Introduction: children's work and current debates

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The symposium

This volume arises from a symposium on Child Labour in East and Southern Africa, held in Addis Ababa in March 2014.[1] The purpose of the meeting was to contribute to policy and intervention by pooling research and experience across the countries concerned.[2]

The symposium was organised by the Young Lives research project, a longitudinal study of children growing up in four countries, with a focus on poverty. Its purpose was to enable policies relating to children and poverty to be firmly based on evidence from children's lives, rather than on ideology and assumptions.[3] When policy is based on empirical research, it can be adapted to the specific needs of the country and the targeted communities, and to the circumstances, realities, needs and challenges facing the families, and especially the children themselves. Such empirically based policy is more likely to achieve its goals than are generalised policies formulated on the basis of international norms without reference to the specific contexts in which they are to be applied. So two questions for the symposium were: what does research tell us about different forms of child labour and children's work; and what considerations are specific to the region of East and Southern Africa?

A second reason for the symposium was to share experiences of responses to child labour, and to discern best practices that might be applied more broadly in the region. Negative attitudes to children's work are dominant in the Western world and permeate child-rights and child-protection discourse. There is concern that these attitudes can interfere with African ideals of child rearing, which value work against any kind of idleness, and these negative attitudes can interfere with the responsibility and need of many poor children to contribute to their own livelihood and that of their families, something which they often wish to do. To ensure that intervention improves the lives of children, rather than inhibiting their development and opportunities, we can learn from how interventions work out in practice. What is likely to improve the lives of children, and what has gone wrong with some attempts?

Conceptual confusions

In much discourse, intervention and policy, confusion is created by different uses of the term 'child labour'. Different criteria for classifying children's work as 'child labour' result in differing policies and interventions, with very different outcomes of benefit and harm in children's lives. In particular, the criterion of hazard and harm in classifying children's work as 'child labour' leads to very different results from classification in terms of age and employment.

'Child labour' as harmful work

Particularly in North America, the term 'child labour' has long referred to work that is in some way harmful—or carries high risk of harm—to children, whether because of the nature of the work, or the hours of work (especially when they hinder other forms of learning), or the way in which children are treated at work, or the compulsion behind it, or simply because it is exploitative in terms of extremely low payment. This is work that interferes with children's development, prohibited by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (article 32), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (article 15), and Convention 182 (1999) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the worst forms of child labour.

There is wide consensus that such worst forms need urgent attention. In severe cases, this means stopping the children from being engaged in the work they are doing; in less severe cases, conditions can sometimes be changed to reduce the risk of harm and to make the work benign and even beneficial.[4] Changing conditions can be a more constructive way of bringing an end to harmful work than simply prohibiting work which, as the chapters in this book show, often offers some benefits to children. Intervention that focuses on minimising harm and maximising benefits is likely to serve the interests of children well.

Many people try to classify children's work into the two categories of harmful 'child labour' and benign 'child work'. At the symposium, some talked about harmful labour as opposed to 'socialising' work, that is, work done in the home as part of child rearing. Such a simple classification would make intervention and policy easier, but it does not relate well to the realities experienced and perceived by children. We shall argue that work in the home is not always harmless. More generally in practice, much work that children do has potential for both benefit and harm, usually depending on the conditions of work, but also on the aptitude and training of the workers. Indeed, work that carries risk of harm may also provide compensating benefits that outweigh the harm; so rather than simply classifying work into the categories of 'harmful' or 'benign', we should be assessing net benefits and net harm. This assessment often depends on the particular circumstances or aptitudes of children: if a child does not have enough to eat, or is involved in helping the family to overcome a serious shock,

income can be so important as to outweigh considerable risks or harm; if a child has little aptitude for school, positive experiences outside school can be important for self-esteem and development, and for building up relations within the family; if, on the other hand, a child is doing so well at school as to have potential for a professional career, even a little work could be damaging. So, rather than trying to classify particular activities as harmful, we should recognise that the same work can entail both benefits and harm. Consequently, assessment of harm and benefit at the local level is likely to be more reliable than generalised standards (Bourdillon et al. 2011: 178–179).

