’. Participation is presented as something *given to* children or *allowing them* to take part in. They almost entirely escape the dynamic and interactive aspect of the process so strikingly demonstrated by for instance the working children’s organisations, and that such interaction can be initiated by the children *as well as* by the adults. Such interaction takes place at two levels, a) among the children and young people themselves and b) between children and adults, both those adults who support and assist them and the adult world of employers, administrators, government, etc. In such interactive processes, working children and youth take responsibility for themselves and each other, they develop and negotiate strategies for improving their situation and informing about it; they offer solutions and promote changes in legislation and public services. An important motivating factor behind this is of course their sense of having a common cause, an urgent wish for a change in their living conditions and to be respected as human beings. In this perspective one also needs to focus on their competence and expertise, and include an understanding of them as active and contributing. This is what lies behind their own preference for the term *protagonism* as opposed to participation. This line of thought should be taken to its full extent towards a definition of participation that also includes a *partnership* dimension. This would harmonise with their own wish to be seen as *stakeholders* or *partners* in the child labour discourse.

Such a view is supported by for instance Ennew, who has worked with and written about working and street children, extensively. She summarises the experience from various projects and programmes in one fundamental conclusion:

Children are capable, resourceful people whose individual histories, feelings and opinions must be respected. It follows that projects must be considered always as working with children rather than for them, encouraging and facilitating the fullest possible participation. (Ennew, 1994:6)

Further support for establishing a *partnership model* for participation can be drawn from a process initiated by ActionAid. This UK based NGO initiated a research project to examine the impact of environmental change on the lives of families in developing countries (Johnson et al. 1995). The researchers decided to include children as key informants as they were seriously affected by for instance scarcity of water and fuel wood that changed dramatically their workloads and welfare. The project also examined strategies to include children and youth in designing new programmes to assist families in such situations. Experience from this project has triggered a process to examine further - and at a general level - strategies for including children and young people in the development process (Johnson et al. 1998). So far, this process does not focus specifically on child labour issues. Still, it provides inspiration for the further reflections in this paper, its main message being that ‘participation is a dynamic process in which both children and adults have to adapt and change on a regular basis’ (Ivan-Smith and Johnson, 1998:291).

Participation has become a principle of increasing importance in community work and development assistance. Consultation with - and active involvement of - the beneficiaries of the programmes and operation is considered imperative to establish the ownership of the beneficiaries, to avoid creating situations where clients are created and people made dependent on assistance and resources from the outside. The World Bank offers the following definition: ‘Participation is a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them.’ (World Bank, 1996:xi) The principle is further elaborated to underline what participation means in practical terms:

We fully support and advocate consultation and listening – especially with the poor and disadvantaged. But we do not equate this with the process called “participation”. Instead, we recognize consultation and listening as essential prerequisites for participation, because, no matter how good the sponsors and designers are at consultation and listening, what is still missing is learning on the part of the people in the local system. (World Bank, 1996:4)

Children as a group of ‘partners’ or ‘stakeholders’ was probably not very much in the minds of those who started applying the principle of participation. However, there is no reason why, for instance, working children should not be included in the concept, they are also poor and disadvantaged and need empowerment.

It could be claimed that partnership between adults and children can never be implemented on any entirely equal basis (Tolfree, 1998:55). Despite the principles of CRC and all empowerment philosophy connected to it, there is by nature and by tradition a rather unbalanced situation between adults and children in terms of development, experience, power and influence. Working children's organisations have members as young as six years old, who will have limited degree of experience and skills in working with adults. At the other end of the scale, there are many youngsters who will be considered adults and have adult responsibilities in their societies. Thus, the degree of 'participation' that is possible, and the need for adult support will vary widely. The organisations seem to take this problem seriously by for instance developing approaches whereby the older members support and teach the younger ones. Another factor that should not be underestimated is the opportunity children and youth have to learn participation through practice within their own organisations, where peer-relations will be the dominant, being more horizontal and equal in power than most child-adult relations.

Another reason why current definitions of 'children's participation' appear somewhat limited in their scope refers to the fact that in most cases they do not provide descriptions of democracy or citizenship do offer a natural place for children and young people. Principles of children's genuine participation in democracy and their full recognition as citizens will only gain full meaning when mechanisms for including children in democratic processes are developed. Based on an understanding that all human beings are social beings whose well-being depends upon their inter-dependence with others, Cockburn (1998) suggests a new theory of citizenship. What we need, according to him, is a theory that accepts that both adults and children are socially interdependent. Such a theory:

provides theoretical grounds for arguing that all children carry some responsibilities and duties. As even the youngest members of society have the responsibility and duty to reproduce themselves, it is only fitting that the awarding of rights and citizenship should be returned. Although the youngest children may be more 'dependent' upon some adults, this should not necessarily exclude them from citizenship as we are all in some sense or another dependent upon others, including the youngest of children (Cockburn, 1998:113).

Such a theoretical orientation could help us understand and handle some of the dilemmas that working children's organisations have faced concerning the role of the adult facilitators or supporters. Cockburn's approach allows for various levels of activity and responsibility as well as an acknowledgement of the differences between various members of society. With it, one might be able to focus on the positive contribution of the adults, rather than the problems caused because they are so involved. This will of course require a new and clearer understanding of the division of roles between adults and children.

IV. WHY PARTICIPATION OF WORKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH?

Edwards has described how children as social actors until recently have been largely invisible in development policy and practice. This, he claims, leads to lost opportunities both for children themselves and for the communities and societies in which they live (Edwards, 1996:813). He calls for changed attitudes:

so that adults begin to take children seriously as children; to learn to listen to what children have to say, understand the reality of their lives, value the contributions they have to make, and act accordingly. This will make development research, policy and practice a lot more complex, but ultimately more rewarding for all concerned: children, adults, and the communities and societies in which they live and work (Edwards, 1996:824).

In applying Edward's perspective to the field of child labour, one could list the following four main reasons why the participation of - and partnership with - working children and youth are important, when developing and implementing advocacy, policies or programmes:

- it is consistent with a child rights approach to 'child labour';
- children and youth can provide important knowledge;
- children and youth can reinforce and support programmes;
- it is consistent with the principle of consultation.

