

# **RAPID ASSESSMENT ON CHILD LABOUR IN TIMOR LESTE**

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ILO-IPEC Jakarta

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# Foreword

This Rapid Assessment was undertaken by the ILO in response to concerns about a growing problem of child labour in Timor Leste. Although reliable national data of the extent of child labour is not available, the difficult economic and social circumstances in Timor Leste especially in recent times have made children more vulnerable to dropping out of school and being involved in work.

The aim of the Assessment is to provide more information about the child labour situation, especially in relation to children working in coffee farming, street/market vending in cities and domestic work. It describes the position of child workers in these sectors, including their hours and conditions of work and the reasons for them dropping out or never attending school. It provides recommendations on how to address the child labour challenge, including by improving the knowledge base and data, conducting awareness raising activities on the importance of education, and ratification of ILO child labour conventions.

The Rapid Assessment is also meant to provide inputs for the National Youth Employment Action Plan for Timor Leste. Involvement in child labour often prevents young people from obtaining the education and skills needed for them to find decent and productive employment in the future.

The conduct of the Assessment and its publication were financed through a project supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) supported Project on Child Labour and Youth Employment Linkages. The ILO would like to thank Jose Cornelio Guterres, the consultant who conducted the research, Arum Ratnawati, IPEC Officer in ILO Jakarta Office, and Fernando Encarnacao from the ILO's Skills Training for Gainful Employment (STAGE) Programme who provided technical backstopping to the consultant.

I hope this research will make a meaningful contribution to building the knowledge base on child labour and to better education and employment opportunities for the young people of Timor Leste.

**Alan Boulton**

Director

ILO Office for Indonesia and Timor Leste



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## List of Abbreviations

CCYCF:	Comoro Child and Youth Centre Foundation
CDW :	Child Domestic Worker
CRC :	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DENORE :	Development of Knowledge and Research Foundation
ECCD:	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA:	Education For All
FEDAROS:	Fundacao Espinhosa da Rosa
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
FTI:	Fast Track Initiatives
ILO:	International Labour Organization
INGO:	International Non Governmental Organisations
IPEC :	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
MECYS :	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports
MISC :	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NAPYE:	National Action Plan for Youth Employment
NER:	Net Enrollment Rate
NGO:	Non Governmental Organisations
RA:	Rapid Assessment
SPSS :	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TLC:	Timor Leste Census
UNICEF :	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program



# SUMMARY

According to the World Bank, nearly 35% of children aged 10–14 years old in Timor Leste were in the labour force in 2004, which means a relatively modest reduction from 1990, when nearly 40% of children in this age bracket were in the labour force<sup>1</sup>. This figure is much higher than that indicated by the data from a national survey conducted by UNICEF (the Multiple Indicator Clusters Survey, or MISC) which found that only 4% of children aged 5 to 14 years old in Timor Leste are engaged in child labour, with 0.5% of them as paid workers and 3.7% unpaid.<sup>2</sup> This much lower figure most probably reflects the fact that the UNICEF data referred to only part of the country.<sup>3</sup> Another source, the Poverty Assessment in Timor Leste in 2003,<sup>4</sup> reports that child labour does not appear to be widespread in Timor Leste, with only 10% of children aged 10–14 years old found to be participating in the labour force.

While ‘child labour’ also includes those aged 15 to 17 who do hazardous work, there are no data concerning child labour in this age group. Census data from 2004 indicate that there are 15,656 young people between 15 and 19 years old who work in subsistence farming and fishing (both male and female).<sup>5</sup> The data also show that 598 people aged 15–19 years old are working in private industry, with 1,767 young people in the same age group self-employed in the cities.<sup>6</sup> However, there is no further information that can be used to determine whether they are engaged in hazardous occupations.

While the existing statistical data reveal varying figures on child labour in certain age groups, child labour is nevertheless perceived as a common problem in Timor Leste. Almost all national stakeholders consulted by ILO-IPEC confirmed that child labour is an issue, and a common phenomenon in Timor Leste.<sup>7</sup> Consultation with stakeholders by ILO last November 2006 resulted in information on the common types of child labour in Timor Leste, which are as follows:

- 
- 1 Labour and Social Trends in Asia and the Pacific 2006. Progress towards Decent Work, ILO, 2006, p.55.
  - 2 Making Children’s Rights Work: Country Profiles on Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam, International Bureau of Children’s Rights, 2006, p.103.
  - 3 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), UNICEF, [www.childinfo.org/Child Labor](http://www.childinfo.org/Child Labor), p.3.
  - 4 Timor Leste Poverty Assessment. Poverty in a new nation: analysis for action, World bank, May 2003.
  - 5 Booklet of the Census of Population and Housing 2004, Direccao Nacional de Estatistica, Timor Leste, 2006.
  - 6 Booklet of the Census of Population and Housing 2004, Direccao Nacional de Estatistica, Timor Leste, 2006.
  - 7 Individual consultations with government offices, a trade union, employers, NGOs and church and international organisations, November 2006

Type of child labour	Specific areas	Remarks
Street/market vendors (selling vegetables, newspapers, phone cards, pornographic materials, etc.)	Dili and other cities such as Baucau and Lospalos	-
Children working in agriculture (mostly subsistence agriculture)	Widespread in rural areas	-
Children in domestic work	Widespread in rural and in urban areas	Although most work in their own households, some children are traditionally adopted by relatives but are given tasks such as household chores or helping with economic activities.
Prostitution and trafficking for prostitution	Dili, Suai	Communities in border areas are at most risk
Hazardous work: involvement in construction work	Can be found in every district	-
Children in fishing	Coastal areas: Metinaro, Manatuto	-

A survey used a questionnaire to interview 160 child labourers and 155 adults (parents and employers) to look into the situation of child labour in three sectors (agricultural sector/coffee farming; as street or market vendors; domestic work) revealed the following findings:

1. More males are engaged in work, especially in coffee farming and street/market vending. Surprisingly, a significant number of males are involved in domestic work (49.1%). This is perhaps because many of them are actually adopted children who want to continue their education in the cities.
2. In addition to their workload, children who are involved in street/market vending and coffee farming also experience separation from their families: 100% of the children in domestic work and 40.8% of the children in street/market vending live with people other than their parents.
3. Most of the children (80%) started their employment when they were under 12 years old, especially those involved in coffee farming (96%). This is because in the agricultural sector, involving children in work is commonly practiced as part of the socialisation process.
4. Most of the child labourers work unpaid (78.1%), with the highest percentage being in coffee farming (96%), followed by children in domestic work (78.9%) and street/market vending (57.1%). The older the age group, the higher the percentage of those working for money.
5. Most of the child labourers (75.6%) in the three researched sectors combine school with working, and 70.2% of them perceive that the work has negatively impacted their learning activities in school. The main reason for dropping out or never attending school is because their parents cannot afford to send them to school. Other factors include the lack of school facilities near the place where they live. Willingness to go back to school among dropouts is rather low (33.3%).

6. Children in domestic work and street/market vending tend to work longer hours each day as well as more days each week compared to their contemporaries working in coffee farming. Moreover, a significant portion of children (46.2%) in coffee farming work only during certain periods in the year, while most of those in domestic work (91.2%), as well as those in street/market vending (89.7%), work almost the whole year round.
7. While children in agriculture work fewer hours and days compared to those in the other two sectors, they are more vulnerable to illness and work-related accidents. Forty percent of all working children in the three sectors perceive that their work has exposed them to certain risks that may jeopardise their health and safety. This perception is felt by 66% of those working in coffee farming, compared to 21% of those in domestic work and 32.6% of those in street/market vending. This is further confirmed by data on the number of children who had been sick in the last four weeks: 62.9% of the children working in coffee farming had been ill, while of those in domestic work the percentage was 40.3% and in street/market vending, 48.9%. Children working on coffee plantations are also more likely to experience work-related accidents (77.7%) compared to those in domestic work (12.2%) and street/market vending (14.2%).
8. Most of the child labourers' parents work in the informal sector, with 46% of fathers and 49% of mothers earning less than US\$60 per month—a low income for the relatively large households (69.4% comprise 6 to 7 members). As a consequence, the contribution of working children is needed, and this is admitted by at least 63% of the child labourers' families. Moreover, 82.7% of the parent respondents said that they ask their children to work, and 47% of them said that it was to increase the household income.
9. Parents have a very positive view of the importance of education. However, their economic situation, together their perception that work does not impact negatively on their children (52%), has deterred parents from withdrawing their children from work. Further, many parents (31.6%) also think that children are allowed to work when they are under 15 years old. According to the parents, one of the actions that needs to be taken to stop children working is improving education.
10. Most of the children in the domestic sector work in the household of a relative or their adoptive parents. Only 10.5% work for other people's households. The households where these children are employed are relatively better off, in socio-economic terms, than their own households.
11. Most of the children doing domestic work are unpaid but are compensated with various benefits, such as support for their education. While they are staying in the households where they work, these children have opportunities visit their own families or to receive visits from their parents.

Timor Leste has not yet ratified the child labour-related ILO Conventions (ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and ILO Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour). According to the office of the National Division of Social Services under the Ministry of Labour,<sup>8</sup> the Timor Leste government is now prioritising the ratification of these two ILO Conventions, with encouragement from the ILO Office. Although Timor Leste has not ratified the ILO's child labour Conventions, a national law on labour issues (Labour Code of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste: UNTAET/REGULATION No. 2002/5) incorporates most of the provisions of ILO Conventions 138 and 182, and the prohibition of child labour is one of four fundamental principles of this Code (Section 9). Despite the existence of this law, the economic, educational as well as cultural situation in Timor Leste, combined with weak law enforcement, has made children in Timor Leste vulnerable to being involved in the labour sector.

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8 Interview with Deputy Director of the Division and the Adviser to the Office.

The Rapid Assessment looked at existing programmes for children and youth in Timor Leste and found out that few of them focus on child labour, except for various programmes for street children. However, the broader programmes on education and child rights that are currently being implemented by the government and various NGOs (national and international) will contribute significantly to the elimination of child labour in Timor Leste. More research will be needed to build a solid knowledge base on child labour that can be used for broader advocacy activities.

# INTRODUCTION

This Rapid Assessment of the situation of child labour in Timor Leste was designed to assess the issue with regard to economic and socio-cultural conditions in the country. In particular, it sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Generate qualitative data related to children in the workforce, including the nature of the work, the causes and the consequences;
2. Produce quantitative evidence on the magnitude of children's involvement in the targeted sectors (three prioritised sectors), identified through consultation with stakeholders;
3. Generate an overview of youth employment/unemployment in the country using available secondary data;
4. Map various existing responses to the issues of child labour and youth unemployment, e.g. skills training programmes.

While secondary data were gathered to provide general information on the issue of child labour in Timor Leste, primary data were gathered using questionnaires, observations and in-depth interviews to understand the situation of child labour in three sectors, which were selected on the basis of ILO's consultation with stakeholders in Dili, Timor Leste, in November 2006.<sup>9</sup> During the consultation, the stakeholders suggested prioritising four sectors for the assessment on child labour in Timor Leste, namely (1) children working in agriculture; (2) children working as street or market vendors in urban areas; (3) prostitution and trafficking of children; and (4) children in domestic work, both in urban and rural areas. It was decided not to address child prostitution and trafficking in this assessment, as a study of this issue would certainly require more time than was available for the project (3 months).

## Research Methodology

In this study, the researchers utilised the Rapid Assessment (RA) method, aiming to get a relatively rapid understanding of the issue of child labour in Timor Leste through the use of various approaches and tools.<sup>10</sup> In other words, in this assessment, the researchers used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect data on child labour in Timor Leste. To execute the RA, the ILO-IPEC assigned a research consultant, two research assistants and fifteen enumerators to administer questionnaires.

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9 Consultations on child labour issues were held with government agencies, a trade union, employers' association and NGOs as well as international agency.

10 Manual on Child Labour Rapid Assessment Methodology, ILO, Geneva, 2005 p.5.

The entire research team, including the enumerators, were given an orientation on child labour by ILO-IPEC before the RA started, so that they would have a better understanding of the issues involved. Enumerators were also trained in the use of the instruments, especially the questionnaires, in order to build appropriate perceptions and understanding. The enumerators who conducted the field enumeration in the three districts (Dili, Ermera and Baucau), were accompanied or supervised by the three researchers.

## **Research Instruments and Data/Information Resources**

Four kinds of data collection techniques were utilised for this study: direct observation, in-depth interviews with key informants, questionnaires and secondary data collection.

In conducting the direct observation, the researchers were guided by a number of specific guidelines on how to observe certain social phenomena with regard to the child workers' experiences in the field. The researchers used an interview guideline to interview the key informants. Interviews were conducted with the following agencies and persons:

- a. Educational institutions: Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre in Dili, Saint Joseph High School in Dili, Escola Pre-secundario 10 de Abril in Ermera, Escola Secundario Nino Coni Santana Gleno, Ermera, and the Education Offices of Baucau and Dili Districts.
- b. National NGOs and international organisations: among others, Comoro Child & Youth Center Foundation (CCYCF), Forum Comunicacao Oratorio Don Bosco, Fundacao Espinhosa da Rosa (FEDAROS), EIROS, Development of Knowledge and Research Foundation (DENORE) and Alola Foundation; and Plan International, UNICEF, and Care International.
- c. Relevant government agencies: the Department of Education, Youth and Sport of Timor Leste.
- d. The director of Café Timor Company. Café Timor Company is the only formal institution which exploits coffee in Timor Leste.
- e. The chairman of a trade union in Timor Leste. This interview was conducted to find out to what extent the organisation has promoted and protected the rights of Timorese labourers, including the actions it has taken to tackle child labour.
- f. Eight household members, consisting of four parents of child street vendors in Dili and four parents of coffee farming children in Ermera.

