Stop! Child Domestic Labour

Child Domestic Labour (CDL) Violence Against Children & Worst Form of Child Labour From Exploitation to blatant violence...
<table>
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<th>MYTH</th>
<th>REALITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Employers are obliging children by employing them.</td>
<td>Child Domestic Labourers (CDLs) are recruited for economic gains, easy manipulation of children to work long hours with little or no wages.</td>
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<td>Poverty is the single major cause of child domestic labour.</td>
<td>CDLs come from impoverished families, are paid low wages, but child employment perpetuates poverty by making a child into an unskilled, debilitated adult, depriving adults of jobs.</td>
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<td>If children do not work, they and their family starve.</td>
<td>Starvation persists even when families and their children are working. It is due to low income (due to adult unemployment, depressed wages or lack of education &amp; skills).</td>
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<td>Child Domestic labour is the result of poor having more children.</td>
<td>CDL is not caused by high population but due to persistent denial of basic rights including right to education, health and economic security.</td>
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<td>Parents would rather send their children to work than to school.</td>
<td>If education facilities provide quality, care and some social security is ensured education is the first priority of every parent rather than work for their child.</td>
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<td>If children work, they become equipped with skills for the future.</td>
<td>The work done by child domestic labourers actually endangers their future. Dangers far outweigh skills including dangers to health, psychological impairment and risks.</td>
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<td>Legislation prohibiting CDL is sufficient to resolve the problem.</td>
<td>No law in Pakistan prohibits child domestic labour. Employment of Children’s Act 1991 bans only limited sectors in the formal economy and enforcement remains very weak.</td>
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<td>Child Domestic labour cannot be abolished.</td>
<td>The task of eliminating child domestic labour can only be tackled if it is framed as an issue of multiple forms of Violence Against Children and termed as Worst Forms of Child Labour, to end apartheid against children and attribute widespread Public National Shame to Child Domestic Labour.</td>
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<td>Law making is difficult for CDL</td>
<td>This may not be so. Amendments to the Children’s Employment Act 1991 must be made categorizing CDL as Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) in the informal sector with enforcement measures in place in line with Pakistan’s ratification of ILO Convention 182, CRC and the SAARC regional legislation.</td>
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CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC) AN OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS CDL

Child domestic labour in all its forms involves multiple denial of the rights of the child as enshrined in the CRC. A child in domestic labour is denied several or all of these rights:

- Article 2: The right of non-discrimination;
- Article 7: The right, as far as possible, to know and be cared for by his/her parents many are completely outside parental care);
- Article 9: The right to be in regular and direct contact with parents if separated from them
- Article 11: The right not to be illegally transferred abroad (this would be the case of children who are trafficked across borders into domestic labour);
- Article 12: The right to express views in all matters affecting her/himself;
- Article 15: The right to freedom of association and of peaceful assembly;
- Article 16: The right not to be subject to unlawful attacks on her/his honour and reputation (many children in domestic labour, and girls especially, are subject to verbal and sexual abuse, ranging from harassment to rape);
- Article 19: The right to protection from physical or mental violence, neglect, abuse or exploitation;

- Article 24: The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and access to health care services;
- Article 26: The right to social security, including social insurance in accordance with national law;
- Article 27: The right to a standard of living adequate for her/his physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development;
- Article 28: The right to education, including compulsory, free primary education;
- Article 31: The right to rest, leisure, play and recreation;
- Article 32: The right to protection from economic exploitation and from performing work that interferes with her/his education or is harmful to physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development;
- Article 34: The right to be protected from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation;
- Article 35: The right to be protected from abduction, sale or traffic for any purpose or in any form;
- Article 37: The right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and also not to be arbitrarily deprived of liberty (UNICEF);

All children have the same rights, including child domestics.
RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY LEVEL

- CDL must be declared as the Worst Forms of Child Labour and being included in the list of WFCWL under Pakistan’s commitment to ILO Convention-182 which must be fully implemented to combat this evil.

- The issue of CDL must be framed in the context of Violence Against Children, a matter of National Public Shame. The practice of employing children as domestics breeds myriad forms of violence against children, including trafficking, rape and murder.

- Poor and vulnerable families must be targeted for provision of easily accessible safety nets for poverty reduction through Bait ul Maal/Zakaat, access to quality free education, health, nutrition and livelihoods.

- Every government functionary, elected/nominated public representative, political party leaders and NGO representatives must be required to sign a declaration that his/her family is not employing a child domestic labourer.

AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION

- This communication strategy must be targeted through National, Provincial and District governments for promoting effective mass awareness and monitoring. Every MNA, Senator, MPA, councillor is duty bound to report cases of child abuse in his/her area. The large number of female councilors can play a strategic role in sensitizing about violation of child rights.

- Devise powerful stickers/images and messages for consumer items against CDL and child labor. (Many consumer industries have consented to this in 2005)

- Make all political parties add in their mandates a commitment to ending CDL.

- Launching public information campaigns on the rights of domestic workers and responsibilities of employers, with special emphasis on the potential hazards of child domestic laborers.

- Child to Child approach to be encouraged, mobilizing educated school children/youth who can be guided to educate their parents about the rights of children working in their homes and to end domestic child labour.

- Building strategic partnerships towards a common goal for ending CDL as inclusively as possible.

EDUCATION AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CDL

- The government must expand its non-formal and basic education and literacy programs through Education, Social Welfare and Labor Ministries to specifically cover CDL as this is pervasive amongst rich and middle class alike, in urban and rural areas. Multilateral bodies such as ILO and UNICEF should redouble their efforts to make the issue of child domestic labour a priority area for urgent action.
RECOMMENDATIONS

PROTECTION

- Governments should initiate legislative reforms to set minimum standards of practice for domestic workers of all ages, widening the scope of existing labour legislation to include domestic work, and/or enactment of specific legislation to protect domestic workers to get same rights as other workers, including minimum wage, time off, & limits on hours of work.

- In addition to provision of good quality and accessible education and health care for all, governments should promote the development of specialized basic services for child domestic labourers, such as specialized crisis and trauma centres for reintegration. The Punjab Child Protection & Welfare Bureau in Lahore should also be replicated to other cities of Pakistan for creating a child friendly society.

- Creating a confidential toll-free hotline to receive reports of workers’ rights violations, including abuses against child domestics and coping with trauma.

- Creating effective mechanisms for inspection, enforcement, and monitoring of child labor, and promptly investigating any complaints of abuses against child domestics.