

Causes and Consequences of Child Labor in Atlantic

Child labor in African fisheries and aquaculture is a pressing issue with far-reaching consequences. It involves the employment of children in fishing activities, aquaculture farms, and processing plants, depriving them of their right to education and a safe environment.

Dr Amadou Tall

Senior Governance and blue economy Expert

Amadou.tall@gmail.com



have to use their children
as workforce to survive.

Defining child labor



1. According to the **1989 UN Convention** on the Rights of the Child, a child is a person **under 18 years of age**.
2. The **1999 Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention (No. 182)** also states that the term “**child**” shall apply to all persons under 18 years. Not all work performed by children is child labor that must be eliminated.
3. While **child labor by definition is unacceptable and should be abolished** – in particular the worst forms of child labor, as a matter of urgency – there are **age-appropriate tasks carried out by children** that are **not harmful** to them and which **can even be beneficial**.

Importance of Child labor worldwide



1. Child labor continues to be a major concern in large parts of the world.
2. FAO estimates **215 million CL** worldwide of which **60 per cent** (129 million) in agriculture, including fisheries and aquaculture.
3. **59 per cent (or 70 million)** of all children aged **5–17 in hazardous work** are in agriculture. Addressing child labor is difficult because it is **intertwined** with poverty, social injustices and the very structure of production systems. Reliable data are often lacking, particularly in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

Child labor in Fisheries and aquaculture sector



1. In the fisheries and aquaculture sector, children engage in a **wide variety of activities**, both in capture fishing and aquaculture and in all associated **down and upstream operations**, for example, processing, marketing, net making and boatbuilding.
 2. Children also perform **household chores** in their fishing and fish-farming **families and communities**.
 3. Child labor appears to be particularly **widespread in the small- and medium-scale sectors of the informal economy**.
1. When child labor is used as **cheap labor to cut fishing costs**, not only may it be **harmful to children's development**, it can also have a **negative effect on the sustainability** of the fishery activity, and the economy.

Causes of Child Labor



1

Economic Exploitation

Impoverished families often rely on child labor to contribute to their income, perpetuating a cycle of poverty.

2

Parental Employment

Children are often introduced to the jobs/enterprises/small scale fisheries and aquaculture farmers by their families due to a lack of alternative sources of income.

3

Limited

lack of strict regulations allows unscrupulous employers to exploit children's children's vulnerability for cheap labor.

Economic Factors Driving Child Labor

Poverty

Low household income and lack of economic opportunities force children into the workforce at an early age.

Unregulated Practices

The absence of strict monitoring and enforcement allows exploitation to persist within the industry.

Market Demands

Increasing demands for fish and seafood contribute to the increased reliance on child labor to meet production targets.

Lack of Education and Awareness



1

Limited School Access

Many children are denied access to quality education, making them susceptible to exploitation in the industry.

2

Ignorance of Rights

Poor awareness among parents and employers about the impact of child labor hinders efforts to eradicate the problem.

3

Cultural Norms

Traditional beliefs and practices may perpetuate the acceptance of child labor in fisheries and aquaculture.

Impact of Child Labor on Children and Society

1. Education Deprivation

Children miss out on formal education, limiting their future prospects and perpetuating poverty.

2. Physical and Mental Health Risks

Long working hours and hazardous conditions expose children to health risks and psychological stress.

3. Undermining Human Rights

The exploitation of children challenges international human rights and labor standards, undermining societal progress.





Health and Safety Risks for Child Laborers

Laborers

Exposure to Toxins

Children in fisheries and aquaculture are exposed to harmful chemicals and potential long-term health consequences.

Injury Hazards

Working with fishing equipment and processing machinery poses a significant risk of injuries and accidents.

Mental Strain

The psychological toll of the work, coupled with harsh conditions, impacts children's well-being and development.

Long-Term Consequences for Child Laborers

Laborers

1

Stunted Development

Lack of proper education and childhood experiences hinder children from reaching their full potential.

2

Poverty Cycle

Early labor traps children in a cycle of poverty, impacting their future and perpetuating social inequality.