Closed-ended questionnaires, prepared by the researchers in consultation with the ILO, were used to interview children as well as adult respondents. These consisted of a questionnaire for children in the three researched sectors (Annex 1), a questionnaire for the parents/guardians of child respondents working on coffee plantations and as street/market vendors (Annex 2), and a questionnaire for adults in the households where children were doing domestic work (Annex 3). The enumerators asked the questions and wrote down the answers given by the respondents.

In completing the study, the researchers also collected some secondary data/related publications produced by various agencies in Dili, specifically from the UNICEF office, the Statistics Office, the Department of Education, the Department of Labour and Community Reinsertion, the Alola Foundation, the Department of Development and the World Bank.



## Sampling

The specific target groups of the rapid assessment were children between 5 and 17 years old who are working. Snowball sampling was used to select the target group of children and parents for interviews. This is a means of selecting people by asking one participant or respondent to suggest a further contact or provide an introduction to other possible respondents<sup>11</sup>. The planned and actual numbers of child respondents reached is as depicted in Table 1. In certain age groups, fewer children were interviewed than was planned because of the difficulties experienced in approaching those children. This was found in particular in the 5–9 age group, where the children were more closely under the control of their parents, who were reluctant to declare publicly that their children were working. In reality, however, there are many children who are asked by their parents to work for economic purposes.

**Table 1**  
**Composition of respondents: planned and actual**

Age range	Planned child respondents	Actual child respondents
5 – 9	40	28
10 – 12	40	44
13 – 14	40	30
15 – 17	40	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>160</b>

For this rapid assessment, interviews were conducted with the parents or guardians of children working on coffee plantations and as street/market vendors. For children in domestic work, however, interviews were held with the adult members of the households where they were working, as it would have been too difficult to reach their parents, most of whom reside in rural areas. The two categories of adult respondents were interviewed using different questionnaires. The questionnaire for the parents of children working in coffee farming and as street/market vendors was designed to gain an understanding of the socio-economic background of the working children, while for children doing domestic work the questionnaire was aimed at gaining insights into the households where the children were working. As mentioned above, the reason for not interviewing the parents of children doing domestic work was the difficulty involved in reaching them, as many of these children's parents live in areas outside the districts of Dili and Baucau, where the survey was conducted, as indicated by the districts of origin of the children shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Districts of origin of children doing domestic work**

District	Frequency	Percent
Aileu	4	7.0
Ainaro	5	8.8
Baucau	18	31.6
Covalima	2	3.5
Dili	6	10.5

11 Ibid p.123

Ermera	5	8.8
Liquica	3	5.3
Maliana	8	14.0
Manatuto	1	1.8
Manufahi	1	1.8
Oecusse	3	5.3
Viqueque	1	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Overall, 155 adults were reached, comprising 98 parents (83 respondents) or guardians (15 respondents) of children working in coffee plantations and children working as street/market vendors, and 57 adult members of the households where children do domestic work. Of the 98 parents or guardians, 63 were male and 35 were female, while of the 57 adult respondents from the households where children do domestic work, 36 were male and 21 were female. It was originally planned that a total of 160 adults would be interviewed, but due to various technical problems, the researchers were only able to interview the 155 adults specified above.

## Analysing and Interpreting Data

Two kinds of data were collected in this study, namely quantitative data and qualitative data. In processing and analysing the quantitative data from the questionnaires, the researchers went through the following procedures: editing, translating, coding and entering/tabulating the data using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) programme, and then analysing and interpreting them.

## Problems Encountered and Lessons Learned

Most of the enumerators reported that during the data collection process, they were sometimes rejected by the families they tried to interview. One reason was that, in the past, various national and international NGOs had promised them many things but had never delivered on those promises. These people assumed that the same thing would happen with the enumerators, whom they assumed had come to collect information for fundraising purposes rather than for helping them. In response to this problem, the enumerators tried to explain the objective of the assessment without making promises about any future projects. Those who were satisfied with the explanation welcomed the interview, but a few of the adults still declined to be interviewed.

Focus group discussions were difficult to organise. Some families questioned why the researchers were gathering their children for this purpose. Some even refused to allow their children to join the discussion, thinking that the researchers might make use of their children as a means of seeking money. In addition, some children had difficulties in expressing their ideas or opinions. Finally, the researchers also faced major challenges in interviewing key respondents and collecting the secondary data from certain agencies. It took a long time to set up meetings with some important people, and to meet the people who had the authority to provide secondary data.

## **Outline of the Report**

Chapter One elaborates the objectives of the Rapid Assessment and the methodology used in the assessment. Chapter Two presents the context of child labour in Timor Leste. Chapter Three describes the situation of the children working in the three sectors and programmes that address the issue, while Chapter Four summarises the findings and provides recommendations.



# CHILD LABOUR AND ITS CONTEXT IN TIMOR LESTE

According to the World Bank, nearly 35% of children aged 10–14 years old in Timor Leste were in the labour force in 2004, which means a relatively modest reduction from 1990, when nearly 40% of children in this age bracket were in the labour force.<sup>12</sup> This figure is much higher than that indicated by the data from a national survey conducted by UNICEF (the Multiple Indicator Clusters Survey, or MISC), which found that only 4% of children aged 5 to 14 years old in Timor Leste are engaged in child labour, with 0.5% of them as paid workers and 3.7% unpaid.<sup>13</sup> This much lower figure most probably reflects the fact that the UNICEF data referred to only part of the country.<sup>14</sup> Another source, the Poverty Assessment in Timor Leste in 2003,<sup>15</sup> reports that child labour does not appear to be widespread in Timor Leste, with only 10% of children aged 10–14 years old found to be participating in the labour force.

While the term ‘child labour’ can also include those aged 15 to 17 years old doing hazardous work, there are no data concerning child labour in this age group. However, census data from 2004 indicate that there are 15,656 young people between 15 and 19 years old (male and female) who work in subsistence farming and fishing.<sup>16</sup> The data also show that 598 young people aged 15–19 years old are working in private industry, with 1,767 young people in the same age group self-employed in the cities.<sup>17</sup>

While existing statistical data reveal varying figures on child labour in certain age groups, child labour is nevertheless perceived as a common problem in Timor Leste.<sup>18</sup> Almost all national stakeholders consulted by ILO-IPEC confirmed that child labour is an issue, and a common phenomenon in Timor Leste.<sup>19</sup> Factors contributing to the problem include the economic situation, non-participation in school,<sup>20</sup> and custom.

## Economic Context

The average level of income in a society is strongly correlated with the prevalence of child labour.<sup>21</sup> Poverty at a country level is indeed both a cause and a consequence of child labour. There are two broad reasons why

12 Labour and Social Trends in Asia and the Pacific 2006. Progress towards Decent Work, ILO, 2006, p.55.

13 Making Children’s Rights Work: Country Profiles on Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam, International Bureau of Children’s Rights, 2006, p. 103.

14 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), UNICEF, [www.childinfo.org/Child Labor](http://www.childinfo.org/Child_Labor), p.3.

15 Timor Leste Poverty Assessment. Poverty in a new nation: Analysis for action, World Bank, May 2003.

16 Booklet of the Census of POPULATION and housing 2004, Direccao Nacional de Estatistica, Timor Leste, 2006.

17 Ibid.

18 Making Children’s Rights Work: Country Profiles on Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam, International Bureau of Children’s Rights, 2006, p. 103.

19 Individual consultation with government offices, a trade union, employers, NGOs and church and international organisations, November 2006.

20 ‘Non participation in school’ covers both children who dropped out of school and those who have never been to school.

21 Child Labour, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, ILO, 2004, p. 83.

lower income countries are likely to have more child labour. Firstly, they are likely to have more households in extreme poverty—a condition which is conducive to child labour in all its forms. Secondly, they are likely to display the sort of social and economic patterns that are known to result in higher rates of child labour.<sup>22</sup> Several key informants asserted that the cause and consequence of child labour in Timor Leste is poverty at both household level and national level. According to these key informants, some low-income families force their children to work in order to keep the family alive.

Timor Leste, a country with an estimated population of 923,198 in 2004, is the poorest country in the region, with a per capita income of \$370 per year in urban areas and \$150 in rural areas in 2004.<sup>23</sup> Forty percent of the people live below the poverty line, which was set at \$0.55 per person per day in 2004.<sup>24</sup> Income poverty is more pronounced in rural (46%) than in urban (26%) areas.<sup>25</sup>

One of the major challenges for economic development in Timor Leste is unemployment, and the challenge is not only one of how to tackle the already sizeable unemployed and underemployed population, but also of absorbing the new entrants into the labour market. In both situations, young people (aged 15 to 25) constitute the majority, with 20% of youth being unemployed (Table 3). Youth are nearly three times more likely to be unemployed than the general population. Across the country, of those employed, 80% are engaged in subsistence farming and fishing, and another 10% of youth are self-employed.<sup>26</sup> Unemployed young women are found to be lower in number than young men because of the higher absorption of young women into subsistence farming.

**Table 3**  
**Youth unemployment by age, sex and region (2004)**

Age Group	National			Dili		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15 - 24						
15-19	<b>19.6%</b>	<b>22.7%</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	<b>44.4%</b>	<b>53.4%</b>	<b>32.5%</b>
20-24	24.7%	26.5%	22.7%	57.5%	64.2%	49.3%
<b>15+</b>	16.6%	20.5%	12.1%	39.5%	49.5%	25.8%
	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>

Source: TLC 2004

Education and training, the quantity and quality of available jobs and barriers to youth entrepreneurship have been identified as the main challenges to youth employment in Timor Leste.<sup>27</sup> Despite its achievements in education, Timor Leste still ranks among the lowest countries in terms of educational status and this, together with the limited training opportunities, means that youth are not prepared with specific skills to enter the labour market. On the other hand, the public and private sectors offer only limited job opportunities. While self-employment could potentially absorb youth, most entrepreneurs operate in the informal sector, where average productivity and earnings are generally low and working conditions unfavourable.

22 Ibid.

23 Timor Leste’s Human Development Report 2006, UNDP, 2006, p. 10.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Draft Timor Leste National Action Plan on Youth Employment.

27 Ibid.

Child labour is another challenge to the expansion of youth employment, as engagement in child labour tends to impact negatively on later employment because it prevents children from acquiring the education and skills they need to compete in the labour market as young adults.

## Educational Context

Poor education is one of the contributing factors to the child labour phenomenon, and various reports indicate that education standards in Timor Leste are low as a result of poverty. Between 10% and 30% of primary school age children (around 67,000 children aged 6–11) are not in school. This number is distributed equally between boys and girls.<sup>28</sup> While it is reported that the primary school net enrolment rate (NER) was 76% in 2000, the NER for junior secondary was much lower, at 27.5% in 2000, and only 18% for senior secondary in 2003.<sup>29</sup> Low enrolment at the secondary level is partly due to the limited availability of secondary schools in rural areas. One-third of all junior secondary schools are located in Dili and Baucau, while half of the 54 senior secondary schools are located in Dili.

**Table 4**  
**Number of junior secondary schools in each district**

District	No. of junior secondary schools
Aileu	9
Ainaro	10
Baucau	22
Dili	20
Covalima	11
Bobonaro	9
Ermera	9
Liquica	7
Lautem	9
Manatuto	9
Manufahi	11
Oecusse	6
Viqueque	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>

According to a report published by the World Bank,<sup>30</sup> about 32% of the poorest and 26% of the richest in Timor Leste had ‘no interest in schooling’. This is probably because there is little economic incentive for people to attend school. In Timor Leste, the labour markets are largely the agricultural and informal sectors, and outside the public sector, there is no obvious link between education attainment and getting a job. The 2004 census shows that 88% of the total working population of 293,348 people was engaged in self-employment or subsistence farming.<sup>31</sup>

28 Timor Leste Human Development Report 2006, UNDP, 2006, p. 9.

29 Making Children’s Rights Work: Country Profiles on Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam, International Bureau of Children’s Rights, 2006, p.99.

30 Timor Leste Education: The Way Forward, World Bank, 2003.

31 Ibid. 14

In general, the challenges to improving education in Timor Leste include eliminating the costs associated with primary schooling; providing more and better educational facilities and resources, including schools that are more accessible to children in rural and remote areas; curriculum reform; more and better trained teachers; and improved teaching.<sup>32</sup>

A key respondent noted that Timor Leste's Ministry of Education has established a policy of nine years' compulsory basic education,<sup>33</sup> which requires all children who have reached school age to go to school for free. The policy of free schooling at elementary and secondary level, which has been implemented since the last school year (2006/2007)<sup>34</sup> according to the informant, could potentially reduce the number of child workers. In its efforts to improve educational standards, Timor Leste joined the EFA Track Initiative (FTI) in 2006, which will allow the country to access funds from donor groups so that the country can provide universal, quality primary education for all children. Among the key donors supporting education in Timor Leste are Portugal, Australia, Sweden, Brazil, Ireland, New Zealand, Japan, and UN agencies, with the World Bank as the coordinating agency.

