



Concept note for a thematic session on

African Union Session

Policy priorities to End Child Labour in Africa

at the V Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, Durban, South Africa

Tuesday 17 May from 14:45 to 16:30 pm (1h45)

The Background

Progress against child labour has stalled and on current trends Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target 8.7 will be missed. What is more, if additional and determined efforts are not made, target 8.7 will also be missed in 2030, the deadline for the achievement of the SDGs. Action is urgently needed to regain momentum and accelerate progress.

The 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child labour provides the last chance to drive the needed action. The Durban Call to Action, which will be adopted at the end of the Conference, seeks to secure strengthened commitment to eliminate child labour, particularly in tackling its root causes through promotion of decent work for adults and for children reached the minimum age for work, universal quality education and social protection.

The child labour situation in Africa remains a great concern. Despite unprecedented levels of awareness, commitment, political will and action to end child labour at continental, regional and national level, Africa has seen an increase in both the number and percentage of children in child labour since 2012. There are now more children in child labour in Africa than in the rest of the world combined.

Child labour's major root causes include widespread poverty linked to the predominance of subsistence farming and the informal economy, poor access to social services such as quality education and health care, vulnerability to external shocks in the absence of adequate social protection and social safety nets, and socio-cultural factors such as gender roles and inequality. Precarious migration, conflict and disruptions linked to climate change are additional risk factors. In many countries, the different factors are compounded by demographic dynamics. Institutional factors such as inadequate laws and weak law enforcement constitute additional underlying causes.



Issues to be addressed

This session provides a forum for African stakeholders to discuss continental-specific challenges as well as policy priorities and strategic partnerships to end child labour in Africa, in particular access to quality universal education, social protection, decent work for adults, school to work transition, large scale action in the rural and agricultural sector and financing. The discussion will be informed by the AU Action Plan to Eradicate Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery (2020-2030) as well as the outcome of the Africa Regional consultation in preparation of the 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, which took place in Johannesburg in November 2021. Key messages from this session will be shared for consideration with the drafting committee responsible for the finalization of the Durban Call to Action, which will be adopted on the last day of the Conference.