4.1. Being consistent with a child rights approach

As discussed in the introductory chapter, CRC provides important guidance with regard to analysing and understanding 'child labour' in a way that can benefit children in danger of being exploited in their work, and to prevent such exploitation. To act in the spirit of CRC means to comply with the basic assumption that children and young persons are to be understood as subjects rather than objects. This means that one has to take them seriously as persons and take their resources into consideration, as well. They may not have the same resources as adults, or their resources might be different, according to their development and experience. Examples from the working children's organisations show that they are, indeed, capable of supporting themselves and each other and developing collective approaches to improving their working situations. They have also contributed to changes in external factors influencing their lives, such as national legislation, education system, public opinion and the way policy makers think. Working children shape their working life as well as being shaped by it. According to Woodhead,:

children are not simply passive victims adversely affected by their work. They are social actors, trying to make sense of their physical and social world, negotiating with parents and peers, employers and customers, and making the best of the oppressive and difficult circumstances in which they find themselves (Woodhead, 1998:19).

CRC establishes the right of all children to express their views and having them taken into consideration.⁴⁶ It is particularly important to be attentive to those children who normally do not have regular channels or established audiences for their views and opinions. CRC is written in the language of international human rights treaties, and stresses the rights of the child as an individual. However, CRC should be interpreted to establish the rights of children to express their views and influence their situation *both* at an individual and at a collective level. To act at the collective level, the organisations of working children and youth are interpreting these parts of CRC in a creative way to secure otherwise marginalised individuals a voice.

There are some traditions for specifying the rights and duties of individual children in national legislation concerning for instance citizenship, inheritance, education and matters relating to the family sphere. But it is equally important to ensure that also at all other levels where decisions are being made, the views of children whose lives the decisions will affect are taken into consideration. Including children in policymaking and decision making at community level together with other stakeholders is not common or taken for granted. Working children and youth have demonstrated that they are ready and willing to make a contribution, and it should be explored what this could mean in practical terms.

Interventions to address child labour problems must be perceived as helpful by those working children that they are aimed at, and refer to their actual experience. To achieve this, it is imperative to look at the definitions of the problems and the effect of the interventions from the perspective of the working children they are aimed at, including to collect information directly from them. This is the only way to make any interventions for them effective, and to ensure that they are in the *best interests* of the children affected.

Child labour situations are often perceived as so appalling and abusive that an immediate change is called for. This creates a strong emotional engagement among many agencies and individuals. But in order to do something effectively with the problems, it is necessary to understand the whole situation. Particularly, it is important to carefully consider what serves the children involved best. In some cases, under-age children have been expelled from factories after pressure from media and consumer groups. When such interventions are made without any further measures to provide for their loss of income, the result might be that after being 'freed' from factory work, some of these children end up in worse work situations (Badry Zalamy et al., 1998). Such experience calls for constant awareness to ensure that policies or actions to remove children from work or abolish work related exploitation of children actually have the intended effect, and not put them at greater peril.

4.2. Working children and youth as an important source of knowledge

Working children and youth have first hand and relevant knowledge that can help to understand child labour properly, and serve useful in planning and conducting effective advocacy or programmes. Their experience and expertise represents an under-utilised source of knowledge. Particularly, working children and youth can give useful information on:

⁴⁶ CRC Articles 12 and 13.

- what is harmful and stressful in their work situations;
- what is beneficial, or gives them useful skills in their work situations;
- what brought them into the work situation, and what keeps them there;
- what do they see as alternatives to work, positive or negative.

Persons who have worked directly and extensively with working children already have pointed out that:

[t]he capacity of children, specially working children, to identify and analyse situations that they find themselves in and change them is grossly underestimated and undermined. They know their situations the best, they understand the nature of humiliation and oppression, they recognise the things that enable growth, development and empowerment. They know what needs to be changed and very often, what needs to be done to change them (Reddy, 1998).

Such views are supported by the research of Woodhead and colleagues. In a study with material collected in several countries, they asked children about their work. Their study was particularly aimed at seeking new understanding about the mechanisms that bring children into various forms of work, keep them there and how they judge their own work against existing alternatives (Woodhead, 1998). They underline that:

listening to children's feelings, perceptions and views is an essential source of evidence on the way work affects [children's] development, especially psychosocial aspects of development. Their feelings about work, about school and about core social relationships that support or undermine their dignity and sense of security are vital indicators of hazard and harm (Woodhead, 1999:29).

There is already a substantial body of knowledge about poverty as the perhaps main mechanism bringing children into exploitative work situations. Existing research has also indicated that there are other mechanisms in force - such as local traditions and perceptions about child development and children's capabilities - which bring children into work situations, and blur the understanding of the harmful effects that various types of work can have.⁴⁷ Such mechanisms are important to understand, also as they are perceived and responded to by children and young persons. Knowledge about these mechanisms would be useful particularly in efforts to support the resilience of children and youth against work related exploitation, and to prevent them from entering such situations.

4.3. Working children and youth as a resource in programmes and interventions

There has been a tendency in child welfare in general, and development assistance aimed at children in particular, to focus on children's vulnerability and the problems they face or that they represent. They are seen mainly as passive recipients of services or individuals to be provided for. This has resulted in a tendency to ignore the strengths and potentials that

⁴⁷ See for instance Camacho, 1999; Letuka, 1998; Woodhead, 1998.

children and young people represent. There is a systematic disregard for the fact that ‘in developing countries children continue to be active and important contributors to family income and welfare, production and reproduction’ (Edwards, 1996:816). Even more seriously, Edwards and others claim, this rarely translated into participation in the political sphere. Organised working children and youth are calling for a change in this situation. They have demonstrated that they want to contribute to the elimination of economic exploitation of children and that they have both ideas and energy to that effect.

This calls for a change in attitudes and thinking among those who plan and implement programmes or other interventions to address child labour:

The most important resource in project design and management is not money, or buildings, or adult skills, but the children themselves. They are not ‘objects of concern’ but people. They are vulnerable but not incapable. They need respect, not pity. True child participation should be the goal of every project and a constant consideration of project management and workers alike (Ennew, 1994:35).

Tolfree (1998) reports from his study that those programmes that include working children actively might be more effective and sustainable than those which do not. Children who are actively involved in programmes to a lesser extent see themselves as passive recipients of services, but become aware of the capacity they might have to influence their own situation. If children are actively involved in the programmes aimed at them, and have a sense of ‘ownership’, there is also a large probability that the effects of the individual programme will last.

Including children and youth in programmes might take place in many different ways. Thus, it might be necessary to adjust existing approaches and methodologies in order to include children and youth in programmes in genuine and meaningful ways, and to develop new ones. The principles should be the same as with other stakeholders: to acknowledge the resources and knowledge about their own situation of the persons any programme aims to reach. Children may have different ways of expressing themselves, or have different skills than adults. The question is then to develop the appropriate approaches to capture and capitalise on this, rather than dismissing children as partners because they do not behave as adults.