'Child labour' defined by age and employment

A different meaning of the term 'child labour' is work that contravenes international or national standards on a minimum age for employment. The principal basis for these standards is the Convention on the Minimum Age for Employment (number 138), passed by the ILO in 1973. This Convention is not about stopping specifically harmful work; it is about excluding children from labour-force work below a certain age, whether or not this work is shown to be harmful, and irrespective of conditions of work. It is time to recognise that this amounts to discrimination against children.[5]

Descriptions of the work of Ethiopian children in this volume (Chapter 2) show children doing both paid and unpaid work from a very young age. There are cultural views about what is right for children to do according to age and gender: boys, for example, may start ploughing only when they are old enough and able, and similarly the tasks of boiling coffee and cooking are confined to older girls. This is a more gradual and responsible approach to young people's immersion into work and the development of life-cycle skills than is the artificial break of the minimum-age approach. Sometimes, paid and unpaid work is the same, such as agricultural work on the family farm and paid work for an investor farmer. There is no indication that the paid work is somehow more harmful than the unpaid work in the home; indeed, when the work is undertaken to help the family overcome some economic shock, payment is a very clear benefit.

Legislation based on minimum-age standards fails to protect children from harmful work, for two main reasons. First, some harmful work lies outside employment. Several studies have pointed out that unpaid work in the home can be exploitative and harmful—sometimes more so than paid employment—and that often children see paid work as preferable (for example, Nieuwenhuys 2000). The Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (CSA 2012: 31–32), for example, in keeping with minimum-age standards, classifies as a 'child labourer' any child aged 5–11 who worked for someone not a member of the household in the previous seven days, and any child aged 12–14 who worked for someone not a member of the household or engaged in any other kind of family work for 14 hours or more. But domestic chores are classified as 'child labour' only if they take up more than 28 hours a week. There is no evident

reason to consider 20-plus hours of household chores as less harmful to an 11-year-old school-going child than a couple of hours of paid work outside the home.

Second, minimum-age standards fail to protect children above the specified age from harmful work. An effect of focusing on age rather than harm is that children below the minimum age are removed from bad working conditions, only to return to the same bad conditions a few years later.

Further, minimum-age standards can exacerbate gender discrimination. These limit work in employment, where boys are usually in the majority. They do nothing to limit domestic work, which is largely the responsibility of girls. Indeed, they encourage an attitude that domestic work does not count—resulting in, for example, girls receiving no alleviation of domestic chores that they are expected to do in the face of the responsibilities of paid work and school.

Finally, minimum-age standards take no account of measures taken by children and their families to minimise hazards in work.[6] Cultural expectations of children's work take account of growing competencies of children. In this volume, and particularly in Chapter 2, we see examples of young children learning how to do a job by accompanying adults or older siblings or other peers, and working on their own only when they have acquired the necessary competence.

The failure of minimum-age standards to protect children is one reason why in 1999 the International Labour Organization (ILO) agreed on Convention 182 against the 'Worst Forms of Child Labour', which received immediate and widespread support. Since this convention now prohibits all work that is harmful to children in any way, continued enforcement of the Minimum Age Convention adds only prohibition on work that is not harmful, and indeed is sometimes beneficial to children; logically this convention should now be regarded as obsolete (see Myers 2001).

By prohibiting work that is not harmful, these minimum-age standards lead to anomalies that sometimes work against children's interests when access to the best jobs and other support is denied them on the grounds that they should not be working, as will be illustrated later in this chapter. There is little evidence that these standards offer benefits to children.[7]

Conflation and confusion

These two very different kinds of 'child labour' have very different outcomes for the children involved: harmful labour is clearly damaging, but work that is illegal on the grounds of age and employment is not necessarily harmful and can even be beneficial to children. But both are widely banned in national legislation following the international conventions, and so both are equally illegal. Legally and in much policy, the two types of child labour are conflated into a single category of something to be abolished, ignoring the important differences in terms of children's interests. In Kenya, for example, as Magdalene Muoki points out in Chapter 8, 'child labour'

is widely assumed to be synonymous with 'harmful work', although in practice it is often defined by minimum-age standards rather than harm. The assumption that work at an age below the specified minimum age of employment correlates with harmful work is not supported by empirical evidence.