## Cultural Context

In Timor Leste, especially in agricultural families, people traditionally teach their children how to work. Some key respondents asserted that child labour in Timor Leste occurs not only because of poverty but also because of cultural values, as it is viewed as the natural and right way to introduce a child to the roles and responsibilities of adulthood and of being a member of a family. As one key informant described, custom in Ermera dictates that every family distributes their coffee farm plots to their family members, especially their sons, to work on, so the parents pass on to their children their know-how about taking care of the coffee farm. In this scenario, 'Children who are lazy about following their parents' guidance might lose their wealth.'<sup>35</sup>

This pattern of children helping their parents is common in many communities throughout Timor Leste. A key informant<sup>36</sup> also observed that in Dili as well as in other districts, children are requested to assist their parents in small shops and commercial activities or in a small home-based business. Another key informant<sup>37</sup> added that in rural communities, children participate in work as part of the household during non-school hours.<sup>38</sup>

## Legal Context

Timor Leste ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on 16 April 2003 and has also acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (on 2 August 2004) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (on 2 January 2003). A draft report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was considered by the Council Ministers on 21 November 2006 and will soon be forwarded to the UN Secretary General.

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32 Ibid.

33 From an interview with the director of Plan and Finance of the Department of Education, Sr. Antonino Pires, Vila Verde Dili, 2007.

34 Ibid.

35 From an interview with the head of Pre-Secondario 10 de Abril 1999, Gleno, Ermera, Sr. Juvinal Exposto, in Gleno, Ermera, December 2006.

36 From an interview with the Chief of the Education Office of Dili District, Sr. Marcos, Matadouro, Dili, Feb. 2007.

37 From an interview with the director of the project for youth leadership and capacity building, Sr. Jose Antonio Neves, Vila-Verde, Dili, 2007.

38 From an interview with the head of Pre-Secondario 10 de Abril 1999, Gleno, Ermera, Sr. Juvinal Exposto, in Gleno, Ermera, Dec. 2006.



Timor Leste has not yet ratified the child labour-related ILO Conventions. However, according to the office of the National Division of Social Services under the Ministry of Labour,<sup>39</sup> the Timor Leste government is now, with encouragement from the ILO Office, prioritising the ratification of these two conventions: ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age and No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Section 2 of the Labour Code of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste (UNTAET/REGULATION NO 2002/5), regarding Definitions, defines child labour as work performed by a person under 18 years old; such a person is also defined by the code as a child. The Code provides a mandate for the Division of Social Services and Welfare to work on the issues of child labour in particular and child welfare in general. This Division, which is now named the National Division of Social Services, is under the Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion. The prohibition of child labour is one of four fundamental principles of the Code (Section 9).<sup>40</sup> The Labour Code broadly incorporates the provisions of ILO Convention 138 as well as Convention 182. Section 11 on Special Modalities for Certain Workers stipulates the following regarding child labour:

- 11.1 Employment of, or work by, a child between the ages of 15 (fifteen) and 18 (eighteen), which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of such a person, shall be prohibited.
- 11.2. Employment of, or work by, a child under the age of 15 (fifteen) shall be prohibited, with the provision that children having attained the age of 12 (twelve) may be engaged in Light Work for Children.
- 11.3. Sub sections 11.1 and 11.2 do not apply to vocational or training schools or institutions or to artistic performances when authorisation has been granted following application to the Board.
- 11.4. The employment of, or the carrying out of work by, a child which is dangerous or potentially dangerous shall be prohibited.

Section 2 of the Labour Code regarding Definitions defines 'light work for children' as work which, by reason of its duration or other characteristics, is unlikely to jeopardise their health, safety or morals, allows for their full and normal development as children, does not prejudice their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority and does not interfere with their attendance at school. While Section 29 stipulates penalties and sanctions for breaches of the Labour Code, no specific provisions on penalties and sanctions for breaching child-related labour standards are included.

Law enforcement is generally still weak. Timor Leste, for example, has only eight labour inspectors for the whole country, which has prevented the inspection of special target groups such as children.<sup>41</sup>

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39 Interview with Deputy Director of the Division and the Adviser to the Office.

40 The three other principles are the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, the prohibition of forced labour, and the prohibition of discrimination in employment and occupation.

41 Draft report on the Implementation of CRC in Timor Leste, UNICEF.



# WORKING CHILDREN IN THREE SECTORS IN TIMOR LESTE

Specific studies on child labour in Timor Leste are rare. The Rapid Assessment only found one study related to trafficking for prostitution, conducted by the Alola Foundation in 2004, which estimated that there were around 250 sex workers in Dili. While several were from Indonesia, China, Thailand, the Philippines and Australia, most (100) were Timorese. This research included in-depth interviews with 16 Timorese sex workers in Dili, and found that five of them were minors and six claimed to have started sex work at age 14. Of the 150 foreign sex workers that the study reported as operating in Timor Leste, none was a minor. The research also revealed that there were 110 male sex workers in Dili, 100 of whom were Timorese and 10 Indonesian. Of this group, 75% were estimated to be minors (under 18 years).<sup>42</sup> In addition, a report on human rights practices told of unconfirmed reports that children as young as 10 were being used to smuggle goods across the border between Indonesia and Timor Leste.<sup>43</sup>

Consultation with stakeholders by ILO in November 2006 yielded information on the most common types of child labour in Timor Leste, which are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5**  
**Types of child labour and areas where child labour is found**

Type of child labour	Specific areas	Remarks
Street/market vendors (selling vegetables, newspapers, phone cards, pornographic materials, etc.)	Dili and other cities such as Baucau and Lospalos	-
Agriculture (mostly subsistence agriculture)	Widespread in rural areas	-
Domestic work	Widespread in rural and in urban areas	Mostly on their own household. Some children are adopted by their relatives but they do household chores or help with economic activities.

42 Trafficking in East Timor: A Look into the Newest Nation's Sex Industry, Alola Foundation, 2004; Making Children's Rights Work: Country Profiles on Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam, International Bureau of Children's Rights, 2006, p. 99.

43 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2005, US Department of State (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61607.htm>).

Prostitution and trafficking for prostitution	Dili, Covalima (Suai)	Communities in border areas are at most risk
Hazardous work: involvement in construction work	Can be found in every district	-
Fishing	Coastal areas: Metinaro, Manatuto	-

During the consultation, stakeholders were consulted on which three or four sectors should be prioritised for the assessment. As a result, the following sectors were proposed as priorities:

- a. Agriculture;
- b. Working as street or market vendors in urban areas;
- c. Prostitution and trafficking for prostitution;
- d. Domestic work.

Although child prostitution was on the priority list, the ILO felt that the timeframe of three months was too short to be able to cover this sector. Taking this into consideration, the RA covers only three sectors, as follows:

- a. *Children working in the agricultural sector.* The researchers selected children who are working for coffee producers in the district of Ermera. Coffee is an important crop in Timor Leste. It not only accounts for a major part of the country’s export earnings, but also provides livelihoods for a considerable proportion of families. According to a 2003 UNDP report on Timor Leste, about 25% of the population depends for its livelihood on coffee, with nearly 43,000 families deriving their livelihood from coffee production.<sup>44</sup> The big coffee plantations are found in three districts: Ermera (which has most of the plantations), Liquica and Dili. This sector employs seasonal off-farm labour for the processing and transportation of coffee. The researchers interviewed children, both boys and girls, who were working not only directly in coffee processing but also in a wide range of other jobs related to coffee farming.
- b. *Children working as street or market vendors* in the city of Dili. The study covered children working for their own households as well as those employed by others. The reasons for selecting street vendors in Dili for the study were as follows: firstly, on the basis of the researchers’ observation that there is a great deal of informal economic activity, specifically street vending, going on in Dili as the principal business city. Most of the children, both male and female, sell newspapers, phone cards, fruit, fish and other wet market produce, and so on.<sup>45</sup> Secondly, Dili attracts a lot of migration from rural areas of people trying to find jobs. Lacking the skills and professionalism to compete in the formal labour market, it can be predicted that many will end up in the informal sector. They face hazardous conditions, both from the work itself and more importantly from the environment, facing constant risks of insecurity, theft, harassment and other forms of violence, even murder. Children working in cities are generally part of a family or other informal enterprise or network, but some of them are self-employed. The employment of children in informal economic activities is a widespread phenomenon in developing countries, because they are considered cheap labour.

44 See a report entitled “Strategy for Timor Leste on Employment and Poverty” by UNDP in Timor Leste, 2003, p. 132.

45 The Microfinance Office in Dili also provided information on the large number of street and market vendors in Dili.

- c. *Children in domestic work* in the districts of Dili and Baucau. In this regard, the researchers classified domestic helpers into two categories: (1) children doing domestic work in their own households, and (2) children working for 'adoptive' relatives or others in urban areas. The former has not so far been a big issue in Timor Leste, though to a certain extent it impedes the children's education. By way of justification, some parents said that they insist on their children working in order to get them used to hard work and self-discipline, which will help them in the future. The latter, however, was raised by almost all the stakeholders consulted as a common problem in Timor Leste nowadays.

Many children from rural areas, both boys and girls, are 'adopted' by their relatives or others while they are pursuing their studies at junior secondary and senior secondary schools in the city. They have to work for these families in return for staying with them. For some families, where the husband and wife are busy with their work all day, employing children from other families, especially from rural areas, is a means of easing their burden. Children from rural areas are preferred because they are considered cheap and loyal.

In this assessment, the researchers focused on (1) children who stay with or are 'adopted' by relatives while they continue their studies, and (2) children who are employed by others.

### Map 1 Location of study



In the design, this rapid assessment was to include interviews with 40 children in each of the following age ranges: 5–9, 10–12, 13–14 and 15–16, but during the field work, fewer respondents were found in the youngest age group (5–9) and the 13–14 age group. Out of all 160 child respondents, 17.5% were in the 5–9 age group, 27.5% in the 10–12 age group, 18.8% in the 13–14 age group and 36.3% in the 15–17 age group. The relative difficulty in finding children in the youngest age group suggests that there are more working children in the older age groups. By sector, 57 children were engaged in domestic work (in Dili and Baucau Districts), 54 children were involved in coffee farming (in Ermera District), and 49 children were engaged in street/market vending activities (in Dili and Baucau Districts). All the respondents (100%) were unmarried.

**Table 6**  
**Child respondents by age group and sex**

	Age group of respondents				Total
	5 - 9	10 – 12	13 - 14	15 - 17	
Female	13	20	17	22	72
Male	15	24	13	36	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>160</b>

## Sex of Child Workers

Fifty-five percent of the child respondents were male and 45% were female (Table 5). There were more boys than girls working as street vendors and in coffee farming, and more girls in domestic work. One of the key informants<sup>46</sup> stated that 'according to the traditional division of labour between male and female children, domestic chores like washing, ironing, taking care of babies, cooking and preparing food are done by women, while farming, vending and taking care of animals are principally done by males.'<sup>47</sup>

**Table 7**  
**Child respondents in each sector, by sex (%)**

Sector	Sex of respondent	
	Female	Male
Domestic work	50.8	49.1
Agriculture (coffee farming)	44.4	55.5
Street vendor	38.7	61.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>55</b>

Children, both boys and girls, working as street vendors sell newspapers, phone cards, cigarettes, food, canned drinks, vegetables and fruit. A small number do car washing, while those in the market sell groceries, chicken, meat, dried fish and vegetables. Boys and girls employed in coffee farming are mainly involved in harvesting, collecting and drying the coffee, weeding, watering the plants and carrying sacks of coffee from the farm to stores or main roads. Children in domestic work are mainly charged with the tasks of cleaning the house, washing, cooking, carrying water for domestic use, taking care of babies and taking children to school.

46 From an interview with the director for Youth Leadership and Capacity Building of the Department of Education of RDTL, Sr. Antonio Neves in Vilaverde, Dili, Feb. 2007.

47 From an interview with a male parent key informant in Dili, 2007.

## Families of Child Workers

Looking further, to the child labourers' families, both parents of the most of the child respondents were still alive (78.8%), while for the remaining 21.2%, one or both parents were dead. The relatively high number of respondents without parents or with only parent is probably a contributing factor in their involvement in labour. Most children working in the agriculture sector live with their parents (85.1%), while a significant portion of those working as street vendors live not with their parents but with relatives (40.8%). All the respondents engaged in domestic work live with people other than their parents. Of this group, most (64.8%) live with relatives such as uncles/aunts (42.1%); older siblings (14%) and grandparents (8.7%), while 31.5% live with so-called 'adoptive' parents and the remainder live with cousins or bosses. Thus, in addition to the fact that they are working, most of children in domestic work and street/market vending also experience separation from their parents.

**Table 8**  
**Who the children live with**

Person with whom child is living	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
Parents	0	85.1	59.1	46.8
Uncle/Aunt	42.1	7.4	12.2	21.2
Older sister/brother	14	1.8	16.3	10.6
Adoptive parent	31.5	0	6.1	13.1
Grandparent	8.7	5.5	4	6.2
Friends	0	0	2	0.6
Cousin	1.7	0	0	0.6
Master/boss	1.7	0	0	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

## Starting Age of Employment

Most of the respondents started to work at a very early age, with 80% entering the workforce when they were under 12 years old. This is particularly apparent in coffee farming, where 96% of child respondents started working before they reached the age of 12. This contravenes Section 11 of the Labour Code of RDTL on child labour, which states that a child under 12 years is absolutely prohibited from doing any work.<sup>48</sup>

48 Labour Code of RDTL, section 11, 2003,

**Table 9**  
**Age at which children started work**

Age	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
Under 12	68.4%	96%	75.5%	80%
12 – 14	24.5%	3.7%	16.3%	15%
15 and above	7%	0%	8.1%	5%

In an agricultural society it is common for children to be forced to work at a very early age. A focus group discussion held in Ermera confirmed this finding, with most of the children—both boys and girls—asserting that they had started to do domestic chores at around 7 to 10 years old.<sup>49</sup> Overall, more females started work at an earlier age than their male counterparts, as shown in Table 10.

