

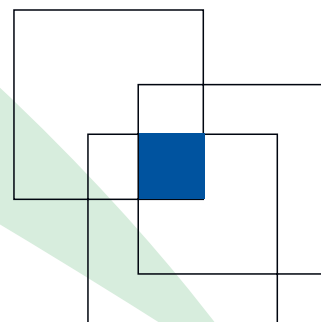


International  
Labour  
Organization



# The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in Lebanon

## Its history, present and future



Unit for Combat of Child Labour  
in Lebanon



NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE  
AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

# History of action against child labour in Lebanon since 2000

Action against child labour in Lebanon started officially and at a national level in 2000. This was when the Government of Lebanon signed the first Memorandum of Understanding with the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), to be implemented through the ILO Regional Office for the Arab States. Other memoranda of understanding followed, most recently in 2010 for enhancing national capacities to tackle the worst forms of child labour in Lebanon, and they formed the basis of several technical cooperation programmes aiming at the elimination of child labour in Lebanon. Those programmes focused their efforts both at the national policy and legislative level and at the grass-roots level through direct action, and gave rise to a number of significant initiatives. In addition, several surveys and studies on different aspects of child labour were carried out. Tables 1, 2 and 3 present examples of those initiatives and interventions at different levels, and the impact they had on reducing child labour in Lebanon.

**Table 1. Policy initiatives on child labour, role of IPEC, and impact**

Policy initiative	Date	IPEC's role	Impact
1- Development of National Strategy to Combat Child Labour in Lebanon	Prepared in 2004 and endorsed by Lebanese Council of Ministers in 2005	Provision of technical and financial support to Ministry of Labour and related National Steering Committee against Child Labour to develop strategy	Reflected in consecutive ministerial declarations and national social, developmental and educational strategies and action plans developed between 2007 and 2011 by different Lebanese ministries (as for example National Social Action Plan and National Educational Strategy)
2- Publication of Action against child labour in Lebanon: A mapping of policies and normative initiatives	Published by ILO in 2012	IPEC published document after commissioning an independent consultant to develop it in consultation with national stakeholders, specifically the Ministry of Labour and workers' and employers' organizations	As a result of recommendations of the document, a national programme directed at the policy and legislative levels was developed and initiated in September 2012
3- Development of National Action Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Lebanon by 2016	Published by Ministry of Labour in 2013 in coordination with ILO	IPEC commissioned independent consultant to prepare the plan and provided additional technical and financial support for its development with the National Steering Committee	Placed child labour again as one of the priorities on the national agenda; discussed at presidential, ministerial and parliamentary levels

**Table 2. Legislative initiatives on child labour, role of IPEC, and impact**

Legislation, decrees	Date*	IPEC's role	Impact
1- Ratification of ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)	2001	Provided support to raise national awareness, especially of parliamentarians, on the significance of these ILO Conventions, leading to their ratification	1) National Strategy, National Action Plan, direct action programmes targeting the worst forms of child labour in Lebanon 2) A special study was prepared by the Ministry of Labour in 2008 in coordination with the American University of Beirut and the supervision and support of IPEC to identify a national list of the worst forms of child labour
2- Ratification of ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)	2003		The minimum age of employment was 14 years; an amendment to the law is going before Parliament to raise the age to 15 in accordance with Convention No. 138
3- Law No. 164 prohibiting trafficking of human beings, including those under 18 years old	2011	Report to the Government of Lebanon of the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), in addition to IPEC technical support	Provides national legal basis for action against trafficking of children
4- National Decree No. 8987 listing worst forms of child labour in Lebanon	2012	Report to the Government of Lebanon of CEACR in addition to IPEC's technical support and advice on harmonization of ILO Conventions with national laws and regulations, especially concerning child labour	Main target for immediate action for IPEC and Government of Lebanon, especially Ministry of Labour, workers' and employers' organizations; at the awareness-raising and policy levels, through National Action Plan and direct action at grass-roots level

**Note:** Lebanese Labour Code project includes several changes concerning child labour that will harmonize it with basic international labour codes specifically concerning child labour and ILO Conventions Nos 138 and 182.

\* *Date of ratification or endorsement by Parliament or Council of Ministers.*

**Table 3. Research and surveys, and role of IPEC**

Research, surveys	Date	IPEC's role
1- Rapid assessment of child labour on tobacco plantations in Lebanon	2002	Commissioned, supervised and published by IPEC Lebanon and carried out by Consultation and Research Institute
2- Study of children working in the garment and footwear sectors in north-eastern and southern poverty belts of Beirut	2002	Commissioned, supervised and facilitated by IPEC Lebanon and carried out by Association of Lebanese Industrialists in coordination with Partners for Development
3- Rapid assessment of working street children	2003	Commissioned and supervised by IPEC Lebanon and carried out by Ministry of Interior and Municipalities and Consultation and Research Institute, Lebanon. Unpublished report
4- Study of gender, education and child labour in Lebanon	2004	Commissioned, supervised and published by ILO-IPEC Geneva and carried out by Partners For Development, Lebanon
5- Study on the identification of the worst forms of child labour in Lebanon	2008	Commissioned and supervised by IPEC Lebanon and carried out by Ministry of Labour and American University of Beirut in coordination with employers' and workers' associations
6- Rapid assessment of child labour in North Lebanon (Tripoli and Akkar) and Beqaa Governorates, Lebanon	2012	Commissioned, supervised and published by IPEC Lebanon and carried out by Saint Joseph University, Lebanon





## Examples of projects at ministry, governorate, municipal and local grass-roots levels

IPEC established several projects with the purpose of ensuring and coordinating direct services for at-risk and working children, their siblings and families in different locations in Lebanon. Some examples of projects and activities are presented in the following table.