Some people attempt to justify this conflation on the grounds that the minimum age of employment is linked to the age of compulsory schooling. Chapters in this volume illustrate how work can impede schooling; but they also illustrate how some children can benefit from work below the minimum age for employment, especially when they are out of school for reasons other than work, but also for productive work out of school hours or in school vacations. Sometimes work even provides the means for attending school, as the case studies from Ethiopia and Kenya show.

Nevertheless, while it is difficult to assess whether there is net benefit or harm for particular children in particular jobs, it is relatively easy—at least in theory[8]—to assess whether they are in employment below a certain age. It is easier for an organisation to deny any tolerance of under-age work than to provide assurances that children benefit from the work that they do. So practitioners find it convenient to use age of employment as a proxy for harm, however inaccurate it may be. Organisations sometimes describe or define 'child labour' in terms of various kinds of harm to children; and then in the implementation of programmes to stop 'child labour' they focus primarily on age of employment.[9] This mismatch between justification and implementation frequently gives rise to anomalies, some of which are mentioned below, and works against the best interests of children.

The macro context of children's work

The first two chapters of this volume illustrate the dangers of considering children's work in isolation or according to abstract standards. For children to benefit from protection policies, these policies must pay attention to the social and economic contexts in which the children concerned live, and must also pay attention to the children's perspectives and aspirations (Myers and Bourdillon 2012). To intervene to tackle a particular problem, like 'child labour', without understanding its place in the lives of the children concerned, often leaves disadvantaged children and their families even worse off. The first chapter, by Tatek Abebe, explains why.

Focusing on Ethiopia, Abebe shows how international trade affects children's work and their relationships within their families. International trade of cash crops provides increased opportunities for income; but paradoxically it also creates pressures within families, enhances gender inequalities, and competes with food production. The 'ordinary' contributions of children as producers, carers, home makers and decision makers are intensified in macro-economic restructuring. Their perceptions and the way they learn to work adapt to the changing situation in which they are

growing up. The agency and choices available to children are tempered by the impact of poverty and structural processes, to the extent that the exploitation of children in work needs to be understood in the context of an increasingly exploitative system of international trade.

Abebe argues that rather than focusing on stopping children from working, interventions should attend to fundamental reasons why children work, and focus on reducing inequality and achieving equity. This is a more fundamental and effective way of dealing with the problems faced by working children.

The micro context

The extensive second chapter presents details of the places of work in children's lives and trajectories, drawing on the Young Lives study in Ethiopia. In it, Alula Pankhurst, Gina Crivello, and Agazi Tiumelissan pay attention to context at the micro level. The chapter shows how changes in their communities affect the trajectories of children's lives in relation to work and school; but for many, even more important are the crises faced by specific families. These affect both children's work and their schooling in complex ways: while work can cause problems with schooling, problems of schooling are often the result of other difficulties that children and their families face, and cannot simply be blamed on work.

Children perceive benefits in their work, as well as risks and harm arising from it. A primary benefit is income that helps to deal with family financial crises, whether this income is directly earned by the children, or enabled by children taking care of work in the home; children are also frequently central to family strategies to overcome shocks, such as death of a breadwinner, serious illness, crop failure, or severe inflation. But children see other benefits, such as social and entrepreneurial skills obtained through their work, or skills of particular trades. They see their work as contributing to their moral status and esteem in the eyes of themselves and of others. They feel proud to be contributing to their families. They see these benefits, against which any risk or harm in work must be measured. Indeed, there was a sense expressed that not to work was inconceivable, and the question why they worked was perceived as very odd.