Having seen the ability of working children and youth to mobilise among themselves and to develop cultures of collective support and solidarity, it is obvious that they can represent an important force towards change. Particularly, they can be influential in terms of changing attitudes about work and influencing understanding and awareness about situations of exploitation. The collective efforts of working children and youth can help develop resilience to avoid exploitative situations. Likewise, their attitudes towards schooling and education can be influential in terms of mobilising for investing in education.

V. PRINCIPLES FOR CREATING PARTNERSHIPS

Participation and partnership that genuinely include children is not easy, for a number of reasons. In some cases, it might be perceived as something ‘modern’ and not compatible with cultural, legal and traditional perceptions about children’s role in society. In other cases, there might be a lack of understanding about what it really means or how to implement it in a meaningful way. However, there are strong indications about the advantages of providing for more genuine participation of working children and youth in programmes, policies and advocacy concerning economic exploitation. This, combined with the imperatives of a child rights approach to define children and youth as active participants and partners in issues concerning their own welfare, creates the basis for a tentative list of five principles for creating partnerships with working children and youth:

- Establishing a culture of listening to children’s voices
- Providing the appropriate and accurate information to working children and youth
- Establishing participation that is compatible with the actual situation of the children
- Distinguishing between participation at various levels
- Allowing for various degrees of participation

5.1. Establishing a culture of listening to children’s voices

First of all, there is the challenge of establishing a climate where the principle of listening to children’s views and opinions is integrated and accepted. There must be effective channels and mechanisms whereby the contributions from children are integrated into the situations where decisions are made, whether in the family or in other parts of society. This needs to be developed and nurtured in ways that respect the capacities and development of the child(ren) in each individual case, and not in conflict with ways children and young people and their development are perceived in their respective societies.

The ‘participation rights’ of CRC are promoted in a way that might create the impression that it is something new and ‘western’, and thus incompatible with traditional perceptions of child development and children’s role in society around the globe. Tolfree (1998) describes the dilemma promoters face: If working children are encouraged to be active and self-assertive in a male-oriented and patriarchal society such as for instance El Salvador, one might put them at risk of being more marginalised because they are acting contrary to conventional expectations. On the other hand, if such training is carefully facilitated, children might be agents for change in society towards empowerment of the poor and end of abuse of children.

There might also be other ways whereby children are included, but that take other forms or are given other names than the ‘western’ version. Himonga (1998) in her study of Zambian families, observed that children were actually involved in making important decisions in the family, by expressing themselves through song and dance, even if they traditionally are not allowed to *speak* directly to adults. It might be worth looking for other such examples where participation or elements of participation are practised in

accordance with traditional values. Also, there is a need to identify how the idea of children's participation and taking children's views into consideration can be linked with local traditions and perceptions, and to develop culturally sensitive ways of introducing the idea where such links are not easily found.

Even in societies that more positively embrace the notion of children's participation, there have been intense discussions about what it actually means, and how far the traditional decision makers are willing to share their power with young people, or to be influenced by them.⁴⁸ Child labour studies in European countries show that even in situations where young people are engaged in work that is both legally and socially acceptable, they do not always have their rights as workers fully respected or feel that they are properly valued and listened to as employees because of their young age.⁴⁹

5.2. Children and youth must have appropriate and accurate information

As we have seen, all the working children's organisations stress the need for information and have taken various steps to maximise flow of information to their members. Exchange of information in the core groups of members, information from adult supporters and various kinds of newsletters play an important role in the activities of the organisations. This is also in line with the underlying philosophy, that for instance Manthoc expresses in its focus on *formación*. Because of their marginalised situation and often being on the outside of the regular education systems, working children and youth are very effectively cut off from important information. Experience shows that they actively seek information and share it among themselves. It is important that the information they get – particularly in programmes and projects where they are invited to participate – is accurate and reliable and also presented in a way that they can understand and use it. Experience also shows that information about the organisations and systems they are approaching in their activities is crucial. Particularly, if they are to gain access to international fora and processes, information about these is important. This is one of the reasons that 'working children's forum' have been held in connection with international conferences, as an effort to support and prepare the young participants.

A very concrete example from the local level about the importance of information about the situation young people participate in, is quoted by Boyden et al. (1998): In Indonesia an ILO-IPEC project:

demonstrated that the ability of working children to defend themselves in the factory environment can be substantially increased by equipping them with proper information and skills. Using an alternative education approach, the project helped nearly 200 factory children, many of whom worked in hazardous conditions, to master the organizational and negotiating techniques necessary to present their complaints and ideas to national and local government leaders, NGO representatives and the media as part of an awareness-raising campaign on

⁴⁸ See for instance, Flekkøy and Kaufman, 1997; Franklin, 1998; Hart, 1992; Hart et al., 1997; Miljeteig, 1999b; West, 1997.

⁴⁹ See for instance, Frederiksen, 1999; McKechnie and Hobbs, 1999.

detrimental child work. At the end, 13 factories employing some 1 500 children removed them from hazardous tasks and extended wage, insurance, and leave benefits, previously available only to adults, to the children as well. (Boyden et al., 1998:231)

In a training manual on participatory research with children, the importance of providing children with appropriate information is underlined:

To participate meaningfully, children need information about the reasons and the consequences of what they are doing, and the social skills for decision-making, debate and action. This need not be confined to teenagers; even pre-school children can participate if adults are willing to share power (Boyden and Ennew, 1997:39).

5.3. Participation must be compatible with the actual situation of the children involved

CRC makes it clear that – in all matters – one needs to take into consideration the development of the child as well as its capacity and resources. This means that one needs to take account for the fact that a five-year old and a 16-year old will have different orientations and abilities to formulate their views or take part in decision-making processes. There will also be differences according to socio-economic status, level of education, access to information and so on. Therefore, the involvement of children and youth must be conditional on their actual possibilities to participate. There must be sufficient flexibility for individual differences, and not least, the expectations must be realistic. Furthermore, participation must be something that is optional, it can never be forced upon children and youth. If there are external factors that influence the role that children might play, that must also be made clear, so that they are not heavily involved in ‘participation’ that is not likely to be taken seriously for instance by those who make final decisions about a programme. In some cases, it has to be respected if working children are not always so eager to ‘participate’ or that they want to use their spare time for play and recreation. As Manthoc repeatedly points out, protagonism can only develop through a long-term educative process, and in a climate of respect and sense of equality among those involved.

