

## Fun, duty or sheer hazard?

This a listing of some useful reports and documents relating to child labour (see also pgs 1 and 8), available for free download from the Internet

**A Future Without Child Labour: Report of the Director General, Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, International Labour Conference, Geneva 2002, ISBN 92-2-112416-9(Revised Edition)**

Fishing is a particularly hazardous occupation, even for adults. In the small-scale sector, which accounts for over half the world's seafood catch and millions of small fishing craft, health and safety problems are endemic for all age groups. The contribution of children is most widespread in small-scale fishing where it can be critical for the profitability of the enterprise. In El Salvador, children work in small-scale, family-based or private enterprises in which boys and girls harvest shellfish, and girls also market the product. For both sexes, this work begins well before the age of 10. Some child labour in fishing occurs outside the family or traditional sector. For example, *muro-ami* fishing (named after the net used) in the Philippines takes place on large vessels, and the profits are reaped by the group that monopolizes the business. Children are engaged as swimmers and divers for catching reef fish extremely dangerous work. In southern Thailand, children work as fish sorters, factory workers and as crew on fishing boats. They carry out a wide range of tasks on board, and may be away at sea for several months at a time. In central Java, work undertaken by children in fishing includes handling and repairing nets, diving, draining boats and cooking.

As in agriculture, gender issues are important in fishing. A strong connection in general between fishing and cultural perceptions of masculinity, as well as income that looks high to boys, encourages them to go to sea as early as they can. As a good deal of fishing takes

place at night, these boys make poor daytime pupils, and high school dropout rates are a feature of fishing communities. Girls and women are engaged in marketing as well as fish processing, which can cause cuts and skin damage.

Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.DOWNLOAD\\_BLOB?Var\\_DocumentID=1568](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.DOWNLOAD_BLOB?Var_DocumentID=1568)

**Safety and Health in the Fishing Industry: Report for Discussion at the Tripartite Meeting on Safety and Health in the Fishing Industry, Geneva, 13-17 December 1999, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2000, ISBN 92-2-111829-0**

This report has been prepared by the International Labour Office as the basis for discussions at the Tripartite Meeting on Safety and Health in the Fishing Industry. The contribution of children is most widespread in fishing throughout the world either as members of a fishing family or working for others. This report provide illustrative examples of children working as fish sorters, factory workers and fishing vessel crew in Thailand, *muro-ami* fishing swimmers in Philippines reef fishing, deep-sea pearl diving fishing and child labour in fishing on *jermals* in Indonesia, and children in the lobster fishery in United States, etc.

Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/tmfi99/tmfir.htm>

**El Salvador Child Labour in Fishing: A Rapid Assessment, by Oscar Godoy, International Labour Office, Geneva, March 2002**

This report contains the findings of an investigation into the worst forms of child labour in fishing. The report assesses the extent to which children are involved in this activity in El Salvador. It argues that

there is an inverse relationship between the children's level of education and their involvement in fishing; that is, the higher the level of education, the lower is their participation in fishing. Fishing is carried out on the shores of lakes, bays, estuaries and gulfs located in the towns of: Tejutla, Acajutla, Puerto de la Libertad, Puerto El Triunfo, Jiquilisco and La Unión. In some areas such as bays, estuaries and rivers, crustaceans (such as crabs) are manually extracted, but only on a small scale.

Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/elsalvador/ra/domestic.pdf>

**Freeing the Fishing Children of Ghana, by Dr. Ernest Taylor**

This article looks at the situation in Volta Lake and opines that hard work under punishing conditions had robbed the children of the joy and vitality that lights the faces of healthy, happy children. Called the "placement of children", it has been a long-accepted practice in Africa. For generations, parents have placed their children for rearing in the home of a relative or a trusted friend. Most of the time, the bonds of trust in the community assured that the child would be cared for and raised decently. In the last 40 years or so, however, traffickers seeking only profits have exploited the crushing poverty of the region and corrupted this traditional practice.

Available at: [http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/gli/gli\\_jun2003f.pdf](http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/gli/gli_jun2003f.pdf)

**Saving the Victims, One by One: An Interview by Marco Gramagna, *Global Issues*, Volume 8, Number 2, June 2003**

The International Organization for Migration in partnership with local non-governmental organizations has been working for months to free these boys from forced and gruelling labour serving "slave masters" on board fishing vessels plying the waters of Lake Volta. The aim of this project is to liberate more than 1,200 boys from harsh conditions in which they receive poor nutrition, no education, and no family nurturing.

Available at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itgic/0603/ijge/gj05.htm>

**Alu toutai-Na laki qoli: Fun or Duty: Schoolchildren's Involvement in Subsistence Fisheries in Tonga and Fiji, by Meeki Kronen, *Women in Fisheries*, Number 14, September 2004**

This article focuses on certain practices in some Pacific societies (for example, Fiji), where women and men share equitable access to marine resources and fishing techniques. The results of the study indicate that, regardless of gender, children first learn about fishing techniques from their mothers or guardians. Findings indicate that participation and fishing strategies employed by children follow the patterns of their respective communities. Gender roles were found not to be imposed at an early stage, but were presumably a product of socialization within the community they live in.