A key observation arising from the Young Lives data is that children's work, starting from a very young age, whether for economic gain or simply contributing to the home, is embedded in the values that they ascribe to their relations with their families, their peers and members of their communities. Their work arises out of their relationships, and their work helps to build their relationships. Their work is not marginal, but central to family strategies and relationships. In particular, the work of children—even when at times it hinders their future chances—is key to the ability of families in poverty to absorb the shocks that can be so devastating to families in poverty (Chuta 2014).

Interventions that simply focus on stopping children from working are likely to disrupt the relationships that provide meaning and well-being to children's lives—indeed, on which children's lives depend.

Both these early chapters suggest that a focus on simply trying to stop child labour is misplaced. Children and their families take it for granted that children should work, and any attempt to stop them is likely to drive some work underground, which could render it more dangerous. Problems with trying to abolish child labour become even more evident when we consider children working on city streets.

Street-connected children

In all African cities children are evident on the streets, often with their families, but sometimes alone. Virtually all such street children are involved in some kind of work, perhaps relatively playful imitation on the part of young children, but usually involving more or less substantial contributions to their own and their families' livelihood. Since there is no minimum age for children to appear on the streets, there can be no minimum age for their work.

In Chapter 3, Ibtisam Satti Ibrahim, writing about the lives of children on the streets of Khartoum, argues against simplistic interventions to address the problem of child labour. She defines 'child labour' as harmful work, and illustrates the damage that work can do to children's lives, exposing them to a variety of risks and depriving them of education. Yet her study reveals that children start working sometimes as young as six years old, and shows that income from their work is essential for their own livelihood and that of their families. The ability to earn money also gives children a degree of control over some aspects of their lives. Citing current structures that fail to deal with poverty, she concludes that children do not benefit from being prevented from working; she argues that policy should regulate their labour and ensure that children benefit from the work that they do, rather than being further harmed by it.

In Chapter 4, Emebet Mulugeta describes the life situations of 32 children working on the streets of Addis Ababa. Like the children described in the three previous chapters, they work under pressure from poverty in an attempt to improve their own lives and the lives of their families in the cities and in the rural areas. She points out how the children helped each other, especially when difficulties arose; and how they saved money and sent some home to their families. The agency and resilience of the children should be recognised and respected, as should their need for income. But Mulugeta argues that children's ambitions for the long term appear unrealistic, since they do not have resources to start their own business, and their work and background impede their schooling. She argues for a holistic approach that responds both to the social contexts of the children and to their needs as individuals. We cannot effectively deal with their work without at the same time dealing with their situation.

School and work

In high-income societies, the main work of children has moved from services and production to the work of learning at school to develop skills for the later benefit of society (Qvortrup 2001). In the contemporary world generally, skills of literacy and numeracy have become an essential empowering tool in a variety of social, political and economic domains. And so basic schooling is considered a right of every child everywhere.

One of the pervading concerns about child labour is that it hinders the social transition in children's work from production to school, even to the extent of keeping children away from school, or pressurising them to drop out of the school system altogether. In Chapter 5, Yisak Tafere and Alula Pankhurst give some examples of this effect of work in Ethiopia; and they provide examples of unpaid work in the home impeding schoolwork. But they also show some children successfully combining school and work, and some even being enabled to continue school through their work—a widespread phenomenon in Africa. They further indicate how poor results at school, and particularly poor quality of schooling, can drive children to work.

Quite by chance, the schools at each of the three Ethiopian sites followed different regimes: full-day, half-day, and alternating morning and afternoon schooling. These affected the compatibility between school and work. In practice, schools are not flexible enough to meet the needs of working children; rather it is the working children who are required to be flexible to fit in with the school system and bear the burden of trying to combine their various responsibilities.