5.4. Partnerships might be different at various levels – from local to global

In order to give more meaning to the idea of partnership and to develop ways it could be implemented, it might be helpful to distinguish between the various levels - from local to global - particularly because the objectives will be quite different, as will the strategies and types of participation. As the descriptions above have shown, organisations of working children and youth in many cases have already established good working partnerships with relevant counterparts or other organisations at local level. This is probably where the most important and influential partnerships are going to take place also in the future, and where the large majority of working children and youth might have a chance to exercise their influence.

There are quite a few highly publicised examples of working children's participation in various international events. These have ranged from international gatherings that the movements of working children and youth have organised themselves or together with their supporting organisations, to international conferences at inter-governmental level. The experience reported from the children's own meetings seems to be positive, although such meetings are costly and require great co-ordinating and technical efforts. Such meetings involve particular needs for interpretation, and they represent enormous inter-cultural efforts. There are also mixed feelings among the participants whether the outcomes justify the costs and efforts. However, these global-level events have already had significant effects in terms of creating a sense of global solidarity between working, and represented important occasions for exchange of experience.

Participation of working children and youth in international conferences might have high symbolic value. But the real influence often lies in participating in, and influencing the preparations for such events. In order to pave the ground for genuine participation in international fora, a process of consultation needs to be established. Therefore, further discussions about how to include children and youth in international collaboration should among other things focus on how to establish mechanisms whereby working children and youth can be represented and duly heard at all stages in international collaboration.

5.5. Allowing for various degrees or forms of participation

It seems that the organisations of working children and youth have been successful in establishing structures where the members have direct influence and take part in their development. At some point, however, there will be a turning point where the individual participant cannot take directly part in all decisions, as observed by Tolfree:

In working children's programmes, the concept of organisation is important in two senses. First, that children come together in groups in order to discuss shared issues and concerns, to learn to listen to each other's views, develop skills of self-expression, find ways of analysing situations together and reach the kind of common understandings which are necessary in order to take effective collective action. Second, organisation, especially in the context of large numbers of children in many different groups, requires structures in order to facilitate discussion and democratic decision making. (Tolfree, 1998:45)

This requires some careful thinking about organisational structures and levels of representativity and influence. Because working children and youth live in situations with extreme pressure on their time and personal resources, the technical and organisational support they can get is crucial. In addition to this, 'working children' is by default a group with high turnover, where membership will change as members grow beyond the age where they could be defined as children. Thus, support from adults is important if the organisations are to sustain with some continuity. This is also why it is necessary to think of participation as something that can take different forms, from full or direct participation to more limited participation and to participation by proxy.

To a large extent organisations such as Enda and CWC serve as advocates for working children's participation. International NGOs, such as the members of the Save the Children Alliance have defined it as a principle to support children's participation in their own programmes, and started trying it out (Save the Children Alliance, 1997; Johnson et al., 1995). Such advocacy and promotion of the idea is important at this stage, where we are still talking about new ideas and practices. Inspired by the Scandinavians, several countries world-wide have – at a general level – introduced special commissioners or *ombudsman* for children, high-profile, high-visibility public positions with their sole mandate to look after and protect children's rights and children's interests.⁵⁰ Some countries have taken this concept further in local government. In Norway, for instance, every municipality is bound by law to appoint a person to serve as children's representative and *spokesperson* in all cases of urban planning and development of physical space.⁵¹ One should try to develop such ideas further and apply them more specifically in the child labour context, in order to ensure that all advocacy and spokesman-functions on behalf of working children and youth are developed to the optimal level and truly represent the interests and perspectives of working children.

It is intriguing to note that arrangements of institutional representatives or spokespersons for children might not be so 'modern' as they seem. Himonga, for instance, has described how grandparents in traditional African societies serve as advocates for their grandchildren. In such societies, children were not supposed to speak directly to adults in public. However, well-established child-grandparent alliances serve as the channels for children to make their wishes and opinions heard (Himonga, 1998).

Finally, children's views and perspectives can also be effectively conveyed through research. Research could serve an important purpose in making efforts to study the working children's own perceptions, and through participatory research methods provide knowledge of what work means to children in various situations, and how it impacts them and their families. Much research is already taking place inspired by issues brought up in programmes for working children, and a promising interface between researchers and practitioners and working children is developing in terms of setting the future research agenda. The child labour section of Urban Childhood conference two years ago gathered representatives from the three mentioned groups for a critical review of existing research efforts and future research needs concerning child labour. Their discussions focussed, *inter alia*, on how to develop a truly child-oriented perspective, and how to create synergies between those who study various aspects of child labour and those who deal with child labour issues in practical terms. The participation of working children and youth in this discussion had a particularly inspirational effect (Miljeteig, 1999; Urban Childhood, 1997).

⁵⁰ See for instance, Flekkøy, 1991.

⁵¹ See for instance, Kjørholt, 1998.

VI. DILEMMAS AND OBSTACLES

There will always be the danger that any effort to improve the situation of working children could be seen as - or have the effect of – galvanising or even legitimising work situations that are not acceptable. There must never be any doubt that the ultimate goal is to do away with anything that is harmful or hazardous to children, or could have a negative impact on their health or development. Working children do have the capacity to take part in decisions about when and how they could work, and about where to draw the lines between what could be accepted or not. But they should not be left to take the responsibility alone, and they should not be expected to have insight in all the long-term effects of their choices, or to have the same degree of overview of macro-aspects such as one could expect from government.

Again the issue of right to access to information becomes an important factor to take into consideration. In order to participate in democratic processes and to take action concerning their own lives, children need the necessary information to make informed decisions. If working children are to have real influence, they must understand their societies and if they are to influence the international discourse, they also need to understand the international context with its institutions and processes. It is an obligation of the adult society to ensure that the *right to information* is taken seriously. The pioneers of Manthoc obviously understood this when they placed so much importance on information and education in the broad sense.