**Table 10**  
**Age of starting work, by sex and researched sector (%)**

Age when children started working	Sex of Respondents		Total
	Female	Male	
Under 12	83.3	77.2	80
12–14	15.2	14.7	15
15 and above	1.3	7.9	5

For more than 93% of children, the job that they have now is their first job, meaning that job mobility is low among child labour, especially for children in coffee farming. The current job is not the first job for 7% of child respondents in domestic work and 12.2% of child respondents in street/market vending.

## Reasons for Working, According to Children

According to 60% of the child labourers, they work to help their families. Twenty-two percent said they did it because they wanted to learn how to work and 14.4% work so that they can pay for their education. Thus the principal reason for working is to enhance the family income.

49 From a FGD held in Ermera District in December 2006.



**Table 11**  
**Main reason for working (% and single answer)**

Reason for working	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
Pay for my education	12.2	7.4	24.4	14.4
Help the family	52.6	66.6	63.2	60.6
Learn how to work	28	25.9	12.2	22.5
Pay for the education of brothers/sisters	1.7	0	0	.6
Father/mother has second wife/husband	3.5	0	0	1.3
To make a living	1.7	0	0	.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### Education of the Working Children

The data gathered using questionnaires showed that majority of the respondents (76.3%) can read and write and 10% read and write only a little, while 13.8% said that they cannot read or write at all. This is in line with the findings regarding their educational status, namely that most of the child respondents (75.6%) go to school (while working), 13.1% had dropped out and 11.3% had never been to school (Table 12). The high percentage of children in school is probably because the research was done in areas where there is a greater concentration of education facilities, such as Dili and Baucau.

**Table 12**  
**Educational status of working children (%)**

Status	Frequency	Percent
In school	121	75.6
Dropped out	21	13.1
Never attended school	18	11.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100.0</b>

There are no significant differences in the patterns of educational status among the studied sectors: most working children in all three sectors are still in school, meaning they are combining schooling with work (Table 13). However, the percentage is slightly higher for working children in coffee farming, with 83.3% of child respondents in school, compared to 71.9% of those in domestic work and 71.4% of those in street/market vending. Further, there is little difference in educational status between males and females, while by age group, the drop-out rate is slightly higher for those aged 15–17, as shown in Table 14 and Table 15.

**Table 13**  
**Educational status of working children, by sector (%)**

Status	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
In school	71.9	83.3	71.4	75.42
Dropped out	15.7	11.1	12.2	12.2
Never attended school	12.2	5.5	16.3	16.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 14**  
**Educational status of working children, by sex (%)**

Status	Sex of Respondents	
	Female	Male
In school	75	76.1
Dropped out	10.6	14.7
Never attended school	13.8	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 15**  
**Educational status of working children, by age group (%)**

Status	Age group of respondents			
	5 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 17
In School	78.5	75	80	72.4
Dropping out	3.5	13.6	10	18.9
Never attend school	17.8	75	10	8.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The reasons for not attending school are largely related to the economic situation of the families, as depicted in Table 16. Only a small number of respondents gave non-economic reasons, such as being too young, too weak academically, or not interested in school.

**Table 16**  
**Reasons for not attending school (N = 18)**

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Too young	1	5.6
Cannot afford school	8	44.4
Family does not allow schooling	5	27.8
Academically poor or not interested in studying	1	5.6
Working (paid or unpaid)	1	5.6
Have to help at home with household chores	2	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Of those who dropped out of school, 76% left when they were in elementary school, 14.3% did not continue schooling after completing elementary, 14.3% dropped out while they were in junior secondary and 4.8% when they were in senior high school. Most had economic reasons for dropping out but many of these children also said that they did not continue their schooling because the school was too far or there was no school in their area. Relatively few had any intention of continuing their education; only 33.3% of those who dropped out wanted to resume their studies because they considered education to be very important.

**Table 17**  
**Reasons for dropping out of school (N = 21)**

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Illness/became disabled	2	9.5
School too far	4	19
Lack of parental support	2	9.5
Have to work	8	38.1
No school in my area	4	19
My mother might take me away from my uncle <sup>50</sup>	1	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0</b>

50 The child's mother maltreated the child and wanted to take her away from the child's uncle.

**Table 18**  
**Willingness to return to school (N=21)**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, because education is very important	7	33.3
No, I am already too old to go to school	4	19
No, not interested	5	23
Disabled	3	14.3
No, I have to work	2	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0</b>

One of the key informants<sup>51</sup> stated that, according to his observations, most of the children who are working in Dili are in junior and senior high school. However, another key informant<sup>52</sup> also asserted that street vendors selling cassettes, newspapers and so forth in Colmera, Dili, are mostly students in elementary and junior high.

Most of the child respondents combine schooling with work, and, when asked about the difficulties they face in their studies, they refer mostly to the fact that because they are working, they do not have enough time to do homework and are too tired to study. However, 29.8% of them said that they have no problem with studying (Table 19). There is no significant difference between the difficulties faced by male and female working children.

**Table 19**  
**Difficulties of studying while working (Multiple Answers, N=121)**

Type of difficulty	Female	Male	Total	Percentage (%)
Too tired to study	16	16	32	26.4
Do not understand lessons in class	3	1	4	3.3
Go to school late	5	9	14	11.6
Not enough time to do homework	18	22	40	33.1
No difficulty	14	22	36	29.8
Lack of concentration	7	5	12	9.9
Poor performance in class	10	10	20	16.5

51 From an interview with the head of Saint Joseph School, Fr. Eduardus R. Dopo, SJ, in Dili.

52 From an interview with the NGO/church representative on the Youth Commission, Fr. Justiniano SDB, Comoro, Dili, 2007.

The results of two focus group discussions held separately in Ermera and Dili support this finding, with the majority of the participants saying that they feel very tired at school, cannot concentrate in class, and have no time to prepare for the lessons.<sup>53</sup> Interviews with educational practitioners resulted in similar views. Some key informants stated that the junior and senior secondary students who do too much work at home, such as farming, fishing and domestic work, feel too tired at school and cannot concentrate in class.<sup>54</sup> However, according to one of the key respondents<sup>55</sup> in Ermera, many schoolchildren fail in school not because they are oppressed by their work at home, but because they do not use their time for studying, but for playing with friends and relatives.

With regard to class attendance, 62.6% of respondents said that they had not missed a school day during the last six months, while 37.1% said that they had missed some days. A parent of a street vendor reported that sometimes his child cannot go to school because he has to spend the whole day helping them to sell vegetables on the street.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, a key informant asserted that some schoolchildren have to work on the street during school days selling newspapers, phone cards, vegetables and so forth in order to help their families, so they have no time to go to school at all.<sup>57</sup>

## Working Conditions

### Work Status

Most child respondents work to assist their parents or relatives (83.1%). However, the percentage of those who admit that they work unpaid is slightly lower (78.1%). This is probably because children who work to help their relatives also receive wages or money in compensation. Those who have employers (11.3%) mostly work as domestic workers and street/market vendors, while all the self-employed children work as street/market vendors. In line with this, those who work for money (21.9%) are mainly engaged in domestic work and street/market vending.

**Table 20**  
**Whether children have employers**

Status	Frequency	Percent
No, I am self-employed	9	5.6
No, I am assisting my parent/ relatives	133	83.1
Yes	18	11.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100.0</b>

53 From focus group discussions held in Ermera and Dili, January and February 2007.

54 From interviews with the head of a public junior high school in Vemasse/Baucau, Sr. Carlos Neves, and the head of a public school in Baucau, Sr. Eduardo, in Baucau, January 2007.

55 From an interview with the head of Pre-secundario 10 de Abril 1999, Ermera, Sr. Juvinal Exposto, in Gleno, Dec.2006.

56 From an interview with the parent of a street vendor in Dili, Sr. Pedro Oliveira, Feb. 2007.

57 From an interview with the director of Forum Comunicao Oratorio Dom Bosco, Sr. Cipriano Olivaira, in Acaderu-hun Dili, Feb. 2007.

**Table 21**  
**Children receiving monetary compensation (%)**

Status	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
Work for money	21	3.7	42.8	21.9
Work unpaid	78.9	96.2	57.1	78.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 22**  
**Children receiving monetary compensation, by sex (%)**

	Sex of respondent	
	Female	Male
Work for money	25.7	74.2
Work unpaid	50.4	49.6

More children in the 10–12 and 15–17 age groups work for money. With regard to gender, it seems that more males work than females for money (74.2%) and a very slightly higher number of females than males work unpaid.

**Table 23**  
**Paid or unpaid work, by age group (%)**

	Age group of respondents				Total
	5 - 9	10 – 12	13 - 14	15 - 17	
For money	17.8	22.7	20	24.1	35
Unpaid	82	77.2	80	75.8	125
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>160</b>

The pattern of children helping parents is common in many societies, including in Timor Leste, where children begin to help their parents with both routine household chores and productive activities as part of a process of learning to work and become familiar with the ‘rules’ of harmonious families and social relations.<sup>58</sup> Commonly, children start working by helping their families before they go out to work for others. They do so partly for reasons of poverty, but also, in many societies, because of cultural values and expectations which view this as a natural and ‘right’ way to introduce a child to the roles and responsibilities linked to being a member of a family and to growing up. This occurs in millions of agricultural families all over the world.<sup>59</sup>

***Earnings of Child Respondents***

More than half of the children from all sectors (domestic work, street vending and coffee farming) who work for money earn less than USD 2 per day, 17.1% earn USD 3 per day, 20% earn USD 4 per day and the rest earn more than USD 4 per day. On average, males earn more than females in all sectors. Most of the child labourers in the three sectors collect their earnings by themselves, but almost a quarter of them reported that the money was collected by their parents.

**Table 24**  
**Earnings of working children**

Earnings	Sex of respondent	
	Female	Male
< 2 USD/day	18	51.4
3 USD/day	6	17.1
4 USD/day	7	20
5 USD/day	1	2.8
9 USD/day	1	2.8
10 USD/day	2	5.7
15 USD/day	1	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100.0</b>

58 From an interview with the director of Youth Leadership empowerment, Department of Education of RDTL, Jose Antonio Neves, in Vilaverde Dili, Feb. 2007.

59 See Hilowitz, Janet, Joost Kooijmans, Peter Matz, Peter Dorman, Michaele de Kock and Muriel Alectus, “CHILD LABOUR” (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour), A Textbook for University Students, ILO Geneva, 2004, p. 81.

**Table 25**  
**Mean earnings of working children, by sex (in US\$ per day)**

Sex of respondent					
Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor
Daily earnings	Daily earnings	Daily earnings	Daily earnings	Daily earnings	Daily earnings
Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
1.34	0.125	1.05	1.43	0.166	3.00

**Table 26**  
**Who collects the money**

	Frequency	Percent
Self	24	68.6
Parents	9	25.7
Stepfather/mother	2	5.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

The perception among children who do not receive money for their work is that they get other benefits from their parents or the adult they work for.

**Table 27**  
**Benefits respondents get from adults they live with, for those doing unpaid work (N = 125) (Multiple Answers)**

Benefits	Total	Percentage
Food	124	99.2
Clothing	107	85.6
School facilities (fees, allowance, books etc.)	83	66.4
Health care	50	40
Place to stay	55	44

***Working Hours and Days***

The majority of the child respondents (75.6%) stated that they work all the time, throughout the year. While this is the case for about 90% of those in domestic work and street/market vending, just fewer than 50% of those working in coffee farming reported that they do not work all year round (Table 28). Those who do not work throughout the year asserted that they work during school holidays only (51%) or during harvest time



(40%). In line with these findings, a parent of a street vendor in Becora, Dili, stated that his son used to sell newspapers the whole year round in order to supplement his family’s income, while in Ermera a parent disclosed that children who collect and process coffee very much depend on seasonal work.

**Table 28**  
**Working time during the year (%)**

	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
Work throughout the year	91.2	53.7	89.7	75.6
Do not work throughout the year	8.7	46.2	10.2	21.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 29**  
**Working periods for those not working throughout the year**

	Frequency	Percent
During school holidays only	18	51.4
During harvest time	16	45.7
When I need money to buy school supplies	1	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Looking at the hours of work per day, 8.7% of child respondents work more than 8 hours a day, 16.8% work 3 hours or less, 22.5% work from 6 to 8 hours a day and the majority work between 3.01 and 5 hours a day (51.8%).

**Table 30**  
**Daily working hours**

Number of hours per day	Frequency	Percent
3 hours and under	27	16.8%
3.5 to 5 hours	83	51.8%
6 to 8 hours	36	22.4%
9 to 11 hours	6	3.7%
12 to 14 hours	8	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100</b>

By sector, it is apparent that those in domestic work and street/market vending tend to work longer hours compared to children in coffee farming (Table 31).

**Table 31**  
**Working hours by sector (%)**

Number of hours per day	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
3 hours and under	5.2%	37%	8.1%	16.8%
3.5 to 5 hours	66.6%	44%	42.8%	51.8%
6 to 8 hours	19.2%	18.5%	30.6%	22.5%
9 to 11 hours	5.2%	0	6.1%	3.7%
12 to 14 hours	3.5%	0	12.2%	7%

Similar results were found when the researchers looked at the number of working days per week: children in domestic work and in street/market vending tend to work more days in the week.