3

Health Challenges

The physical and mental strain can lead to long-term health challenges, affecting their quality of life.

Existing international framework for addressing Child Labor

1. **UN / ILO Conventions and other agreements.** UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. The Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (**No. 138**) and the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (**No. 182**) are **the key international instruments for child labor**

FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF, 1995), and the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) are relevant instruments and guidelines specific to fisheries and aquaculture.

Fisheries and aquaculture is a particularly **neglected sector** that offers **poor protection to men and women workers**.

Governments need to **adopt national policies** and put in place legal and **institutional frameworks to address child labor**. **Laws** are only **effective if implemented** and **enforced**, and **incentives** are required to **ensure compliance**.

Efforts and Solutions to Address Child Labor in all sectors including Fisheries and Aquaculture

Legislative Reforms

Implement and enforce strict laws (ILO Convention 182- SDGs 8.7, 16.2 (decent work and economic dev)) to prohibit the employment of children in dangerous work environments.

Education Initiatives

Enhance access to education and raise awareness about the risks and risks and rights associated with child labor.

Support Programs

Develop programs to support affected families and provide avenues avenues for sustainable livelihoods.

Overview of the African Union Commission's Efforts



Coordinated Interventions

The African Union Commission has taken a multi-pronged approach in tackling child labor, including interventions to address root causes, provide support to affected families, and ensure legal protections.

Policy Development

2 Efforts have been made to develop and implement comprehensive policies aimed at eradicating child labor from the fishery and aquaculture sector. 1

3

Capacity Building

Focusing on enhancing the capacity of local communities, law enforcement, and governmental agencies in identifying and addressing instances of child labor.

Legislative Measures and Policies Implemented

Legal Framework

The African Union Commission has put in place a robust legislative framework specifically targeted at eradicating child labor within the fishery and aquaculture sector.

Regulatory Compliance

Strict compliance measures have been implemented to enforce the laws and policies aimed at curbing child labor practices.

Child Protection Programs

Efforts towards implementing programs to safeguard and support the welfare of children in vulnerable communities affected by child labor.

Collaboration with International Organizations and Stakeholders

1

Global Partnerships

The AUC Ten – year Plan on eradication of CL under ILO'S IPEC Flagship on elimination of CL in all its forms by 2025 and eradication of CL and slavery and human trafficking by 2030) to leverage global support for combating child labor in the fishery and aquaculture sector

2

Community Involvement

Working closely with local communities and stakeholders to create awareness and build collaborative initiatives aimed at addressing child labor concerns. RECs , AU-IBAR, AUDA-NEPAD should national and regional platforms of NSAs in F&A

3

Resource Mobilization

A focus on mobilizing resources and expertise from various stakeholders to provide sustainable solutions to eliminate child labor.

Awareness Campaigns and Education Programs

Programs

1. Outreach Programs

Engagement in targeted outreach campaigns to sensitize communities about the adverse effects of child labor within the fishery and aquaculture sector.

2. Educational Initiatives

Implementation of educational programs designed to provide children with opportunities for personal development and growth, steering them away from exploitative work environments.

3. Social Media Advocacy

Leveraging social media platforms for advocacy and awareness creation to garner support for the cause

Monitoring and Enforcement Mechanisms

Regulatory Oversight

Establishment of stringent regulatory measures for monitoring and enforcing child labor laws within the fishery and aquaculture

Inspections and Audits

Regular inspections and audits to ensure compliance and protect the rights and well-being of children involved in the sector.

Penalties and Sanctions

Implementing penalties and sanctions for violators to create a deterrent effect against engaging in exploitative child labor practices



Future Goals and Challenges

Continuous Advocacy

Continued advocacy and lobbying to garner support and resources to sustain the fight against child labor in the fishery and aquaculture sector.

Vulnerable Communities

Focused efforts on addressing the vulnerabilities of communities and children to prevent them from falling prey to child labor practices.

Policy Strengthening

Strengthening and refining existing policies to adapt to evolving challenges and ensure their effectiveness in eradicating child labor.

Thank you