There are many factors apart from work that inhibit children from doing well at school. Schools available for the poor are often poor in human and material resources, and learning outcomes for the children attending can be correspondingly low (see, for example, Hallack and Poisson 2007). Tafere and Pankhurst point to the absence of teachers, which drives some children away from school and into work. The long-term Young Lives study shows that children from disadvantaged backgrounds rarely catch up in reading and mathematical skills, and often remain behind even when attending the same schools as their more advantaged peers (Murray 2012; Rolleston and James 2014). One reason for this is inadequate nutrition, which stunts both physical and cognitive growth and is psychologically debilitating. Particularly in rural homes, bacterial infections can damage the lining of the intestine, resulting in inadequate absorption of available food (Kinsey, forthcoming). Even when young people successfully complete their schooling, there may be no appropriate jobs for them. Growing faith in school is sometimes questionable. While school can impart skills to enable a few to break out of poverty, it cannot guarantee this outcome for many; work experience can help young people to develop such skills, such as dealing with employers and clients, as well as sometimes specific technical skills.

There is a further consideration. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child states that children have the responsibility to assist their parents and elders in need (article 31), and several of the children in the cases from Ethiopia feel this responsibility. We return to the point made in Chapter 2: how children's work and their schooling is embedded in the situation of the families and their relationships within the families. The authors conclude that children from poor families can make use of opportunities to earn and combine these with at least some schooling. They suggest that rather than stopping children from working, we should make sure that they can also benefit from schooling.

In Chapter 6, Gladwell Wambiri presents some results from a study in Kenya, giving children's reasons why they decided to undertake paid work; their motives include helping their families, having enough to eat, and earning money for school expenses. She also presents parents' perspectives on the benefits of work in terms of the training that it provides for children; but the parents also appreciate school education and see the disadvantage that their children face at school through having to work to help the family. She calls for programmes that might help to make school and work more compatible.

Both Chapters 5 and 6 suggest that when poverty or some factor in their family situation requires children to work, schools need to be flexible enough to make school and work compatible (see also Orkin 2011). Is this possible? What does research tell us about the compatibility of work with school?

Certainly, full-time work hinders or prevents schooling. A precise definition of full-time work is not possible, but 30 hours a week can be taken as a rough guide. This applies to unpaid work in the home, which can be more exploitative than paid work outside the home. The Ethiopian data show that the work in the home that is demanded especially of girls often leaves inadequate time for school homework. One study in Egypt argued that it is precisely domestic work in the home that reduces girls' attendance and performance at school (Assaad et al. 2010). And children in South Africa have complained of work in their homes getting in the way of their school work (see Clacherty 2002: 33–34; Lehohla 2001: 25).

By contrast, evidence does not on the whole indicate that up to ten hours of work per week (whether economic work or any other work) has a negative effect on school performance. In some situations, such light work may even improve school performance (Stack and McKechnie 2002: 99; Post and Pong 2009: 112).

Research results for work between these extremes are mixed. Several studies of children's use of time have suggested that time for work is taken from leisure or passive activities, rather than from time spent on schoolwork (Bourdillon et al. 2011: 122). When measures to reduce poverty result in higher school attendance, this is not always accompanied by a reduction of children's work; and where such reductions do take place, they do not mirror increases in school participation (De Hoop and

Rosati 2013). So research does not support the assumption that work and school are in direct opposition to each other. The effects of work on school depend on a number of variables, including the nature of the work; the hours demanded; relations with employers and fellow workers; the aptitude of the child; the quality of schooling; and the flexibility of the school system. (For a summary of research findings, see Bourdillon et al. 2011: 108–132.)

Children's views on their hazardous work

In Chapter 7, Josephine Wouango presents the stories of children involved in hazardous work: in an artisanal mine and in a stone quarry. Although this chapter comes from research in Burkina Faso, which lies outside the regional focus of this book, the issues that it raises have widespread application for policy and intervention.