**Table 32**  
**Number of working days in a week (%)**

Number of hours per day	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
2	0	1.8%	4%	1.8%
3	0	0	4%	12.5%
4	0	3.7%	4%	2.5%
5	1.7%	14.8%	4%	6.8%
6	24.5%	64.8%	30.6%	40%
7	73.6%	14.8%	53%	46.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>100%</b>

More than half of the working children said that they have time to play with their friends/relatives, just under 40% said that they sometimes have time and 12% said they do not have time to play. Almost all of those working in coffee farming have time to play.

**Table 33**  
**Play time (%)**

	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
Yes	57.8	44.4	59.1	53.7
Sometimes	31.5	53.7	30.6	38.7
No	10.5	1.8	10.2	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

***Health and Safety Risks of Work***

Sixty percent of all the child respondents said that their jobs did not involve any risks that could jeopardise their health and safety. Awareness of the risks of working is higher among parents, with 64.3% of adult respondents saying that their children’s work posed risks to their health and safety. If we look into each sector, almost two-thirds of the children in coffee farming perceived that their work involved risks, while only a fifth of children in domestic work and about a third in street/market vending perceived so.

**Table 34**  
**Perception of risks at work (%)**

Perception of risk	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
Yes	21%	66%	32.6%	40%
No	79%	33.3%	67.3%	60%

Vulnerability to illness was the risk mentioned by most children in domestic work, while children in coffee farming perceive their work as having exposed them to sickness, falling from the trees and cutting oneself. Children doing street and market vending face risks such as being hit by cars, people stealing their money and physical abuse. A focus group discussion among children working in coffee farming provided further confirmation that that they risk falling from the trees and being bitten by insects.<sup>60</sup> During another focus group discussion, street vendors asserted that their working conditions are mostly insecure; they could be killed or kidnapped by unidentified people anywhere and at any time.<sup>61</sup>

The fact that many children in coffee farming perceive their work as risky is perhaps because a higher number of children in this sector (62.9%) admit that they have been sick in the last four weeks compared to children in domestic work (only 40.3%) and in street/market vending (48.9%). Overall, more than 50% of the working children said that they had been sick in the last four weeks. The most common types of ill health the children

60 From a focus group discussion held in Ermera, Jan 20, 2007.

61 From a focus group discussion held in Dili, Feb 2, 2007.

suffered were heavy flu, measles, headache, back pain, malaria, diarrhoea and chest pain. The data show that a significant number of children suffer malaria; this is because Timor Leste as a whole is very vulnerable to this disease. A total of 87.6% of those who had been sick in the last four years said that they did not work when they were sick.

**Table 35**  
**Children who had been sick in the last four weeks**

Were you sick during the last four weeks?	Sectors			Total
	Domestic work	Agriculture (coffee farming)	Street vendor	
Yes	40.3%	62.9%	48.9%	50.6%
No	59.6%	37%	51%	49.3%

**Table 36**  
**Types of sickness (Multiple Answers) N = 81 (%)**

Types of sickness	Percentage (%)
Heavy flu	66.7
Measles	63.0
Chest pain/respiratory problem	12.3
Headache	55.6
Diarrhoea	16.0
Back pain	35.8
Malaria	30.9
Leg injury	1.2
Coughing	6.2
TBC	1.2
Stomach ache	6.2

Children working in coffee farming had had the highest percentage (77.7%) of work-related accidents compared to children in domestic work (12.2%) and in street/market vending (14.2%). For all the working children, falls from trees, being physically abused and being hit by motorcycles were the most serious accidents they had ever experienced. More boys (39.7%) experienced accidents compared to girls (29.1%). As for means of protecting themselves from hazards at work, hats, shoes and long-sleeved shirts were the most common items referred to by the child respondents. Very little emerged about the risks faced by the children in domestic work during the focus group discussions (FGD) held in Dili and Ermera.<sup>62</sup> One problem was that most of the participants in the FGDs were from the street vending and coffee farming sectors. However, according to the researchers' observations, most of the children doing domestic work are bullied and abused by their employers.<sup>63</sup>

62 See the results of the focus group discussions held in Ermera District in December 2006 and in Dili in January 2007.

63 Personal observations of the research team.

***Aspirations of the Child Respondents for Their Future***

Many of the child respondents (45%) want to continue their studies and go to university. A further 18.1% would like to run their own business and 11.9% want to work with the government, as shown in Table 37.

**Table 37**  
**Future plans of the respondents**

Aspirations/Plans	Frequency		
	Female & Male	Female	Male
Work for the government	11.8	11.1	12.5
Work abroad	3.7	1.3	5.6
Go to university	45.0	56.9	35.2
Work for an NGO	0.6	0	1.1
Do skills training	2.5	1.3	3.4
Run own business	18.1	9.7	25
Go back to school	3.7	1.3	5.6
No plans	14.4	18	11.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Socio-economic Background of the Working Children’s Families**

***Education of Parents/Guardians***

Both mothers and fathers of the working children have only a low level of education. A significant percentage of mothers (47.9%) and fathers (41.8%) have never been to school, and some 20% of both fathers and mothers did not complete elementary school. The educational situation of the working children is much better than that of their parents, with 76.1% of the children in school. Expenditure on food and transportation for most of the households (54%) is less than USD 2 per day, while for 40.8% of the households it is between USD 2 and 4.

**Table 38**  
**Educational level of mothers/female guardians**

Educational level	Frequency	Percent
Not applicable (mother deceased)	3	3
No schooling	47	47.9
Elementary – did not graduate	20	20.4
Elementary - graduated	3	3
Junior high school – did not graduate	6	6.1
Junior high school – graduated	4	4
Senior high school – did not graduate	4	4
Senior high school – graduated	11	11.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 39**  
**Educational level of fathers/male guardians**

<b>Educational level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Not applicable (father deceased)	5	5.1
No schooling	41	41.8
Elementary – did not graduate	20	20.4
Elementary - graduated	3	3
Junior high school – did not graduate	5	5.1
Junior high school – graduated	3	3
Senior high school – did not graduate	3	3
Senior high school – graduated	18	18.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100</b>

***Household Income and Expenditure***

Most of the parents have some sort of employment, mostly in the informal sector, working as farmers, vendors and construction workers. This is of course related to their educational background. Only a small number work for the government. More than half of the mothers asserted that they are housewives. Almost half of the fathers and half of the mothers earn less than USD 60 a month. This is a very low level of income, given that households are usually large: 69.4% have 6 to 7 members.

**Table 40**  
**Main job of fathers/male guardians of the child respondents**

<b>Main Job</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Deceased	5	5.1
Farmer	39	39.8
Government worker/civil servant (including police and military)	10	10.2
Vendor	16	16.3
Construction worker	8	8.2
Driver	4	4.1
Fisherman	1	1.0
Carpenter	6	6.1
Unemployed	3	3.1
Security guard	2	2.0
Janitor	1	1.0
Teacher	2	2.0
Selling livestock e.g. goats, chickens	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 41**  
**Income of fathers/male guardians**

Income	Frequency	Percent
Deceased	5	5.1
Less than USD 60	46	46.9
USD 60 - 89	3	3
USD 90 - 150	31	31.6
USD 180 - 270	11	11.2
USD 300 and above	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 42**  
**Main job of mothers/female guardians**

Main Job	Frequency	Percent
Deceased	3	3.1
Farmer	16	16.3
government worker/civil servant (including police and military	2	2.0
Vendor	21	21.4
Craftsman	1	1.0
Construction worker	1	1.0
Maid	1	1.0
Housewife	51	52.0
Teacher	2	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 43**  
**Income of mothers/female guardians**

Income	Frequency	Percent
No income	26	26.5
Deceased	3	3.1
Less than USD 60	49	50.0
USD 85 –150	18	18.3
USD 180 – 270	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 44**  
**Number of people living permanently with respondents**

Number of people	Frequency	Percent
2	2	2.0
3	6	6.1
4	11	11.2
5	11	11.2
6	19	19.4
7	49	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 45**  
**Daily family expenditure**

US\$/day	Frequency	Percent
Less than USD 2	53	54
USD 2–4	40	40.8
More than USD 4–10	5	5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100</b>

### ***Working Children's Contribution to the Household Income***

The children make an important contribution to the family income. More than half of the parents admit that their children contribute to their income. Forty eight percent (48%) of the parents of respondents working as street vendors and in coffee farming said that their children contribute between 1 and 25% of the household income, 9.2% reported a contribution of 26–50% and 5.1% said that the children contributed more than 50%. The children's important contribution to the household income is also reflected in the number of children in the household who work, with 74.5% of households having more than one child working. Moreover, parents admit that they ask/force their children to work in order to increase the household income.

**Table 46**  
**Children's contribution to family income**

Contribution to income	Frequency	Percent
None	17	26.5
1 – 25%	47	48.0
26 – 50%	9	9.2
Above 50%	5	5.1
Don't know	20	20.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>



**Table 47**  
**Total number of working children in the household (N=98)**

Number of children	Frequency	Percent
1.00	25	25.5
2.00	23	23.5
3.00	22	22.4
4.00	13	13.3
5.00	11	11.2
6.00	4	4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 48**  
**Extent of children being forced to work**

Do you force your children to work?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	81	82.7
No	17	17.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 49**  
**Reason for forcing children to work (N=81)**

If you force your children to work, why?	Frequency	Percent
To increase the household income	47	58.0
Better than just staying at home	26	32.1
To learn to work	5	6.2
To ease parents' workload	3	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>

***Housing Facilities***

The poor economic background of the working children is reflected in the facilities in the houses where they live. Although most of the houses are owned by the parents, 52% of the houses are not concrete constructions. Many of the households still use oil lamps, but most have electricity.

**Table 50**  
**House ownership status of parents**

Status of ownership	Frequency	Percent
Own house/place	87	88.8
Rented house	3	3.1
Family-owned house	5	5.1
Occupy house of others	2	2.0
Government house	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 51**  
**Type of House of Respondents**

Type of house	Frequency	Percent
Wood and bamboo	18	18.4
Wood only	5	5.1
Palm leaf and bamboo	7	7.1
Semi-concrete	18	18.4
Concrete	49	50.0
Wood, bamboo and iron sheeting	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 52**  
**Lighting at House**

Lighting	Frequency	Percent
Oil lamps	44	44.9
Candles	2	2.0
Electricity	52	53.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Households Where Children Do Domestic Work

During consultation, stakeholders in Timor Leste raised their concerns about issue of children doing domestic chores in their own households, as well as children who are traditionally adopted by relatives but are given tasks to do, such as household chores or helping with economic activities. For this research, children who do domestic work outside their parents' households as well as 57 adult members from the households for whom the children work were interviewed to better understand the characteristics of such households.

### *Relationship with the Children*

Through the interviews it emerged that most of children doing domestic work are working for their relatives as well as for so-called adoptive parents. Only 10.5% of the children work in households that are not either their

relatives' or their adoptive parents' households. None of these children were recruited through agencies, and the households knew the children, who are not related to them, through their friends or families. Most of the children (87.7%) started staying with the households concerned where they were under 15 years old.

**Table 53**  
**Relationship with the child**

	Frequency	Percent
Adoptive father/mother	8	14.0
Uncle/aunt	25	43.9
Grandfather/grandmother	7	12.3
Older brother/sister	11	19.3
No family relationship	6	10.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

***Socio-economic Condition of the Households***

When we compare the socio-economic backgrounds of the working children's own families and the households where they do domestic work, it is apparent that the latter enjoy better economic conditions. This can be seen from more formal types of work of the respondents and their spouses. A significant number of respondents and their spouses work in the formal as government staff, NGO staff, hotel receptionists, teachers, computer technicians, etc. Average monthly incomes are also higher than those of the parents of the working children.

**Table 54**  
**Main job of the respondents**

Main job	Frequency	Percent
Government staff (police, administrator, military, etc.)	10	17.5
Driver	4	7.0
Peasant	3	5.3
Vendor	12	21
Housewife	9	15.8
Computer technician	1	1.8
Teacher	6	10.5
Hotel receptionist	1	1.8
Janitor	3	5.3
NGO staff	2	3.5
Small entrepreneur	1	1.8
Security officer	2	3.5
Carpenter	2	3.5
Unemployed	1	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 55**  
**Main job of respondents' spouses**

Main job	Frequency	Percent
Not applicable	3	5.3
Housewife	20	35.1
Unemployed	1	1.8
Government staff (police, administrator, military, etc)	9	15.8
Driver	4	7.0
Tailor	2	3.5
Vendor	5	8.8
Sales staff	4	7.0
Teacher	3	5.3
Janitor	1	1.8
NGO staff	1	1.8
Small entrepreneur	2	3.5
Security officer	1	1.8
Selling at restaurant	1	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 56**  
**Average total monthly income of respondents' households**

Income group in USD	Frequency	Percentage (%)
< 50	6	10.5
51 – 150	28	49.1
151 – 250	12	21.1
251 – 350	2	3.5
351 – 450	3	5.3
451 – 550	4	7.0
551 – 650	0	0.0
651 – 750	1	1.8
> 750	1	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The wealthier status of the households is also reflected in their housing conditions, with most respondents owning their own houses (84.2%) and just under 90% of the houses being semi-concrete or concrete constructions. Electricity was installed in 93% of the houses, 14% of the households had land line telephones, 73.7% owned television sets, and 43.9% had a motor vehicle.