Project	Date and partners	IPEC's role	Impact
1- Establishment of Child Labour Unit at Ministry of Labour	2001. Ministry of Labour and Child Labour Unit institutionalized through a decree from the Council of Ministers	Provided technical and financial support for some activities of unit from 2001 to date	Child Labour Unit has become main governmental reference for child labour in Lebanon, dealing with related technical, legislative and policy issues
2- Establishment of National Steering Committee against Child Labour in Lebanon	2001. Established by Ministry of Labour through a decree of the Council of Ministers initially in 2001, which was revised in 2010 to make it a Higher Committee Against Child Labour	Played advocacy role and provided guidance in its establishment, in addition to training its members on their national roles and responsibilities	Has played a leading role since its establishment, as recognized by its raising of status by the Government of Lebanon to a Higher Committee against Child Labour
3- Withdrawal and rehabilitation of at-risk and working children from worst forms of child labour in Sin el Fil, Bourj Hammoud and Nabaa area	2001. Forum of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Sin el Fil, Bourj Hammoud and Nabaa	IPEC provided training for 10 NGOs and a development services centre in the area to encourage coordinated activities in the provision of services	Helped over 1,500 at-risk and working children in less than two years; project has continued to date

Project	Date and partners	IPEC's role	Impact
4- Establishment of unit for combating working street children in Lebanon	2002. Established by Ministry of Interior and Municipalities	Technical and financial support for establishment of unit and carrying out training of trainers for Internal Security Forces and Civil Defence	Created some awareness at the time among members of ministry but project no longer functioning
5- Establishment of governorate committees against child labour in Lebanon	2002. Established by Ministry of Interior and Municipalities	Initiated the idea and helped in the training of two committees established for the Governorates of Nabatiyeh and North Lebanon	More than 1,000 children were helped directly through the actions of the Governorate Committee of Nabatiyeh and more than 500 children through the Governorate Committee of North Lebanon in a period of 18 months and with very minimal costs
6- Enhancing capacities of labour inspectors at Ministry of Labour to attend to child labour	2007	Provided technical and financial support for labour inspectors at Ministry of Labour to deal with child labour in small establishments	Increased knowledge by labour inspectors and increased ability to attend to the issue of child labour, especially in small establishments
7- Establishment of child labour monitoring and referral system in Municipality of Tripoli, involving all relevant ministries and NGOs	2009	IPEC provided technical and financial support for establishment of a child monitoring system, in addition to training and follow-up with relevant NGOs	Helped more than 700 at-risk and working children in almost 18 months



## IPEC at present

A new IPEC project was initiated in September 2012, entitled Enhancing National Capacities to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Lebanon. This project is funded by the German Government, which was the first government to provide a significant contribution to the establishment of IPEC in 1992.

The present IPEC project in Lebanon has been able to initiate and complete some significant projects to raise awareness and encourage policy formulation at the national level, despite its recent establishment.

These include:

1 - Training of the National Steering Committee against Child Labour in Lebanon on its roles and responsibilities in combating child labour in Lebanon, especially its worst forms (started in October 2012)

2 - Preparing and finalizing a National Awareness-Raising Strategy against the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Lebanon, developed by the National Steering Committee against Child Labour with the support of the Ministry of Labour and IPEC (completed September 2013)

3 - Development of a dedicated website on all child labour-related issues for the Child Labour Unit at the Ministry of Labour (will be ready and active as of September 2013)

4 - Development of a documentary on the worst forms of child labour, targeted at policy-makers (April 2013)

5 - Establishment of the first Working Children's Podium in Lebanon, in which working children have been trained on their rights and advocated them through several concerned Lebanese Parliamentarians from different parts of Lebanon (launched by Minister of Labour in February 2013)

6 - Organization of two workshops for at least 35 national and international media operating in Lebanon on some media principles for covering the issue of child labour in Lebanon, especially in its worst forms (First in March 2013 and the second in June 2013 in light of the WDACL)

7 - Development of a National Action Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Lebanon by 2016 (process started in December 2012 and completed July 2013 2013).

## Towards the future

One of the main targets for IPEC Lebanon in the coming few years is to support the Government of Lebanon, especially through the Ministry of Labour and its Child Labour Unit, the National Steering Committee against Child Labour, and workers' and employers' organizations in implementing the National Action Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour by the year 2016 and the related National Awareness-Raising Strategy.



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