The chapter presents perspectives of the working children and their parents. They acknowledge the difficult and hazardous conditions at these sites; nevertheless they see work as a solution to greater problems. The main reason is financial necessity, in response to extreme poverty. But there are also social reasons: children may be better off accompanying their parents at work than being idle and uncared for at home. Children learn to work and acquire self-esteem through the money that they earn. Some earn money for schooling.

Wouango points to long-standing attention to child labour in Burkina Faso, partly motivated by the country's dependence on foreign aid, and by the concerns of aid organisations. Many children have been removed from hazardous work and given schooling or other training, but few organisations have information on long-term outcomes for the children. One organisation that did assess outcomes for the children whom it helped found that few were subsequently able to utilise their training, and 80 per cent were returning to the sites of their former work. This is a failure of many interventions on child labour throughout the world: they assume that children are better off not working, and fail to test this assumption in the particular situations in which children have to live their lives.

Wouango further points out that many NGOs deal only with the children, and fail to recognise the importance of the situation of children's families in determining their lives. Parents and children are critical of policies that prohibit children from working and fail to offer alternative support. There remains little evidence that policy takes into account the views of the affected people, which should be a matter of right and is necessary for effective intervention.

Interventions

In Chapter 8, Magdalene Muoki describes a programme by Save the Children for working children in Kenya, in which consulting children is central and the children's views are brought to bear on policy, in accordance with their right to participation. To create opportunities for children, Save the Children advocates an integrated strategy that incorporates child protection, economic strengthening, and social protection. Part of this strategy involves empowering children to identify their problems and to initiate possible solutions to them in a programme called *Children Lead the Way*.

The programme encourages working children above the age of 14 to establish clubs in order to share experiences and to encourage awareness of children's rights, as well as to participate in events to influence decisions. Following the input from the children, a new draft for a Child Labour policy has incorporated certain key principles to ensure that their interests are attended to, and working children have contributed to the list of hazardous work prepared by the government. Working children have also contributed to the state reports relating to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Muoki argues that this kind of participation ensures that children's interests are taken into account. In particular, the working children point out that they can benefit from appropriate work.

She does, however, point to an anomaly: children under 14 are excluded from the programme, on the grounds that they are supposed to be in school and schools have their own initiatives to promote children's rights. Yet not all children under 14 are in fact in school, and many combine school and work; and these young and very vulnerable children are excluded from the programme. This illustrates a limitation of many programmes of child participation: the parameters of participation are generally laid down by adults. Where there is an assumption on the part of controlling adults that children should not work under the age of 14, children's voices to the contrary are unlikely to be taken seriously. Muoki mentions the African Movement of Working Children and Youth, which is led by young people and has associations in 27 countries throughout Africa.[10] Dominant in their agenda and advocacy are the 'Twelve Rights' that arose from experience of working children early in the movement's history, and which include 'the right to light and limited work', with no mention of age.

Exclusion of young children from protective programmes on account of minimum-age standards has been recorded elsewhere. Mélanie Jacquemin (2006) described a programme providing good support to child domestic workers; its policy, however, was that any child under the age of 15 should be removed from work, so the young children who wanted or needed to continue their employment were deprived of support. Recently a programme in Egypt, recognising the need of children to earn, tried to remove children (aged 12–18) from hazardous work by finding them safer employment:[11] it was able to remove older youths into such production industries as furniture

manufacture and other forms of safe work; but responsible employers who had to meet the requirements of European buyers would not employ anyone under 15, so some younger children remained in hazardous work, such as in a lead-smelting plant.