## Reasons for Children to Stay in the Households

The main reasons for children to stay with the adult respondents, according to the respondents, are to go to school (66%), to work (19.3%) and to ease the economic burden on their families. As relatively big cities, Dili and Baucau have better education facilities and many children from other areas come to these cities to continue their education.

**Table 57**  
**Why the Child Respondents Stay with the Adult Respondents**

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Schooling	38	66.7
To relieve the economic burden on his or her own family	6	10.5
To work	11	19.3
Own father/mother frequently beats the child	1	1.8
The child voluntarily chose to stay with the family	1	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Although the children joined the households for the purposes listed in Table 57, they were tasked with various household chores as depicted in Table 58. Some of the children were also given economic tasks such as looking after a shop, helping on the farm, helping in a kiosk, and selling cigarettes on the street in addition to household chores. While culturally, in Timor Leste, men are identified with farming and women with domestic chores like washing, cooking, sweeping and so forth, ‘adopted’ boys are asked to do what is traditionally thought of as women’s work as well, such as taking care of children, cooking, shopping and washing.

**Table 58**  
**Tasks the child respondents have to do while staying with the respondents (Multiple Answers)**

Aspirations/Plans	Female	Male	Total	Percentage (%)
Washing	8	14	22	38.6
Ironing	2	4	6	10.5
Cleaning the house	14	30	44	77.2
Cooking	14	16	30	52.6
Taking care of the children	6	19	25	43.9
Looking after the shop	5	9	14	24.6
Helping on the farm	2	4	6	10.5
Helping in the market stall/kiosk	5	5	10	17.5
Sweeping	2	2	4	7.0
Selling cigarettes on the street	0	2	2	3.5

Selling at the kiosk		1	1	1.8
Selling food (sate, fried bananas, donuts, etc.) on the street	0	1	1	1.8
Taking the children to school	0	2	2	3.5
Watering plants or trees	0	1	1	1.8

**Compensation for the Children**

Only nine respondents said that they paid the children. The children receive between USD 20 and USD 50 per month. Those who do not pay the children provide various other benefits such as food, clothing and education costs. Other benefits provided include health care and pocket money.

**Table 59**  
**Who pays for the child respondent’s education**

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
He/she no longer attends school	13	22.8
His/her own parents	4	7.0
I pay for his/her education	40	70.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 60**  
**Benefits children get from the respondents**  
**(Multiple Answers)**

Benefit	Total	Percentage
Food	54	94.7
Clothing	45	78.9
School facilities (including school fees)	40	70.2
Health care	22	38.6
Some pocket money	20	35.1

**Children’s Contribution to the Households**

Most of the adult respondents said that main contribution of the children to their household is taking over some of the burden of household work (82.5%), but they also help to increase the family income, as some of these children are also given the task of helping out with economic activities.

**Table 61**

**Main contribution of the child respondents to the respondents' households**

Contribution	Frequency	Percent
Taking over some of the burden of household work	47	82.5
Being companions for our children	6	10.5
Giving us some moral support	1	1.8
Increasing the family income	3	5.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

***Children's Working Hours, According to Adult Respondents***

Most of the adult respondents claim that the children work for their household for an average of 3.5 hours to 5 hours a day; 21% work less than 3 hours a day, 17.6% work for about 6 to 8 hours and 8.8% for about 12 to 14 hours. This is mostly consistent with the information provided by the child respondents, but a much higher percentage of children (66.6%) stated that they spent 3.5 to 5 hours doing domestic chores compared to what was claimed by the adult respondents (21%).

The majority (86%) of the adult respondents said that they give the children sufficient time for play and rest, while 14% felt that they did not do so. This does not contradict the information provided by the children, with only 10.5% saying that they do not have time to play.

**Table 62**

**Average number of hours per day the children work for the respondents' households**

	Frequency	Percent
3 hours or less	12	21
3.5 to 5 hours	30	52.7
6 to 8 hours	10	17.6
12 to 14 hours	5	8.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 63**

**Respondents' perception of the time they allow for play, study and rest**

Do you think you give the child sufficient time to play, study and rest?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	49	86.0
No	8	14.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

***Opportunities for Children to Meet their Own Families***

Most of the children were given sufficient opportunities to meet with their own families, either through parents' visits to the children or the children visiting their parents.

**Table 64**  
**Visits by children's parents**

<b>Do the child's parents visit?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, once a year	9	15.8
Yes, twice a year	17	29.8
Yes, 3 times a year	6	10.5
Yes, 4 times a year	6	10.5
Yes, more than 5 times	3	5.3
No, one of the parents remarried	3	5.3
No, the parents are dead	3	5.3
No, it is far away and there is no money for transport	6	10.5
No, the parents have abandoned the child	2	3.5
No, the child's parents are divorced	1	1.8
No, the mother is alone, and there is nobody to look after the house	1	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 65**  
**Children's visits to their parents' homes**

<b>Do the child respondents visit their parents in their home?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, once a year	7	12.3
Yes, twice a year	22	38.6
Yes, 3 times a year	5	8.8
Yes, 4 times a year	4	7.0
Yes, more than 5 times	3	5.3
No, one of the parents remarried	2	3.5
No, the parents are dead	3	5.3
No, the parents live in Dili	1	1.8
No, because it is very far	2	3.5
No, the parents have abandoned the child	4	7.0
No, the child is too young to travel alone	1	1.8
No, I need the child to help me at home	2	3.5
No, the child is busy studying	1	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>



## **Programmes to Address Child Labour and Youth Unemployment Issues in Timor Leste**

The Rapid Assessment attempted to look at existing programmes for children and youth in Timor Leste and found out that there are few that focus on child labour, except for various programmes for street children. However, broader education programmes and child rights promotion programmes implemented by the government and various NGOs (national and international) will impact positively on reducing child labour in Timor Leste.

Interviews with national NGOs reveal that they have been implementing various programmes for children and youth with assistance from international agencies such as UNICEF, Plan International, Church World Services and Care. Although these programmes are generally not focused on child labour, they are contributing to the elimination of child labour as they target those most at risk of becoming involved in child labour and promote an environment in which children's rights are respected. In general, NGO programmes cover the following activities:

- a. Literacy programmes, which target not only children but also older groups of people.
- b. Formal education, by providing scholarships for children to stay or enrol in formal education.
- c. Promotion of child rights, which includes media development for children to voice their views, workshops for parents, and training for teachers. The messages covered include the importance of education and the impacts of working at an early age.
- d. Life skills training.
- e. Skills training, covering, for example, computer skills; English; handicrafts; and TV, radio, parabola and tape recorder repair.

Many NGOs currently focus their activities on the district of Dili, but during interviews many of them indicated plans to extend their activities to other districts. More details on NGO and INGO programmes can be found in Annex 4.

Various NGOs include in their programmes the provision of skills training in an effort to equip youth with skills for work, which in turn will contribute to youth employment. Further, in its effort to tackle youth unemployment, the Government of Timor Leste, specifically the Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion, is preparing a National Action Plan on Youth Employment (NAPYE), assisted by the International Labour Office (ILO). The NAPYE, the draft of which was discussed in a national forum in 2006, aims to prevent social exclusion by improving youth employability and promoting the development of a vibrant private sector that will provide youth with increasing opportunities for decent employment.



# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Child labour is perceived by many stakeholders as a common phenomenon in Timor Leste, although reliable national data are not available. While the national law on manpower in Timor Leste has set a prohibition on employing underage children, the economic, educational and cultural situation in Timor Leste means that children in this country are vulnerable to being involved in work. National level data on children engaged in work vary according to the sources. The Poverty Assessment in Timor Leste in 2003<sup>64</sup> reported that 10% of children aged 10–14 years old were found to be participating in the labour force, while in 2004, according to the World Bank, nearly 35% of children aged 10–14 years old in Timor Leste were in the labour force.<sup>65</sup> UNICEF's MISC Survey came up with the figure of just 4% of children aged 5 to 14 years old in Timor Leste being engaged in child labour.<sup>66</sup> Data on children aged 15 to 17 doing hazardous work are not available.

The survey was based on a questionnaire that was administered to 160 children working in coffee farming, street/market vending in cities and domestic work, who were selected through snowball sampling. The survey provided the following information on the child labour situation in East Timor:

1. More males are engaged in work, especially in coffee farming and in street/market vending. Surprisingly, there are a significant number of males doing domestic work (49.1%). This is perhaps because many of them are actually 'adopted' children who want to continue their education in cities.
2. In addition to their workload, children in street/market vending and coffee farming also have to experience separation from their own families: 100% of the children in domestic work and 40.8% of the children in street/market vending do not live with their parents.
3. Most of the children (80%) started their employment when they were under 12 years old, particularly those in coffee farming (96%). This is because in the agricultural sector, involving children in the work is commonly practiced as part of the socialisation process.
4. Most of the children work unpaid (78.1%), with the highest percentage in coffee farming (96%), followed by children in domestic work (78.9%) and street/market vending (57.1%). The older the age group, the higher the percentage of those working for money.
5. Most of the child workers (75.6%) in the three researched sectors combine school with working, and 70.2% of them perceive that their work has negatively impacted their learning activities in school. The main reason for dropping out or never attending school is that the parents cannot afford to send them to school. Other factors include a lack of school facilities near where they live. Willingness to go back to school among dropouts is rather low (33.3%).

64 Timor Leste Poverty Assessment. Poverty in a New Nation: Analysis for Action, World Bank, May 2003.

65 Labour and Social Trends in Asia and the Pacific 2006. Progress towards Decent Work, ILO, 2006, p. 55.

66 Making Children's Rights Work: Country Profiles on Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam, International Bureau of Children's Rights, 2006, p. 103.

6. Children in domestic work and street/market vending tend to work longer hours in a day, as well as more days in a week, compared to their fellow working children in coffee farming. Moreover, a significant portion of the children (46.2%) in coffee farming work only during certain periods in the year, while most of those in domestic work (91.2%) as well as in street/market vending (89.7%) work almost the whole year round.
7. While the children in the agricultural sector work fewer hours and days compared to those in the other two sectors, they are more vulnerable to illness and work-related accidents. Forty percent of all working children in the three sectors have the perception that their work has exposed them to certain risks that may jeopardise their health and safety, with a higher percentage among the children working in coffee farming (66%) compared to those in domestic work (21%) and in street/market vending (32.6%). This is further confirmed by data on the number of children who got sick in the last four weeks, with 62.9% in coffee farming and 40.3% and 48.9% in domestic work and in street/market vending respectively. The number of children who had experienced work-related accidents was also higher among those working on coffee plantations (77.7%), compared to 12.2% of those in domestic work and 14.2% of those in street/market vending.
8. Most of the child workers' parents work in the informal sector, with 46% of fathers and 49% of mothers earning less than US\$60 per month, a low income for the relatively large households (69.4% have 6 to 7 members). As a consequence, the contribution of the working children is needed, and this is admitted by at least 63% of the child workers' families. Further, 82.7% of the parent respondents said that they ask their children to work, and 47% of them said it was to boost the household income.
9. Parents have a very positive view of the importance of education. However, their economic situation, together with the parents' perception that work does not have a negative impact on their children (52%), has deterred parents from withdrawing their children from work. Moreover, many parents (31.6%) think that children are allowed to work when they are still under 15 years old. According to the parents, one of the actions that needs to be taken to stop children working is improving education.
10. Most of the children doing domestic work do so for the households of relatives or adoptive parents. Only 10.5% work for other people's households. The households where these children are engaged in domestic work enjoy a higher socio-economic status than the working children's own households.
11. Most of the children doing domestic work are unpaid, and by way of compensation they receive various benefits, including support for their education. While staying with the households for which they work, these children have opportunities to visit their own families or to be visited by their parents.

Qualitative evidence on the number of child workers in the three researched sectors is difficult to get, as the various informants were not very confident about providing estimates, and the estimates that were offered were much lower than what was observed by the researchers. The Rapid Assessment, therefore, is unable to reach any conclusion on the estimated numbers of child workers in the researched sectors.

The elimination of child labour calls for a multifaceted effort, ranging from poverty alleviation to the provision of education for all children in Timor Leste. While such programmes are already on Timor Leste's national agenda, various other activities are also recommended to help address the issue:

1. The rapid assessment has shown that child labour exists in Timor Leste. However, reliable data are difficult to get. It is recommended that the government of Timor Leste makes use of its national labour force survey to generate child labour-related data. Reliable data is of paramount importance as the basis for further child labour-related programming and policy development.

2. Further research on child labour in other sectors will be very helpful for building a knowledge base on child labour in Timor Leste. Such data can also be used for further advocacy to the general public, government and donors in efforts to tackle the issue.
3. Awareness raising activities on the prohibition of child labour (as stipulated by the Labour Code), the importance of education, and the negative impacts for children of working should be conducted in support of the national programme to achieve education for all.
4. To move forward on the elimination of child labour, Timor Leste will need to expedite its plan to ratify the ILO Conventions relating to child labour. The National Division of Social Services under Timor Leste's Ministry of Labour is now prioritising the ratification of the two ILO Conventions concerned (ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age and No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour). The ILO Office in Dili could provide assistance for the above ratification.
5. Timor Leste is preparing its National Action Plan for Youth Employment (NAPYE), and as child labour could be one of challenges to developing youth employment, it is recommended that the issue of child labour in Timor Leste is taken into consideration in the development of the NAPYE.



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# ANNEX 1. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN

## QUESTIONNAIRE – CHILDREN

(This questionnaire is used for interviewing children in domestic work, agricultural work and street vendors)

Date of interview : .....