Available at: <http://www.spc.org.nc/coastfish/News/WIF/WIF14/Kronen.pdf>

**Vulnerabilities and Visibility: Thailand's Management of Female Domestic Workers from Burma, by Sirithon Thanasombat, *Journal of Public and International Affairs*, Volume 15, Spring 2004**

This article examines the difficulties of managing the migration of domestic workers from Burma to Thailand. Following farming and fishery-related sectors, domestic work employs the third-highest number of registered migrant workers in registered female migrant workers. The 2001 registration indicated that nearly a third of all female migrant workers registered in Thailand work in domestic service, followed by work in the farming and fishery-related sectors. Many industries in Thailand, including fishing, canning, garment production, rubber, fruit orchards, and domestic work, depend on high growth, but also enjoy the profits made by employing cheap, unprotected labour.

Available at: [http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/jpia/v15\\_2004/v15\\_2004m.pdf](http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/jpia/v15_2004/v15_2004m.pdf) or <http://www.princeton.edu/~jpia/pdf2004/Chapter%2012.pdf>

**Tanzania Child Labour in the Informal Sector: A Rapid Assessment, by C. Kadonya, M. Madihi and S. Mtwana, ILO, January 2002, Geneva**

This report is a result of a rapid assessment study conducted in Arusha, Dar es Salaam and Mwanza regions to investigate activities performed by working children in the informal sector. Four main activities were studied. They included scavenging in Arusha municipality and the city of Dar es Salaam, quarrying in Dar es Salaam, garage work in Arusha and Mwanza, and fishing and fish processing in Mwanza. The purpose of the study was to find out the causes that push children to involve themselves in the informal sector activities, particularly in scavenging, quarrying, garage and fishing and fish processing activities. On average, children worked for nine hours per day in all informal sector activities. When broken down by activity, however, children working in garages worked for 10 hours, and children engaged in quarrying, fishing and fish processing and scavenging activities worked on average for nine hours, eight hours, and seven hours per day, respectively. This denotes that children were exposed to long hours of work, which is detrimental to their normal growth and development at such a tender age.

Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/simpoc/tanzania/ra/infosec.pdf#search=%22Tanzania%20Child%20Labour%20in%20the%20Informal%20Sector%3A%20A%20Rapid%20%22>

**Girl Workers in the Fisheries Sector of Belawan, by R. Chairil Chaniago, *Child Workers in Asia*, vol.16, No.2, May-August, 2000**

The Belawan region is a fisheries area that lies along the north Sumatra coast, and is a part of Medan, Indonesia. Most of the people living in the fishing villages are of the Malay and Banjar ethnic groups. They work as traditional fishermen with no boats of their own. Profits from the catch are divided between the fisherman and the boatowners in a system called "taukay." The traditional fishermen's boats commonly use single-layer nets or simple fishhooks. Their income is very low compared to the fishing ships that use modern technology.

A study of the eight fishing villages by Yayasan Pondok Rakyat Kreatif (YPRK) found that 400 children work in this

sector, and 30 per cent of these child workers are girls. They work in processing shrimps, shellfish, crabs and fish. As a signatory to the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, the Indonesian government is obliged to give attention to the all child workers, including those in the fisheries sector.

Available at: [http://www.cwa.tnet.co.th/Publications/Newsletters/vol16\\_2/v16\\_2\\_chaniago.html](http://www.cwa.tnet.co.th/Publications/Newsletters/vol16_2/v16_2_chaniago.html)

**Plunging into the Depths of the Sea, by Alejandro W. Apit, *Child Workers in Asia*, Vol. 13, No. 4, Oct.-Dec. 1997**

As pearl farm workers, the girl children are brought by a motorboat to the rafts that are stationed in certain parts of the sea surrounding the Ikulong Island in the Philippines. And there they are exposed to the heat of the sun or to the rain. They dive into the sea to collect shells, descending to as deep as 60 m in the water. They bring the shells to the rafts where they clean or scrub them, bore holes in them and tie a string on each so that each can be hung from the "boya" or "palutang". Then they tie each to the "boya" and plant a piece of plastic inside each shell. They work eight hours daily, but there are times when they are told to work overtime, for which they are not compensated. Their wages are already very low. They receive their monthly wages only after several days or even after a month. The hazardous part of their work is plunging into the depths of the sea for gathering and collecting shells or for retrieving fallen shells. They are provided with insufficient and unreliable safety devices. A field worker is equipped with just a pair of underwater eyeglasses and a hose that is connected to a compressor, which sends air or oxygen to the field worker under the water.

Available at: [http://www.cwa.tnet.co.th/Publications/Newsletters/vol13\\_4/v13\\_4\\_apit.html](http://www.cwa.tnet.co.th/Publications/Newsletters/vol13_4/v13_4_apit.html)

This listing has been compiled by N. Venugopalan (icsf@icsf.net) of ICSF's Documentation Centre