The implementation of CRC world-wide has repeatedly demonstrated that it is not an easy text to understand within various cultural, legal, religious or traditional frameworks.⁵² This is an issue beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say that some of the articles that are in focus here, such as Articles 12, 13 and 15 clearly are among those principles of CRC that cause most controversy. That children have a right to speak out and to be listened to goes beyond what is generally considered to be acceptable in many cultures, as well as the right to organise themselves. Thus, ‘in adopting highly participative approaches, organisations concerned with children may be running counter to the ways in which children are being socialised by parents, teachers and others’ (Tolfree, 1998:48). If this happens, one runs the risk of putting additional problems on the shoulders of working children and youth. One needs to strike a careful balance between the expectations of the adult supporters or programme workers to empower children and support their liberation on the one hand, and the expectations of parents and other adults, on the other hand, that children should be obedient and submissive. Tensions can arise because idealistic adults want to go further in promoting children’s participation than what is currently accepted in the communities where they work, or that children are ready for. This might sometimes make it necessary to carefully rephrase and downplay the ‘participation aspect’ of programmes for children to a level that can be tolerated in the community. One also has to keep in mind that the children themselves often are raised in traditions with other expectations to them that those of child rights activists.

⁵² See for instance Alston, 1994; Boyden, 1997; Burman, 1996; Ennew and Milne, 1989; Ncube, 1998.

There is also the danger of getting caught by the ‘political correctness’ of promoting children’s participation and forgetting the need to be sensitive to the needs and capacities of the children, and the role they are traditionally given in their societies. As Tolfree quite correctly observes:

With the current trend of seeing child participation as ‘politically correct’, there are great dangers that organisations may respond to donor pressure by attempting to see it as something which can be ‘bolted on’ to existing approaches. The experience [...] is that genuine participation is difficult and requires fundamental change in staff attitudes, working methods, their role-relationship with children and their own experience of participation within the organisation. Above all it requires able and confident adults who are secure in their own role, who really appreciate the importance of listening to children, and who value their personal resources and see their capacity to be social actors rather than merely beneficiaries (Tolfree, 1998:57).

This underlines the importance of sensitisation and capacity building among those who work with working children and youth and who want to accommodate for their participation. Those who initiated or inspired the working children’s organisations obviously understood this quite intuitively. However, the most important part of such capacity building is the daily and non-prejudiced interaction and dialogue with working children and youth. Many people already have such experience. It is important to have it recorded and analysed in a way that makes it possible for others to learn from it.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that promoting children’s participation is relatively new in the form that is discussed here. Thus, among the difficulties and obstacles concerning effective and genuine participation of children one needs to include the simple fact that we may not have the sufficient understanding of ‘how to’ yet. There seems to be some important experience gained at local level. This needs to be fully examined, and more knowledge accumulated. Concerning ways to include working children at international levels, much more creative work needs to be done. Simultaneously, good procedures for diffusing experience from local levels to international levels need to be developed.

VII. FORWARD STRATEGIES - NEXT STEPS

7.1. Division of labour among various groups and agencies

‘Participation’, ‘protagonism’ and to some extent ‘partnership’ with working children have become popular ‘buzzwords’ in child rights and development circles and ‘politically correct’ to include in discussions. As the previous sections of this paper have shown, participation, protagonism and partnership with working children and youth can take place in a variety of contexts, with a variety of objectives and with different types of impact. However, available information is very scattered and mostly anecdotal. Thus, it is difficult to analyse and evaluate. There is a great need to clarify in more detail which these situations are, who the stakeholders are, what the results are, and how the process might

be taken further. In the following, a list of ‘next steps’ will be suggested, with an indication of who the actors might be. Only with such a systematic approach will it be possible to take the complex issue of working children’s participation forward in a meaningful way.

7.2. More knowledge needed - role of research and importance of information sharing

A first step that could be taken more or less immediately is to undertake a systematic compilation and analysis of already existing experience, and to disseminate it widely. There is a fundamental lack of understanding what participation means if it is to be taken to its fullest meaning, in a way that respects the capacities and integrity of children *and* is culturally sensitive. Particularly, there is a need for research and analysis that could help address the following issues:

- children’s capacity for ‘participation’ and ‘partnership’, their competence, resilience and other aspects of development that are relevant;
- results and impact of working children’s participation;
- how working children and youth perceive their roles and strategies when involved in programmes or other activities related to child labour;
- mechanisms that facilitate and complicate (or obstruct) children’s participation;
- local understandings and traditions that can be conducive to children’s participation and respect for their contribution to family and society;
- to what extent are programmes that include working children actively more effective and sustainable, and what makes such programmes replicable;
- relationships and roles between children of different ages as well as between ‘children’ and ‘adults’, how to establish non-intrusive working relations between children of various ages and adults;
- the role of the adults involved: How do they balance their efforts to make a difference against the respect for children’s integrity? How do they most effectively support the children without making them dependent of their constant presence?

Efforts to gain understanding of the *perspectives of working children* should be intensified in research, using various methods to include children in the research process. Such child-oriented research should not be seen as replacing other types of research, but rather as complementing efforts:

Carrying out a study of children’s perspectives is not an alternative to conventional evaluation research. Such research may demonstrate long-term toxic effects of hazardous work, of which young people themselves are oblivious. Multiple approaches are required to determine the impact of work in children’s lives, that acknowledge multiple perspectives as well as the impact of specific situations and experiences. [...] Ideally, studying children’s perspectives would be complemented by the perspectives of families, employers, non-working school-children, etc. (Woodhead, 1999:29).

Existing research touching upon issues such as those mentioned above has mostly been undertaken in connection with the work of NGOs or commissioned by them. There is a need to encourage academic groups world-wide to take a greater interest in this research and ensure a sustainable research approach that includes all relevant disciplines and methodological approaches. Major international and intergovernmental organisations with a capacity to conduct or commission research – or with a strong research in research - such as ILO, UNICEF (the International Child Development Centre in Florence), the World Bank and the Save the Children Alliance should be encouraged to include such issues in their research portfolios, when appropriate, and to collaborate more closely with relevant research groups.

7.3. Reaching out to organisations of working children and youth

The working children's organisations and their collaboration at various levels will need to develop and take place organically and in its own way, and according to what the working children themselves find worth investing in. They would probably also need continued support in order to have a chance to develop further, and to develop their outreach to adult organisations and agencies. Discussions about what kind of support they would need and how it should be implemented, need to be initiated. Simultaneously, 'adult' organisations with an engagement in child labour issues need to look at their own ability and willingness to serve as supporters and partners for the working children's movements, and to enter various kinds of partnerships with working children and youth. A natural first step in this process would be to start a systematic dialogue between organised groups of working children and youth and the other involved agencies and organisations both at local and international levels. This dialogue could build on the informal contacts that already exist, at the same time as other organisations and groups of working children and youth are identified and new contacts established. As this process goes on, there is also a need to develop ways whereby the working children and youth can have their information and interests taken into consideration in more indirect ways, when direct influence is difficult or not feasible, through advocacy, spokespersons and other ways.