Although Muoki is the only practitioner at the symposium who has contributed to this volume, others discussed interventions at the symposium.[12] Anselm Wandega presented a pilot programme in two parishes in Southern Uganda to create 'Child Labour Free Zones'. This has become a widespread term, internationally espoused by campaigners against child labour, who often have substantial financial support from high-income countries; but many of these campaigners are motivated by emotion rather than information about the lives of working children.[13] In the pilot programme described by Wandega, a 'Child Labour Free Zone' is a place in which everyone is convinced that children of school-going age should be regularly attending school on a full-time basis, and a place in which all co-operate to eliminate child labour completely. More than 1,600 children aged 5–14 who had never been to school or who had dropped out of school were enrolled and provided with necessary materials. Bridge schools were established for older children, and technical support was given to schools generally. The programme trained young advocates and supported children's initiatives, as well as supporting monitoring committees. It also involved discussions with communities to revise values and cultural practices on child-rearing practices. Such programmes undoubtedly benefit many deprived children educationally; but it is not self-evident that school will be able to fulfil its promises to the majority of children, and the attitude to work expressed in this programme is questionable.

The programme is supported by HIVOS International, an organisation based in The Netherlands, which, in coalition with other organisations[14] in other countries, has a policy of eliminating all forms of child labour: 'no child should work; every child must be in school'.[15] This is not a policy of eliminating only harmful work. While the HIVOS policy on improving schooling is commendable, in the light of other chapters in this book showing work to be embedded in social relations, it is not clear that the 'no child should work' policy is necessarily in the interests of the children, when we consider the importance of work in their family relations and social lives. While cultural values should always be scrutinised in terms of outcomes for people—and in this case for children—it is not evident that the values of HIVOS and their coalition will necessarily benefit children and are superior to African cultural values of work for children. Rather than trying to create 'child-labour-free zones' in Africa, we should better be trying to create poverty-free zones and zones in which there are adequate safety nets to meet the needs of families in crisis.

Felix Marumutsa presented research on child labour on tea production in Rwanda. A key goal of the research is 'To provide support and recommendations to the tea industry with the goal of eliminating child labor and removing Tea from the USDOL *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor and Forced Labor (2010 and 2011)*'.

This goal is important for Rwandan trade, and in the long term may therefore be in the interests of children. Since, however, the US Department of Labor defines child labour in terms of age and employment,[16] the goal of eliminating child labour diverges from the goal of protecting children from harmful work.

Marumutsa pointed out that in the tea-growing communities it was taken for granted that children should work on family plantations and those of their neighbours, to support their families and to 'discourage laziness'. The families claim that this is not child labour. But to satisfy foreign importers, this behaviour has to change. In the discussion following the presentation, Marumutsa pointed out that there was no objection to children herding livestock and cutting fodder with machetes (which can result in accidents) right next to the tea plantations, on the grounds that this is acceptable work within the family; but if they were found doing anything, however benign, directly related to tea plantations (such as plucking tea leaves), this would jeopardise the export market and would be defined as child labour to be abolished.

Reading this volume

All the chapters in this volume provide some information on how children can benefit from work, as well as be harmed by it. The importance of work for the livelihoods of children living in poverty or facing some kind of family crisis is obvious; moreover, several of the chapters also point to the importance of work in family social relations, and in the child's development into a person able to accept responsibility for family and community. So one question to ask is: what precisely is the place of work in different contexts for children's social and material life?

Arising from understanding work in children's lives, a second question to consider is: what kinds of policy might best support the efforts of children to develop in their communities? And further, what is the relationship between international ideals and the specific realities that the children face? Can we ensure that children benefit, and are not harmed, by whatever work they do, both in the home and outside it? We shall return to these questions in the Concluding Reflections at the end of this volume.

Notes

1   Not all presentations were made available for this volume. Further Powerpoint presentations are available at http://www.younglives.org.uk/news/news/symposium-report-childrens-well-being-and-work-in-sub-saharan-africa

2   At the symposium, besides representatives of international organisations dealing with child protection and child rights, there were practitioners and academic researchers from Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Zimbabwe and Burkina Faso. Others invited from Southern Africa were not able to attend.

3　See the policy brief issued shortly after the symposium, available at http://www.younglives. org.uk/publications/PP/childrens-wellbeing-and-work-in-sub-saharan-africa

4　A very good example appears in the case of Shoishab, an organisation for protecting child domestic workers in Bangladesh. By making employers aware of the problems that children were facing, as well as of their rights, some who had previously exploited their young workers became actively involved in improving their lives through education and other services, and through advocacy among other employers. (See Black 2002: 48–49.)