Name of interviewer :.....

Signature :.....

Place of interview :.....

Reviewed by (name) :.....

Signature :.....

Age group of respondents (to be filled in by the interviewer and checked by supervisor)

5 – 9                      01

10 – 12                    02

13 – 14                    03

15 – 17                    04

Note: SA (Single Answer)

MA (Multiple Answer)

### Identity

1. Name of respondent : .....

2. Research area : .....

3. Marital status
  01. Never married
  02. Married with children
  03. Married without children
  04. Separated/divorced/widowed (with children)
  05. Separated/divorced/widowed (without children)
4. How old are you? .....years old
5. Sex of the child
  01. Female
  02. Male
6. With whom are you living? (SA)
  01. Parents
  02. Uncle/aunt
  03. Older sister/brother
  04. Adoptive mother/father
  05. Grandmother/grandfather
  06. Friends
  07. By myself
  08. Others, specify.....
7. Are your parents alive? (SA)
  01. Mother and father still alive
  02. Mother and father dead
  03. Father alive
  04. Mother alive

### Working Conditions

8. What tasks do you do in your current work? (MA)
  01. Selling newspapers, phone cards on the street
  02. Selling fish, vegetables on the street
  03. Selling cigarettes etc. from a *mobiling* (cart)
  04. Washing cars
  05. Ploughing soil
  06. Weeding
  07. Watering plants
  08. Carrying sacks of rice or coffee from farm to main road
  09. Preparing soil
  10. Planting coffee
  11. Manuring
  12. Spraying (pesticide)
  13. Harvesting
  14. Drying

- 15. Carrying coffee to store
- 16. Taking care of baby (carrying, feeding, bathing, changing nappies, etc.)
- 17. Cleaning the house
- 18. Taking children to school
- 19. Washing
- 20. Ironing
- 21. Cooking
- 22. Carrying water for domestic use
- 23. Other (specify) .....

9. Do you have an employer?

- 01. No, I am self-employed
- 02. No, I am assisting my parents/relatives
- 03. Yes

10. Why did you have to work? (main reason, SA)

- 01. Meet friends
- 02. Pay for my education
- 03. Help the family
- 04. Learn how to work
- 05. Very bored at home
- 06. Pay for the education of brothers/sisters
- 07. Other (specify) .....

11. How many hours do you work a day? .....hours

12. How many days a week you usually work?.....days

13. Do you work all the time throughout the year?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No

14. If not, when do you usually work? (MA)

- 01. During school holidays only
- 02. During harvest time
- 03. Other, specify.....

15. Do you still have time to play with your friends or relatives after working?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No
- 03. Sometimes

16. Do you work for money or unpaid?

- 01. For money
- 02. Unpaid

17. If for money, how much do you earn? (SA)

- 01. Daily, \$ ...../day

- 02. Weekly, \$...../week
- 03. Ten days, \$...../10 days
- 04. Monthly, \$ ...../month
- 05. Each time I work, \$ ..... /.....
- 06. Other (specify) .....

18. If you receive a wage/salary, who collects it? (SA)

- 01. Self
- 02. Parents
- 03. Stepfather/mother
- 04. Others (specify).....

19. If you work unpaid, what benefits do you get from the adults you are working for? (MA)

- 01. Food
- 02. Clothing
- 03. School facilities (fees, allowance, books etc.)
- 04. Health care
- 05. Place to stay
- 06. Other, specify .....

20. How do you feel about your current workload?

- 01. Too heavy
- 02. Heavy
- 03. Normal
- 04. Light

## History of Work

21. At what age did you start to work?.....

22. Is this your first place of work?

- 01. Yes (go to no. 25)
- 02. No

23. If not, how many times have you changed your job?

[This job is my: ]

- 01. Second
- 02. Third
- 03. Fourth
- 04. Fifth
- 05. Other (specify).....

24. Why did you change your workplace? (MA)

- 01. Low remuneration
- 02. Low income
- 03. Punishment/harassment

- 04. Not allowed to attend school
- 05. Insufficient food
- 06. Dismissed
- 07. Other (specify) .....

## Education

25. Can you read and write?
- 01. Yes
  - 02. No
  - 03. A little (e.g. can only write own name)
26. Do you go to school now?
- 01. Yes
  - 02. No, dropped out
  - 03. Never attended school
27. What is the main reason for you never attending school? (SA)
- 01. Too young
  - 02. Disability/illness
  - 03. School is too far
  - 04. Cannot afford schooling
  - 05. Family does not allow schooling
  - 06. Poor at studies or not interested in school
  - 07. School is not considered valuable
  - 08. School is not safe
  - 09. To work for pay as an employee or (as a paid or unpaid worker) in the family business or farm
  - 10. Need to help at home with household chores
28. If you answered 'yes' to 26, what grade are you in?

**Circle the response**

Elementary	Class 1	01
	Class 2	02
	Class 3	03
	Class 4	04
	Class 5	05
	Class 6	06
Junior Secondary	Class 1	07
	Class 2	08
	Class 3	09
Senior Secondary	Class 1	10
	Class 2	11
	Class 3	12

29. If you answered 'yes' to 26, what difficulties do you have with studying while you are also working? (MA)

.....  
.....  
.....

30. If you answered 'yes' to 26, did you miss any school days during the last six months due to the need to work?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No

31. If you answered 'yes' to 26, when is your homework/home study time? (MA)

- 01. Morning
- 02. Daytime
- 03. Night
- 04. No time for homework
- 05. Never do homework/home study although I have time

32. If you dropped out, what is the last educational level you attained?

**Circle the response**

Elementary	Class 1	01	
	Class 2	02	
	Class 3	03	
	Class 4	04	
	Class 5	05	
	Class 6/completed elementary school	06	
Junior Secondary	Class 1	07	
	Class 2	08	
	Class 3/completed junior secondary	09	
Senior secondary	Class 1	10	
	Class 2	11	
	Class 3/completed senior secondary	12	

33. If you dropped out, why? (main reason, SA)

- 01. Illness/ disability
- 02. School too far
- 02. Lack of parental support
- 03. Have to work
- 04. Financial problems
- 05. No school in my area
- 06. Not interested in schooling
- 07. Need to help at home withhold chores
- 08. Other (specify).....

- 34. Do you want to return to school?
  - 01. Yes, why.....
  - 02. No, why.....

**Risks and hazards at work**

- 35. Do you think that your work/what you are doing now involves risks to your health and safety?
  - 01. Yes
  - 02. No

- 36. If yes, what are those risks? (MA)
  - .....
  - .....
  - .....
  - .....
  - .....

- 37. Did you get sick in the last four weeks?
  - 01. Yes
  - 02. No

- 38. If you answered 'yes' to 37, what type of sickness? (MA)
  - 01. Heavy flu
  - 02. Fever/measles
  - 03. Chest pain/respiratory problem
  - 04. Headache
  - 05. Diarrhoea
  - 06. Back pain
  - 07. Malaria
  - 08. Dengue
  - 09. Other (specify).....

- 39. Do you have to work when you get sick?
  - 01. Yes
  - 02. No

- 40. Have you ever had a work-related accident?
  - 01. Yes
  - 02. No

- 41. If you answered 'yes' to 40, what type of work-related accident did you have? (MA)
  - 01. Hit by car/motorcycle
  - 02. Fall
  - 03. Abused by others
  - 04. Other, specify .....

- 42. What accidents do you consider most serious? .....(SA)
- 43. How serious was the accident mentioned in No. 42 above? (SA)
  - 01. It caused me to stop work for a while
  - 02. Had to have a health check-up/see a doctor
  - 03. I was hospitalised
  - 04. Other (specify) .....
- 44. When you are working, what self-protection equipment do you use for your safety and health? (MA)
  - 01. Shoes
  - 02. Hat
  - 03. Footwear other than shoes
  - 04. Long-sleeved shirt
  - 05. Gloves
  - 06. Mask
  - 07. Other (specify) .....

### Future aspirations

- 45. What are your plans for the future? (SA)
  - 01. Work for the government
  - 02. Work abroad
  - 03. Go to university
  - 04. Work for an NGO
  - 05. Get skills training
  - 06. Run own business
  - 07. I do not have any plans
  - 08. Other (specify).....

### Social support and protection system

- 46. When you have trouble with your work, to whom do you complain? (MA)
  - 01. Inspectors
  - 02. NGOs
  - 03. Government
  - 04. Parents
  - 05. Church
  - 06. Employer/master
  - 07. Other (specify) .....



# ANNEX 2.

## Questionnaire for Parents/Guardians of Children in Coffee Farming and Street/ Market Vending

**QUESTIONNAIRE – PARENTS/GUARDIANS  
(THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS USED TO INTERVIEW THE  
PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF CHILDREN WORKING ON  
COFFEE FARMS AND CHILDREN WORKING AS STREET/  
MARKET VENDORS)**

Date of interview : .....

Name of interviewer : .....

Signature : .....

Place of interview : .....

Reviewed by : .....

Signature : .....

Notes: SA (Single Answer)  
MA (Multiple Answers)

### Identity

1. Name of respondent : .....

2. Research area : .....

3. Sex of respondent : .....

4. Age of respondent : .....

5. Relationship to the child respondent:

- 01. Mother
- 02. Father
- 03. Uncle
- 04. Aunt
- 05. Grandfather
- 06. Grandmother
- 07. Other (specify).....

6. How many people live in your house permanently?

- 01. 1
- 02. 2
- 03. 3
- 04. 4
- 05. 5
- 06. 6
- 07. More than 6

### Household income, expenditure and living conditions

7. How old is the father/male guardian of the child respondent?

- 01. ....years old
- 02. Deceased (go to no. 11)

8. Highest educational level of father/male guardian of the child respondent?

**Circle the response**

No schooling		00
Elementary	Class 1	01
	Class 2	02
	Class 3	03
	Class 4	04
	Class 5	05
Junior Secondary	Class 6/finished elementary	06
	Class 1	07
	Class 2	08
Senior Secondary	Class 3/finished junior secondary	09
	Class 1	10
	Class 2	11
	Class 3/finished senior secondary	12

9. What is the main job of father/male guardian of the child respondent? (SA)

- 01. Farmer
- 02. Government worker/civil servant (including police and military)
- 03. Vendor

- 04. Craftsman
- 05. Construction worker
- 05. Unemployed
- 07. Driver
- 08. Fisherman
- 09. Carpenter
- 10. Maid
- 11. Housewife
- 12. Other (specify).....

10. How much does the father/male guardian earn?

- 01. Under \$2/day
- 02. \$3-5/day
- 03. \$6-9/day
- 04. \$10 or above/per day
- 05. If receiving a salary: US\$...../month

11. How old is the mother/female guardian of the child respondent?

- 01. ....years old
- 02. Deceased (go to no. 15)

12. Highest educational level of mother/female guardian of the child respondent?

**Circle the response**

No schooling		99
Elementary	Class 1	01
	Class 2	02
	Class 3	03
	Class 4	04
	Class 5	05
Junior Secondary	Class 6/finished elementary	06
	Class 1	07
	Class 2	08
Senior Secondary	Class 3/finished junior secondary	09
	Class 1	10
	Class 2	11
	Class 3/finished senior secondary	12

13. What is the main job of the mother/female guardian of the child respondent? (SA)

- 01. Farmer
- 02. Government worker/civil servant (including police and military)
- 03. Vendor
- 04. Craftsman
- 05. Construction worker

- 05. Unemployed
- 07. Driver
- 08. Fisherman
- 09. Carpenter
- 10. Maid
- 11. Housewife
- 12. Other (specify).....

14. How much does the mother/female guardian earn?

- 01. Under \$2/day
- 02. \$3-5/day
- 03. \$6-9/day
- 04. \$10 or above/per day
- 05. If receiving a salary: US\$...../month

15. How much is your family expenditure on food and transportation per day? \$.....day

16. When your family has an economic crisis, where do you look for help? (MA)

- 01. Government
- 02. Church
- 03. Relatives
- 04. NGOs
- 05. Friends
- 06. Other (specify).....

17. What is the ownership status of your house/residence? (SA)

- 01. Own house/place
- 02. Rented house
- 03. Family-owned house
- 04. Other (specify) .....

18. In what type of house do you live in? (SA)

- 01. Wood and bamboo
- 02. Wood only
- 03. Palm leaf and bamboo
- 04. Semi-concrete
- 05. Concrete
- 06. Other (specify).....

18. Lighting at home (SA):

- 01. Oil lamp
- 02. Candles
- 03. Electricity
- 04. Other (specify) .....

### Child's Contribution to Household Economy

20. Please list, in the table below, only the members of your family who are under 18 years old, according to their educational and work status.

Name	Age	Educational status		Work status	
		In school	Out of school	Works more than 3 hours a day	Not Working
		Total children in school:	Total children out of school:	Total children working:	Total children not working:

21. Do you force your child to work?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No

22. If yes, why?

- 01. For the household income
- 02. Better than just staying at home
- 03. Other (specify).....

23. What percentage of the family's monthly income is contributed by the work of all your children who are working?

- 01. None, why.....
- 02. 1 – 25%
- 03. 26 – 50%
- 04. More than 50%
- 05. Don't know

24. Do you want your child stop working ?

- 01. Yes, why .....
- 02. No, why .....

25. If you have children who have dropped out of school, do you want your children to resume their education?

- a. None of my children have dropped out
- b. Yes
- c. No, why.....