In this context, it is interesting to note that the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) which has traditionally had a critical position vis-à-vis the working children's organisations, has launched a campaign to make trade unions more sensitive to the interests and needs of young workers between 14 and 18, and to include them actively among their members. This is a very interesting development, and efforts should be made to see how trade unions could serve as effective tools for those young workers that are eligible.

7.4. Programmes and operations

Based on its engagement in, and experience from, child labour issues, the Save the Children Alliance has written the following into their position paper on child labour:

The [Save the Children] Alliance believes that working children know their own immediate situations best. Policy, planning and action on child work issues must

involve the participation of working children and that of their families. This will help ensure that action is based on the reality of children's lives and enhance the likelihood of its success. It will also help reduce the possibility of interventions having unforeseen negative consequences. Promoting the participation of working children and their families in solving their own problems may involve, among other activities, supporting the development of working children's organisations (Save the Children, 1997:3).

The Alliance and its member organisations are now working to develop their strategies to implement this commitment, based on their own experience, and that of other organisations.⁵³ They should be encouraged to share their experience with other interested organisations. UNICEF and IPEC are, to some extent, involving working children and youth in their programmes and have played supportive roles, but not in the same direct manner. They should be encouraged to take steps to develop more comprehensive child-including approaches.

7.5. Advocacy and social mobilisation

In addition to developing models for genuine and culturally sensitive participation of working children in their planning and programming which relate to their situation, organisations that work both at local and international levels, such as Save the Children and UNICEF could play an important role in serving as advocates for working children and youth, and help convey their views and opinions from the local level into relevant international fora. An important contribution from UNICEF has been the efforts to help publish information from various relevant activities, for instance MNMMR's movement to influence legislation in Brazil, and for commissioning groundbreaking publications on the topic of children's participation and advocacy for working children. The involvement of working children and youth in the IPEC programmes in some West African countries is promising, and it is hoped that this will pave the way for more direct involvement in the important type of advocacy that the IPEC programmes represent.

Organisations involved in advocacy and social mobilisation related to child labour should seek ways to include working children and youth in these activities. Young people know how to speak to young people, and the impact of peers in changing attitudes and behaviour could be much more effective than the impact of adults on children and youth.

There is a great need for developing culturally sensitive strategies for promoting children's participation. It is important to look for cultural and traditional experience that can ease the introduction of a concept that often feels alien in many societies, non-western and western, alike. Here it is a need to draw upon local expertise on cultural practices and local understandings of childhood and children's role in society.

⁵³ See for instance Ennew, 1994; Johnson et al., 1998; Save the Children, 1999; Tolfree, 1998.

7.6. Legislation and public policies

Another important experience from existing initiatives is the need to reach out to, and sensitise lawmakers and decision-makers at various levels. They are formulating legislation and policies and make budget allocations that influence the lives of working children and youth, as well as their families. They need to be aware of their particular needs and be challenged to take them into consideration. As we have seen in the examples cited earlier, this has been done – with various degrees of success – in for instance Peru, Brazil, Senegal and India. If working children can formulate their claims with convincing arguments and join forces with other popular movements, there is a fair chance that they will succeed. It is also important that organisations such as UNICEF, and others that work directly with governments, use this opportunity to advocate the needs and rights of working children, and promote the idea of including them as partners in legislation and policy-making.

7.7. International cooperation

Working children and youth are already part of international cooperation on child labour issues by virtue of their own international meetings, and of their participation at some major international conferences. There is, however, a long way to go to ensure good and working mechanisms for their integration in international cooperation. Much attention has been focussed on a few events at global level. They are significant enough, as a part of the complete picture. But it is probably more important to find ways to integrate working children and their views in the day-to-day work in various organisations at various levels, and in their collaboration and make sure that it is diffused to the various levels. This needs creative development work, in the same way as it will require some creative thinking to find ways to ensure that children are not excluded from international event where their voices should be heard.

VIII. WHAT COULD THE WORLD BANK DO?

8.1. Include in programmes (lending/non-lending activities)

With its already clear and well established position on partnership in its operations, it might be natural for the World Bank to elaborate its strategies to include participation of and partnership with working children. The Bank could also consider including in all operations that have any reference to working children or their situation, the principle of the best interest of the child as well as the principles of participation and partnership. The Bank could be particularly sensitive to identifying and supporting activities that include such an approach.

8.2. Research

The World Bank is already supporting a substantial body of research with relevance to child labour issues. The Bank could consider including some of the research needs

mentioned above in further research to be conducted or commissioned by the Bank. For instance, research to produce knowledge on the following issues is needed:

- how to integrate working children in programmes aimed at their situation and welfare;
- what is/could be the impact of working children and youth on programmes and policies relating to child labour;
- cultural and social mechanisms that facilitate or counteract partnerships with working children and youth;
- how does participation in programmes, or in own organisations, increase young workers' resilience, their ability to handle their own situation, increase their human capital, present economic welfare or future income earning capabilities.

8.3. Sensitisation and capacity building of staff and partners

The World Bank could include knowledge of the merits of and methods for, working with working children in its sensitisation and capacity building relating to child labour with own staff and that of partners. This could also be included in sensitisation and capacity building in other areas that have relevance for child labour, such as education and early childhood development.

8.4. International collaboration

The World Bank is a major player within the international collaboration to support economic and social reconstruction, poverty reduction as well as development assistance. By including principles for participation and partnership with young workers in relevant programmes and contributing to the development of relevant methodology, the Bank could have a significant impact on the international child labour discourse. By introducing it in programmes and in collaboration with other organisation the Bank could ensure that working children's participation becomes an important element of all programme activities with relevance for working children and youth.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

The primary goal of child labour interventions is to address with great urgency all situations where children and young people are being exploited through their work, and to prevent the further occurrence of such situations. With an extremely complex matter, such as child labour, it is important to thread carefully. Particularly, it is important to always carefully consider whether every move actually is to the benefit of the children involved and do not have unintended effects. It is important to state very clearly that reaching out to working children and youth, taking their views and experience into consideration, and to make them partners in the child labour discourse, could not be seen (or should not be seen) as acts that could galvanise their situations of exploitation.