5　There has been a parallel tension between those (men) in the ILO who would protect women from certain work situations (reserving certain jobs for men) and those who demand equal opportunities for women. Convention 89 (1948), for example, restricted women from certain types of night work allowed to men; in the 1970s and 1980s, there was debate between those who advocated special protection for women against those who advocated equal opportunity for women without discrimination. The 1990 Protocol for Convention 89 allowed flexibility without abrogating the earlier Convention.

6　For examples in India, see Morrow and Vennam 2012.

7　A recent study of 59 countries failed to find evidence of minimum-age regulations significantly reducing children's work outside the home. The authors conclude, "the evidence in this paper does not suggest an influence of minimum age of employment regulation on child time allocation that is commensurate with the level of policy attention to promoting the regulation." (Edmonds and Shrestha 2012, 26)

8　In practice in developing countries, age is not always easy to assess, especially in the face of the falsification of birth certificates (where these exist) for educational or other purposes. Such considerations are frequently missed by policy makers in developed countries.

9　See, for example, the policy document agreed by UNICEF, Save the Children International, and UN Global compact on *Children's Rights and Business Principles* (UNICEF et al. 2012). The glossary on p.7 describes 'child labour' in terms of harmful work; but the immediate implementation (a) of the principle against child labour (p.19) is about removing children below a certain age from workplaces, while discussion of harm to young workers is given secondary consideration.

10　See http://maejt.org/page%20anglais/indexanglais.htm

11　'Promoting and Protecting the Interests of Children who Work (PPIC-W)': http://www. ppic-work.org. The report on this 'Safe Work' project is available at http://www.ppic-work.org/download/Smelters-and-Sorters.pdf; it does not mention under-age children sometimes remaining in hazardous work, an observation conveyed to Michael Bourdillon by Richard Carothers, who was involved in the project.

12　Powerpoint presentations are available at http://www.younglives.org.uk/news/news/symposium-report-childrens-well-being-and-work-in-sub-saharan-africa

13 On 12 June 2014, the World Day against Child Labour, a march was organised in Addis Ababa funded by donors and celebrated in pomp with children from schools and a band. Author Alula Pankhurst observed the proceedings and was struck to see other children enterprisingly selling lollies to the children participating in the march. Neither the marching children nor the organisers appeared to notice the incongruence.

14 A key partner of HIVOS in India is the Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya (MV) Foundation, which has been asked by a number of European organisations to initiate programmes in Africa. The MV Foundation has paid much commendable attention to improving the quality and accessibility of schools in India. However, the organisation does not accept poverty as a valid reason for child labour; it argues that 'there can be no distinction drawn between hazardous and non-hazardous occupations as any work that denies the child the right to participate in school is damaging to the their growth and a violation of their Fundamental Rights under the Constitution of India' (http://mvfindia.in/child-labour-act/ accessed 10 February 2015). This approach leaves little room for children's responsibilities to their families, which children feel and the African Charter asserts, and indeed little place for children's participation in decisions that affect them. The approach of the MV Foundation appears to exemplify top–down approaches, in which well-off people assume the superiority of their knowledge and impose their ideas on the lives of the poor, with little respect for, and inadequate understanding of, the perspectives of the people they claim to be helping; such approaches notoriously overlook key interests of the poor. (For a critique of top–down approaches in development, see Easterly 2013.)

15 See https://www.hivos.org/search/site/child%20labour

16 Winrock International, the organisation directly involved in the research and intervention, will not tolerate 'Engaging children in hazardous, exploitative, or illegal labor' (http://www.winrock.org/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/Winrock%27s_position_on_child_labor.pdf). This effectively conflates harmful work with work that breaches minimum-age standards, irrespective of whether or not it actually causes harm.

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