### Occupational Risks and Hazards

26. Does the work that your child undertakes involve risks to your child's health and safety?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No

27. If yes, what are the risks? (MA)

- 01. Being hit by others
- 02. Being killed by unidentified groups
- 03. Hunger, thirst
- 04. Restlessness
- 05. Robbery
- 06. Pesticide usage
- 07. Carrying heavy weights
- 08. Falls (from.....)
- 09. Others (specify).....

### Attitude to Child Labour and Aspirations

28. In your opinion, does the work that your child undertakes have a negative impact on your child?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No

29. If yes, what are those negative impacts? (MA)

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

30. In your opinion, at what age are children allowed to work full time, in general? (SA)

- 01. Under 10 years old
- 02. 10 years old
- 03. 11 years old
- 04. 12 years old
- 05. 13 years old
- 06. 14 years old
- 07. 15 years old
- 08. 16 years old
- 09. 17 years old
- 10. Above 17 years old

31. In your opinion, how important is education for the future of your children?

- 01. Very important
- 02. Important

03. Not important

32. In your opinion, what should be done so that children will not need to be involved in work? (MA)

What needs to be done	Who is responsible for ensuring that this happens





# ANNEX 3.

## Questionnaire for Adoptive Parent or Head of Household where Child does Domestic Work

**QUESTIONNAIRE –  
HEAD (OR OTHER RESPONSIBLE PERSON) OF HOUSEHOLD  
WHERE CHILD DOES DOMESTIC WORK**

Date of interview : .....

Name of interviewer : .....

Signature : .....

Place of interview : .....

Reviewed by : .....

Signature : .....

Notes: SA (Single Answer)  
MA (Multiple Answer)

**Identity**

1. Name of respondent :
2. Sex of Respondent :
3. Age of Respondent :
4. Relationship with the child.
  01. Adoptive father/mother

- 02. Uncle
- 03. Aunt
- 04. Grandfather
- 05. Grandmother
- 06. Not related
- 07. Other (specify).....

5. How did you get to know the child, if the child respondent is from outside your family clan?

- 01. From an orphanage
- 02. From a friend
- 03. From family
- 04. Other (specify).....

5.1. Which district does the child come from?.....

6. How old was the child respondent when he/she started staying with you?.....years old.

7. How many adoptive children or children who are not your biological children stay with you?.....people

8. How many people live in your house permanently (excluding adoptive children and other non-biological children)? .....people

### Household income and living conditions

9. What is the main job of the head of the household?

(SA).....

9.1. What is the main job of your spouse? .....

10. How much is the average total monthly income of your household? US\$ .....

11. Status of your house:

- 01. Own house
- 02. Rented house
- 03. Family-owned house
- 04. Other, specify .....

12. Type of house you live in:

- 01. Wood and bamboo
- 02. Bamboo only
- 03. Wood only
- 04. Palm leaf and bamboo
- 05. Semi-concrete
- 06. Concrete
- 07. Other (specify).....

- 13. Lighting at home:
  - 01. Oil lamp
  - 05. Candles
  - 06. Electricity
  - 07. Other (specify) .....
- 14. Do you have a telephone (land line)?
  - 01. Yes
  - 02. No
- 15. Do you have a television?
  - 01. Yes
  - 02. No
- 16. Do you have a motor vehicle?
  - 01. Yes
  - 02. No

### Child Respondent's Contribution

- 17. Why does the child stay with you? (SA)
  - 01. Schooling
  - 02. To ease the economic burden on his/her own family
  - 03. Because we have no children
  - 04. Our own children are far away
  - 05. To work
  - 06. Other (specify)..... ..
- 18. What tasks does the child respondent have to do while staying with you? (MA)
  - 01. Washing
  - 02. Ironing
  - 03. Cleaning the house
  - 04. Cooking
  - 05. Taking care of the children
  - 06. Looking after the shop
  - 07. Helping on the farm
  - 08. Helping in the market
  - 09. Other (specify) .....
- 19. In your opinion, what is the main contribution of the child to your household? (SA)
  - 01. Taking over some of the household work
  - 02. Being a companion for our children
  - 03. Giving us some moral support
  - 04. Other (specify).....

- 20. Who pays for education of the child respondent? (SA)
  - 01. He/she does not attend school any more
  - 02. His/her own parents
  - 03. The child him/herself
  - 04. I pay for his/her education
  
- 21. What benefits does he/she get from you? (MA)
  - 01. Food
  - 02. Clothing
  - 03. School facilities (including school fees)
  - 04. Health care
  - 05. Some pocket money
  - 06. Salary/wage, how much per month? US\$ ...../month **(go to 21.1)**
  - 07. Other (specify) .....
  
- 21.1. Who receives the salary/wage?
  - 01. The child him/herself
  - 02. Parents/guardian
  - 03. Other (specify).....
  
- 22. How many hours per day does the child work for your household, on average? .....hours
  
- 23. Do you think you give the child sufficient time to play, study and rest?
  - 01. Yes
  - 02. No
  
- 24. Have the child's natural parents ever visited him/her while the is child staying with you?
  - 01. Yes, how many times a year? .....times
  - 02. No, why.....
  
- 25. Has the child ever visited his/her parents in their home village?
  - 01. Yes, how many times? .....times
  - 02. No, why.....

# ANNEX 4. RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH NGOs

## 1. FUNDASAUN ESPINOHAS DA ROSA (FEDAROS)<sup>67</sup>

FEDAROS is a Timorese NGO that has been working specifically for children and youth in Dili and Liquica since 2002 and implementing various activities and programmes in the fields of education, health and advocacy (law enforcement).

- a. In the education sector, the Foundation is involved in non-formal and formal education. FEDAROS is cooperating with UNICEF to work for literacy for adults and youth as well as children. They also offer scholarships to enable children and young people from poor families to participate in formal education.
- b. In the health sector, the Foundation works to improve the nutritional status of children. In this case, FEDAROS is cooperating with the Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion to improve health in schools in some districts. They also plan to get involved in HIV and AIDS in future by enhancing children and young people's knowledge about HIV as well as teaching young people how to protect themselves against HIV.
- c. On legal advocacy, FEDAROS is cooperating with AISET (Ajudo Lei Ba Comunidade), a local NGO, to conduct training on law enforcement related to gender issues, land property issues, citizenship rights as well as children's rights. They also provide legal training and establish teams consisting of women, youth, traditional leaders, village leaders and church leaders. The Foundation works to promote the protection of children in prison and has suggested to the government that children who are involved in crime should not be kept in prison together with adults but should instead be placed in a separate centre.

## 2. ALOLA FOUNDATION

The Alola Foundation works to create employment opportunities, promote human rights, strengthen community participation in development and improve the status of women. It implements various programmes and activities to achieve its objectives, as outlined below:

- a. **Maternal and child care:** reducing maternal and infant mortality through: (1) promoting exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months; (2) creating a supportive environment for improving women's and children's health; (3) strengthening community action for women's health; and (4) increasing health service competencies.

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67 Interview with Sr. Jesuina de Oliveira, Director of FUNDASAUN ESPINOHAS DA ROSA (FEDAROS), on April 20, 2007

- b. Education:** (1) Supporting the implementation of the Timor Leste National Development goal of education for all; (2) improving the quality of teaching and increasing retention rates; (3) increasing community support for education; (4) increasing status and opportunities for girls and young women; and (5) improving life skills and health.
- c. Economic development:** (1) Creating employment for women; (2) developing the handcraft industry; (3) providing a role model for family-friendly workplaces; (4) maintaining cultural traditions in women's handicrafts; and (5) strengthening support services for women in enterprise.
- d. Advocacy: (1)** Women's resource centre; (2) campaigning for women's rights and health; (3) providing development opportunities for women; (4) creating a women-friendly space; and (5) providing humanitarian assistance.
- e. Management:** (1) Creating a caring working environment; (2) ensuring transparent financial management; (3) establishing management processes for Alola facilities; and (4) responsive programmes.

The programmes related to children and youth that have been done so far are as below:

- In cooperation with Care International, the foundation has been promoting the Convention on the Rights of the Child through giving training to communities (teachers, parents) about the rights of children and how to protect children according to both the constitution and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Giving training to teachers (the Eskola Belun programme); the Convention on the Rights of the Child is part of the materials disseminated by the European Commission.
- Life skills training for children, covering, among other things, how to live independently, how to take care of themselves, knowing their personalities as men or women, the ethics of communication and how to deal with problems that emerge. These programmes were supported by UNICEF in Timor Leste.
- In 2004, the Alola Foundation conducted research on human trafficking in Timor Leste. The issue of the worst forms of child labour was one component of this study.
- Giving training on administration, computer skills, management and financial management for women.
- Providing scholarships through the Friendship Schools and Haburas Labarik projects, in partnership with Care International.
- Establishing a women's resource centre, widows and victims support and a child care centre.
- The foundation is also implementing an economic development project focusing on handicrafts and a Cultural Centre.

### 3. COMORO CHILD AND YOUTH CENTER FOUNDATION (CCYCF)<sup>68</sup>

CCYCF is a Timorese NGO that has been working for children in Comoro since 2002. The organisation is a member of the National Youth Council and shares its experience with other youth centres in Dili. CCYCF and KnK are supporting activities in Comoro Youth Centres and in Farol Youth Centre in Dili. The objectives of the organisation are (1) to facilitate unity among youth in Comoro, where people are still struggling with life; (2) to offer education to children who have no access to formal education; and (3) to provide practical courses to enable youths to find employment.

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<sup>68</sup> Interview with Sra. Jacinta dos Santos Guterres, Director of Comoro Children Youth Center Foundation (CCYCF), and Nobuaki Kuribayashi on April 13, 2007.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the Foundation runs the following activities:

- a. Sport activities such as soccer, volleyball and basketball. The foundation believes that sport is the best way to facilitate harmony among young people. They also invite various youth leaders to involve young people from gangs to join their sports activities. Youths are engaged in violence simply because they are looking for ways to express their stresses and emotions. To reduce their stress, the Foundation conducts these sports activities in a peaceful atmosphere. In addition to daily sports activities, they also organise a sports tournament once a month to involve more participants from various areas of Dili. Those taking part in these sports activities are children between 12 and 17 years old and young people aged 17 and above.
- b. English courses: three levels are offered (basic, pre-intermediate, intermediate) based on the children's ability. The Foundation awards certificates to those who successfully complete their courses.
- c. Literacy programme: this is provided because many children cannot afford education due to the economic problems faced by their families. Most of them have to work, and they have no time for studying and playing. More than 100 children aged between 5 and 13, including street children, come to the centre every day to receive a basic education and join in a variety of activities such as watching movies, reading books, singing, dancing and picnics. Through these activities, some children have returned to the formal educational institutions they previously attended. The programme has quite a large number of participants (800–1,600 children each year). Specifically for street children, the Foundation also provides food and a place to stay, and helps them to reintegrate into society.
- d. Vocational training such as television, radio, parabola and tape recorder repair. The Foundation offers these courses in response to demand from young people who are eager to develop skills that will enable them to earn an income. The number of participants has been increasing steadily. More 500 youths have already taken part in the training courses at the centre. Some of the youths who have acquired skills have started working, and around 15 of them have been able to open their own businesses or shops. Up to now, this activity is has only been implemented in Dili, but in 2008, CCYCF and KnK plan to expand it to Baucau and Lospalos.

## 4. EIROS<sup>69</sup>

EIROS provides three kinds of training for the youths in 13 districts of Timor Leste: (1) a computer training programme, which consists of general office applications, competency-based IT applications, computer accountancy and computer technician skills; (2) English courses; and (3) management training. The first two are given to all young people or children who want to gain computer and English skills for working, but they are not limited to children and youth; people from older groups can also access the training. Management training is mostly provided to government and UN staff. EIROS also cooperates with the government, specifically the Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion, on the provision of computer training for 50 unemployed people. In addition, EIROS provides training for people referred by other organisations such as CWS (Church World Services).

In the future, EIROS will expand its services by providing computer and English training for children who are interested in such courses.

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69 Interview with Sr. Joao Paulo Gama Guterres, Director of EIROS, on April 11, 2007

## **5. FORUM COMUNICACAO JUVENTUDE ORATORIO DOM BOSCO<sup>70</sup>**

The Forum held a number of workshops for parents in 2005 and 2006, which focused on promoting the rights of children related to education and child labour/working at an early age. The Forum also has cooperated with UNICEF to address the problem of children, particularly street children, who cannot continue their studies because of economic and social problems. Through the workshops they aim to encourage parents to send their children to school instead of putting them to work at a very early age. So far they do not have any training activities for street children, but they have started to plan and identify places for computer and language training for such children.

## **6. DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE ON RESEARCH FOUNDATION (DENORE)<sup>71</sup>**

Since 2000, DENORE has been implementing (1) agricultural and sustainability training for people in rural areas, specifically in Manufahi and Kovalima Districts; (2) health programmes such as urgent treatment for families or children who are suffering from malnutrition and who are infected with HIV, especially in the areas of Manufahi (Same) and Suai/Kovalima; and (3) advocacy training for youth in Timor Leste.

Starting in August 2007, DENORE will implement a literacy programme for children who have dropped out of school, skills training for people with disabilities and awareness raising workshops for parents on the importance of the education for children.

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70 Interview with Mr. Cipriano Freitas, Director of Forum Comunicacao Juventude Oratorio Dom Bosco, April 2007

71 Interview with Sra. Lurdes Muthy Cardoso, Director of Development of Knowledge and Research Foundation (DENORE) on April 11, 2007.