To argue for the inclusion of working children and youth means primarily to see them as a resource in the fight against exploitation, to define them as partners rather than objects or

adversaries. This paper has listed several reasons why this is important, most notably that this is consistent with a child rights approach, and with current trends within community and development work. Taking working children and youth seriously means examining objectively their views and perspectives in a dialogue that focuses the various options and potential short-term and long-term effects. It does not mean that every suggestion from working children and youth will be accepted uncritically. (Would there ever be a need to say the same about any other group in the child labour discourse?) But it would need to take them seriously in terms of trying to understand what they reflect, what are the motivation behind them and what would the impact be. Particularly important it would be to do so in a dialogue that includes a critical discussion of any variations between long-term and short-term perspectives, and the differences in strategies that that might imply.

Such a dialogue should take as its entry point the view that young workers are competent and resourceful rather than being passive and representing a problem. With such a positive approach one has a better chance of succeeding. Another relevant entry point is the fact that the organised working children see themselves as fighting against poverty. That is an objective shared by the other actors. Their insight in cultural and other mechanisms that lead to child labour is also an important resource in order to understand what causes child labour other than poverty. And finally, their wish to change the situation is a motivating factor that is worth including in the perspective and makes them invaluable partners in social mobilisation as well. All of this, it is argued, fall well in line with recent development of programming and policies for children as observed by for instance Boyden et al. (1998); Edwards (1996), Ennew (1994), Johnson et al. (1998) and described in policy documents by for instance the World Bank (Fallon and Tzannatos, 1998); UNICEF (1997) and Save the Children (1997).

Although relatively new to the field of child labour, the World Bank's main objective of poverty reduction could be challenged to include the perspective on poverty taken by working children and youth. The World Bank gives importance to participation and empowerment of the beneficiaries of programmes financed by loans from the Bank. Thus, reaching out to work more directly with the organisations of working children and youth would be an invaluable effort to test the further potential of established principles of the Bank.

This paper is an effort to summarise and identify some issues that are new to the child labour discourse. The main concern has been to provide input for a further discussion of this way of expanding the child labour discourse, and developing it further in a *dialogue with* working children and youth. There are more questions than answers at this point in the process, and is a long road to go to develop new positions. The guiding principle should be to *the best interests* of working children and youth.

REFERENCES

- A letter from the street* (1998), No. 17. Dakar: Enda Tiers Monde
- Agenda for Action* (1997), Adopted at Oslo Conference on Child Labour, October 27-30, 1997. Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Alston, P. (1994) 'The Best Interests Principle: Towards a Reconciliation of Culture and Human Rights', in P. Alston (ed.) 1994 *The Best Interests of the Child: Reconciling Culture and Human Rights*. Oxford: Clarendon Press and UNICEF
- Arana, C., M. Cisne and M. Liebel (1997) 'On the history and prospects of the Regional Movement of the Central American Isthmus, Mexico and the Caribbean', *NATs Working Children and Adolescents International Review*, 3(3-4): 103-114
- Badry Zalami, F. et al. (1998) *Forgotten on the Pyjama Trail. A Case Study of Young Garment Workers in Méknès Dismissed from their Jobs Following Foreign Media Attention*. Amsterdam: International Working Group on Child Labour.
- Bhima Sangha (1999) *Bhima Sangha WWW home page*. <http://www.workingchild.org>
- Boyden, J. (1997) 'Childhood and the Policy Makers: A Comparative Perspective on the Globalization of Childhood.' In A. James and A. Prout *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood. Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood*. London: Falmer Press
- Boyden, J. and J. Ennew (1997) *Children in Focus – a manual for participatory research children*. Stockholm: Rädda Barnen
- Boyden, J., B. Ling and W. Myers (1998) *What works for working children*. Stockholm: Rädda Barnen and UNICEF.
- Burman, E. (1996) 'Local, Global or Globalized? Child Development and International Child Rights Legislation', *Childhood*, 3(1): 45-66
- Camacho, A. Z. V. (1999) 'Family, child labour and migration. Child domestic workers in Metro Manila', *Childhood*, 6(1): 57-73
- Cockburn, T. (1998) 'Children and citizenship in Britain. A case for a socially interdependent model of citizenship', *Childhood*, 5(1):99-117
- Cussianovich, A. (1997) 'The "out of place": Paradigm of a new society', Paper presented at Urban Childhood conference, Trondheim, Norway, 9-12 June.*
- Dagsavisen*, Oslo, 12 October 1997. (Interview with Kari Norheim Larsen, Minister of Development Assistance.)

Dakar Declaration (1998), Adopted by representatives of the Movements of Working Children and Youth of Africa, Latin America and Asia, at their meeting in Dakar, Senegal, March 1998.

Edwards, M. (1996) 'New approaches to children and development: Introduction and overview', *Journal of International Development*, 8(6):813-827

Ennew, J. (1994) *Street and working children - A guide to planning*. London: Save the Children (Development manual 4)

Ennew, J. (1997) *Measuring and monitoring child work & child labour*. Oslo: Childwatch International and the Norwegian Centre for Child Research.

Ennew, J. and B. Milne (1989) *The Next Generation. Lives of Third World Children*. London: Zed books.

Fallon, P. and Z. Tzannatos (1998) *Child labor. Issues and Directions for the World Bank*. Washington, DC: The World Bank

Flekkøy, M. G. (1991) *A Voice for Children: Speaking Out as Their Ombudsman*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Flekkøy, M. G. and N. H. Kaufman (1997) *The Participation Rights of the Child. Rights and Responsibilities in Family and Society*. London and Bristol, Pennsylvania: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Franklin, B. (1998) Children's Political Rights, in E. Verhellen (ed) *Understanding Children's Rights. Ghent Papers on Children's Rights – No 3*. pp. 157-173. Ghent: Children's Rights Centre, University of Ghent.

Frederiksen, L. (1999) 'Children and youth employment in Denmark. Comments on children's work from their own perspective', *Childhood*, 6(1): 101-112

Gomes da Costa, A. C. and B. Schmidt-Rahmer (1991) 'Brazil: Children spearhead a movement for change', in *The Convention: Child rights and the UNICEF experience at the country level*. Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre (Innocenti Studies)

Grimsrud, B. (1999) *Measuring and analysing child labour. Methodological issues*. (Final Draft) Washington, DC: The World Bank

Grootaert, C. and H. Patrinos 1998 'The Policy Analysis of Child Labour: A Comparative Study', Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Hart, R. A. (1992) *Children's participation: From tokenism to citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre (Innocenti Essay No 4)

Hart, R. A. (et. al) (1997) *Children's participation. The theory and practice of involving young citizens in the community development and environmental care*. London: UNICEF, Earthscan

Himonga, C. (1998) 'The Right of the Child to Participate in Decision Making. A Perspective from Zambia', in W. Ncube (ed) *Law, culture, tradition and children's rights in Eastern and Southern Africa*. Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Dartmouth.

