

Experiences from addressing Child Labour in Fisheries and Aquaculture: The case of Malawi

Presented at COFI 30 side event on
Addressing labour conditions in fisheries and aquaculture

By

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Introduction: The Fisheries Sector

- Capture fisheries



•Aquaculture



•Aquarium



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Fishing gears used by artisanal fishers



Introduction (Cont...)

- The issue of child labour in fisheries in Malawi is quite complex since it is mainly small-scale fisheries, ie
 - Is it child labour?
 - Is it learning the tricks of the game?
 - Is it a traditional socio-cultural activity?
- What happens to the fish caught by the children?
- This presentation looks at initiatives Malawi is taking to control CL in the fisheries sector

Responsible Ministry

- In Malawi, the issues of child labour fall under the Ministry of Labour
- The Ministry is mandated to ensure that any form of child labour does not exist and is doing its best to make sure that this objective is achieved
- It works through its District Labour Officers

Legal Instruments in Place

- Employment Act
- Malawi code of Conduct on Child Labour – gives guidance to parents and employers
- National Child Labour Policy - Draft
- The Malawi Republican Constitution – protects the exploitation of the child
- The National Action Plan (NAP) on child labour – aimed at guiding and coordinating different actors

Legal Instruments in Place

- The Child Protection and Justice Law
- The Decent Work Country Programme
- The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II

Plus

- National Steering Committee on Child Protection
- Child Labour Unit

Structure of Ministry of Labour

- Ministry Headquarters headed by PS
- Labour Services Department
- Employment Services
- Child Labour Unit
- District Labour Offices
 - District Child Labour Committees (DCLCs)
 - Area Child Labour Committees (ACLCs)
 - Community Child Labour Committees (CCLCs)

Initiatives to combat CL in Fisheries

- Department of Fisheries is in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS)
- MoAFS and Ministry of Labour and with technical and financial support from FAO and ILO have carried out a number of activities with the aim of :
 - Controlling Child Labour in Agriculture and Fisheries

Initiatives to combat CL in Fisheries

- Raising awareness on the dangers of Child Labour
- Initiating community activities that should stop child labour
- In December 2010, MoAFS, MoL with support from ILO, FAO and IUF jointly organised a series of workshops in Malawi with the aim of:
 - Sharing knowledge on child labour issues in Agriculture and Fisheries, and
 - Development of Action Plans

Initiatives to combat CL in Fisheries

- These were done with national key stakeholders within the framework of the National Action Plan on Child Labour
- In May 2011, MoAFS and MoL, with support from FAO and ILO conducted a capacity development workshop on Child Labour in Agriculture for senior level staff (Managers and Directors) of relevant government and Civil Society Organisations

Initiatives to combat CL in Fisheries

- The May 2011 workshop aimed at:
 - Developing a common basis of understanding
 - Knowledge exchange on CL in agriculture
 - Identifying entry points and practices to better integrate CL issues in agric and labour organisations, and
 - To identify opportunities for joint action

Initiatives to combat CL in Fisheries

- In July 2011, MoAFS and MoL, with support from FAO and ILO conducted another capacity development workshop for district teams
- The district teams comprised of Extension workers, Labour Inspectors, Health, Education, CSOs etc
- Aim was the same as the May 2011 workshop

Challenges to effective control of CL in Fisheries

- Conflicting/different definitions of a child (especially cut off age, 14, 16, 18 – Employment Act, Constitution, ILO)
- Limited capacity of MoL – inadequate labour inspection system in terms of knowledge, skills, mobility, financial and human resources

Challenges to effective control of CL in Fisheries

- Inadequate information flow from MoL headquarters to districts and Communities
- DoF being in MoAFS, emphasis goes to agricultural activities than in fisheries

Why children participate in fishing and fishery related activities

- Fishing brings money instantly to poor households based along lakeshore areas.
- Children are used to collect fish (*kutoma*) for home consumption or for sale
- Affluent people owning fishing gears mainly seines recruit people of different age groups within fishing communities to operate their gears
- The need to learn the fishing skills

Existing Opportunities

- Government is aware of the importance of inter-ministerial coordination to fight CL
- Efforts have been made to initiate and enhance inter-sectoral coordination in controlling CL in fisheries
- Availability of enabling legislation to control CL

Why children participate in Fishing activities



Children participating in pulling ashore a beach seine net in Salima



Children operating a small beach seine at Mwawa Beach, Mangochi. This is how young boys learn the art of fishing without any instructor

Beach activities



Children participating in organising and mending a gillnet in readiness for fishing trip



Children waiting to get some fish from a boat, either as payment for some services on the beach or as “*kutoma*” on Lake Malombe

Beach fish collection for sale or home consumption?



Children collecting fish from boats that have landed their catch on Lake Chilwa.



Children in a fishing boat that has landed, with fish in their hands which they may either sell or take home as relish for their families.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION