



## SUPPORTING THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR IN MALAWI AGRICULTURE

Throughout the world, around 215 million children work – many of them full-time. In Malawi, 37 per cent of children aged 5-17 are involved in child labour, of which 53.5 per cent are engaged in agriculture, livestock and forestry. In order to encourage children to go to school, the Govern-

ment needs to improve infrastructure, ensure adequate teaching and upgrade learning materials. The elimination of child labour is a multi-sectoral issue, requiring a holistic and comprehensive approach; the stakeholders need to join forces to tackle this issue.

### FACTS AND FIGURES

**Partners:**  
Elimination of Child Labour in Tobacco Growing Foundation (ECLT)

**Beneficiary country:**  
Malawi

**Timeframe:**  
September 2012

**Budget:**  
USD 250,000

### THE RESPONSE

Against this background, and in line with its commitment to ILO values, demonstrated by its ratification of various ILO Conventions, the Government of Malawi organised its first-ever National Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture on 5-6 September 2012. The Conference was organized with technical support from the ILO, as well as with technical support and funding from the Elimination of Child Labour in Tobacco Growing Foundation (ECLT).

The Conference objectives were as follows:

- To exchange and share good practices on the elimination of child labour in agriculture;
- To share and adopt – or endorse – prioritized actions to better integrate child labour in agriculture in Malawi in the context of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Child Labour for Malawi by 2016;
- To contribute to a roadmap, with specific commitments, responsibilities, concrete actions and milestones, for the implementation and realization of the agricultural component of the NAP.

### RESULTS

The Malawi National Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture, organized by the Ministry of Labour with its social partners, was a significant milestone in the history of eliminating child labour in Malawi.

The Conference attracted 72 representatives from Government Ministries; 69 NGO representatives; 47 corporate representatives from the tobacco, sugar, cotton and fishing industries; 22 trade union officials; 17 representatives of United Nations agencies and embassies; one donor; 17 media representatives; and three attendees from universities and research institutions.

The Conference identified a number of key issues that needed to be addressed to combat child labour, including: the application of agricultural technologies; the difference between child labour and children working; teachers using students as child labour and subjecting them to sexual abuse in rural areas; outdated child labour data; the role of local leaders as both law enforcers and tobacco growers; the few cases of children withdrawn from child labour; and the lack of recognition of trade unions, which compromised attempts to implement and monitor labour laws.





The Conference clarified the responsibilities of the Ministries of Education, Labour, Agriculture and Food Security; the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions and its agricultural affiliates; the Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM); the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NAS-FAM); the Farmers' Union of Malawi (FUM); the Tobacco Association of Malawi (TAMA); the Tea Association of Malawi (TAML) and other agricultural producer associations; traditional and religious leaders, as well as faith groups; district assemblies, local leaders and communities; children; the tobacco industry, tea and sugar sector, and other 'neglected sectors' in agriculture; non-governmental organizations; development partners; the media; and other stakeholders.

The Conference came up with a plan of activities for better addressing child labour in agriculture in Malawi, in the context of the NAP.



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#### **BENEFITS OF PARTNERING**

The ILO provided technical support to Malawi's national tripartite constituents to promote the implementation of the agricultural components of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Child Labour for Malawi by 2016, and other projects combating child labour in agriculture.

The ILO strengthened the development process of the NAP's agricultural component by: 1) supporting the implementation of selected activities; 2) reinforcing the collaboration and capacity of key labour and agricultural stakeholders.

The ILO provided assistance in the preparations of the National Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture, by consulting with and mobilizing national agricultural stakeholders in support of the Conference objectives