ILO (International Labour Organization) (1996) *Targetting the Intolerable*. Report No. 8, Geneva.

Ivan-Smith, E. and V. Johnson (1998) 'The Way Forward', in V. Johnson et al. *Stepping Forward. Children and young people's participation in the development process*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Johnson, V. et al. (1998) *Stepping Forward. Children and young people's participation in the development process*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Johnson, V., J. Hill and E. Ivan-Smith (1995) *Listening to smaller voices. Children in an environment of change*. London: Actionaid

Kjørholt, A. T. (1998) 'Children as Active Citizens: Perspectives on Norwegian Child Policy and the implementation on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child', Paper presented at *Children's Rights and Wrongs Conference*, Nicosia, Cyprus, 5-6 November 1998

Kolkeri, N. (1997) 'Our story, our dreams. Micro and macro influences on child labour', Paper presented at *Urban Childhood conference*, Trondheim, Norway 9-12 June 1997.

Kundapur Declaration (1996), adopted at First International Meeting of Working Children, Kundapur, India, 27 November-9 December, 1996.

Letuka, P. (1998) 'The Best Interests of the Child and Child Labour in Lesotho', in W. Ncube (ed) *Law, culture, tradition and children's rights in Eastern and Southern Africa*. Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Dartmouth.

McKechnie, J. and S. Hobbs (eds) (1998) *Working children. Reconsidering the debates. Report of the International Working Group on Child Labour*. Amsterdam: Defence for Children International and International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

McKechnie, J. and S. Hobbs (1999) 'Child labour. The view from the North', *Childhood*, 6(1): 89-100

Miljeteig(-Olssen), P. (1992) 'Children's Participation: Giving Children the Opportunity to Develop into Active and Responsible Members of Society', *Social Education* 56(4): 4

Miljeteig, P. (1994) 'Children's involvement in the implementation of their own rights – present and future perspectives', Paper presented at *International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development, XIIIth Biennial Meetings*, 28 June-2 July 1994, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Miljeteig, P. (1999a) 'Understanding child labour', *Childhood*, 6(1): 5-12

Miljeteig, P. (1999b) 'Children's Democratic Rights - Are we ready for it? What we can learn from young workers speaking out on their rights', Paper for *Children's Rights: National and International Perspectives* conference, University of Otago, New Zealand, 7-9 July 1999

Myers, W. E. (1999) 'Considering child labour', *Childhood*, 6(1): 13-26

NATs Working Children and Adolescents International Review. 1997 (3-4)

NATs Working Children and Adolescents International Review. 1995, February

Nasaw, D. (1985) *Children of the City*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Ncube, W. (1998) 'The African Cultural Fingerprint?' in W. Ncube (ed.) *Law, culture, tradition and children's rights in Eastern and Southern Africa*. Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Dartmouth.

Norheim Larsen, K. (1997) 'Skal barn ha rett til arbeid?' Oslo: *Dagbladet*, 3 July 1997. (Article in daily newspaper, *Dagbladet*, in Oslo, Norway: 'Are children entitled to the right to work?')

Reddy, N. (1998) 'Child labour and the value of children's decisions: The child's place in policy and practice', Paper presented at *ISPCAN congress*, Auckland, New Zealand, 6-9 September 1998

Santos Pais, M. (1999) *A Human Rights Conceptual Framework for UNICEF*. Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre (Innocenti Essays No. 9)

Sanz, A. (1997) 'From Kundapur to Geneva. The international coordination of working children', *NATs Working Children and Adolescents International Review*, 3(3-4): 11-23

Save the Children (1997) *Position on Child Work*. The International Save the Children Alliance Position Paper No 1.

Save the Children (1998) *Report on the working children's forum. Oslo, Norway 21st October – 2nd November 1997 and the international conference on child labour 27th - 30th October 1997*. Geneva: The International Save the Children Alliance.

Save the Children (1999) *Child work. Child Centred Approaches to Child Work Issues*. Conference Report, Oslo 20-21 April 1999. Oslo: Save the Children.

Shihata, I. F. I. (1991) *Requirements of "Meaningful Consultation"* Executive Directors' seminar – September 19, 1991, Operational Directive 4.0 on Environmental Assessment. Washington, DC: The World Bank

Shihata, I. (1996) 'The World Bank's Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights.' in *International Journal of children's Rights*, 4(4):383-405

Swift, A. (1991) *Brazil: The fight for childhood in the city*. Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre (Innocenti studies)

Swift, A. (1999) *Working children get organised. An introduction to working children's organisations*. London: Save the Children Alliance

Tolfree, D. (1998) *Old enough to work, old enough to have a say*. Stockholm: Rädda Barnen.

Torres, N. (1994) 'Working children, leading the struggle to obtain and defend their own rights', in E. Verhellen and F. Spiesschaert (eds) *Children's Rights: Monitoring Issues*. Gent: MYS & Breesch Publishers

UNICEF (1997) *The State of the World's Children 1997*. (Focus on child labour). Oxford: Oxford University Press

Urban Childhood (1997) 'A report on the Child Labour Section', *Urban Childhood* conference, Trondheim, 9-12 June 1997. Oslo: The Norwegian Centre for Child Research and Childwatch International.

Van Beers, H. (1995) *Participation of children in programming*. Stockholm: Rädda Barnen (mimeo)

Wesley, C. (1995) 'Children as Catalysts of Change: Children's participation in Rural Development in India', *Children's environments*, 12(4): 427-433

West, A. (1997) Children and Political Participation, in E. Verhellen (ed) *Understanding Children's Rights. Ghent Papers on Children's Rights – No 2*. pp. 243-257. Ghent: Children's Rights Centre, University of Ghent.

White, B. (1996) 'Globalization and the child labour Problem', *Journal of International Development*. 8(6): 829-839

White, B. (1999) 'Defining the intolerable: child work, global standards and cultural relativism', *Childhood*, 6(1): 133-144.

Woodhead, M. (1998): *Children's perspectives on their working lives. A participatory study in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, The Philippines, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua*. Stockholm: Rädda Barnen

Woodhead, M. (1999) 'Combatting child labour. Listen to what the children say', *Childhood*, 6(1): 27-49

World Bank (1996) *The World Bank Participation Sourcebook*. Washington, DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank