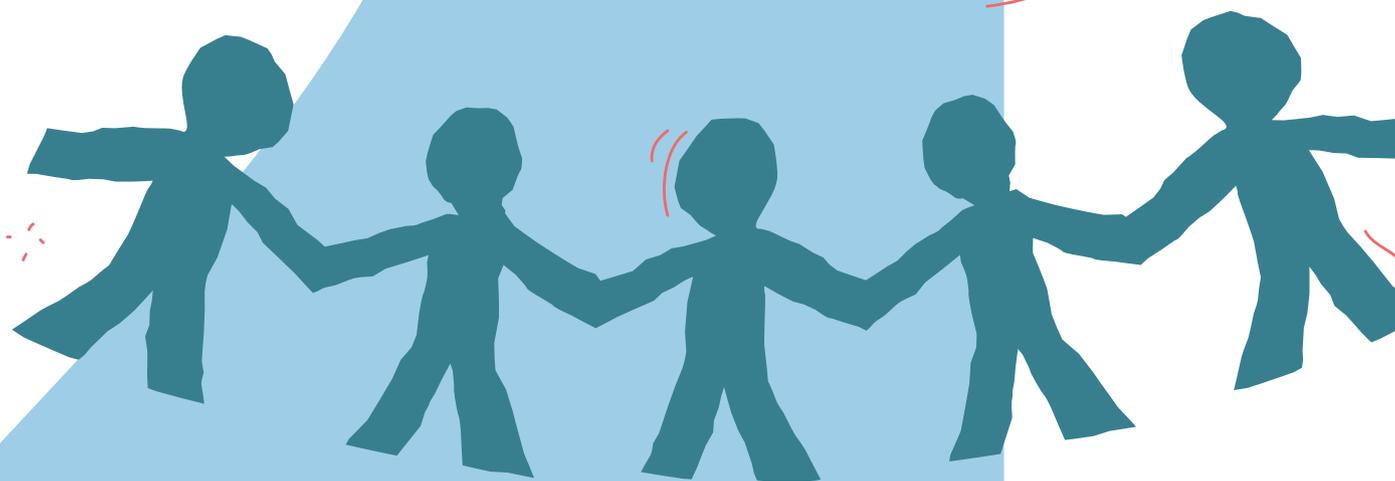


- It's Time to Talk! - Children's Views on Children's Work

*Gender Differences
in Children's Work*



**TIME TO
TALK!**

#talkaboutchildwork

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Kindernothilfe is a German children’s rights organisation that supports vulnerable and marginalized children and youth to develop their full potentials. We partner with local non-governmental organisations in 33 countries and empower children to lead independent, self-fulfilled lives.

terre des hommes Germany supports "Time to Talk!" as a representative of the Terre des Hommes International Federation (TDHIF). TDHIF is a network of ten national organisations working for the rights of children and to promote equitable development without racial, religious, political, cultural or gender-based discrimination.

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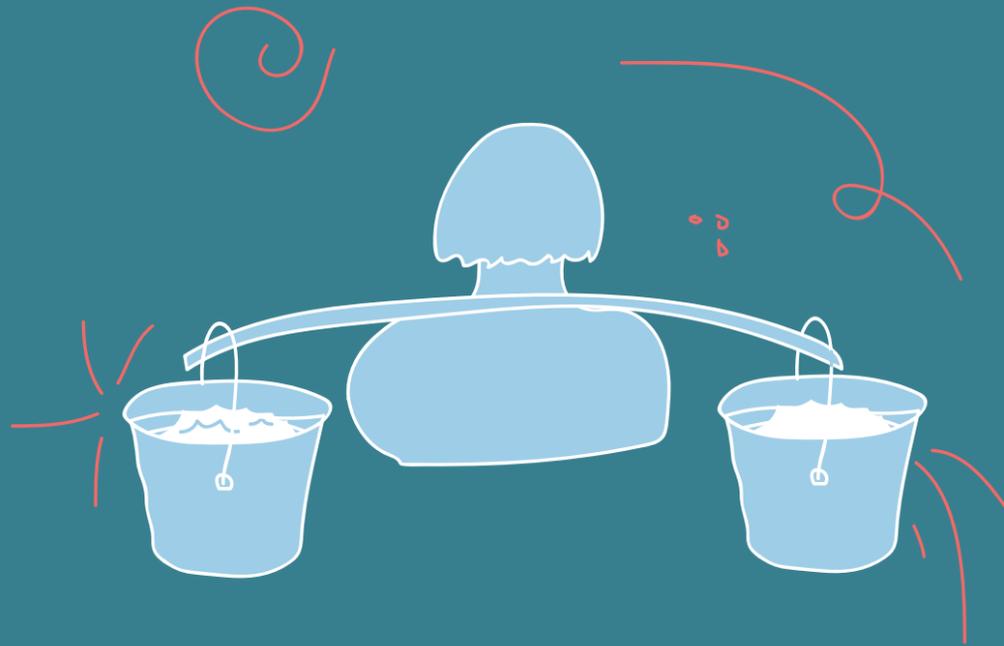
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Introduction

The global child participation project “It’s Time to Talk! – Children’s Views on Children’s Work” consulted 1,822 working children (947 girls, 873 boys, 2 other) in 36 countries across Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Europe¹ on their lives, perspectives and recommendations to enhance their protection and wellbeing (Time to Talk!, 2018). The consultation results clearly showed gender-relevant trends and observations that have implications for policy and practice. This publication sheds a light on 10 key gender-related findings and encourages practitioners, policy-makers and researchers to consider the corresponding recommendations in their work.

Background information on the consultations

The project was implemented by Kindernothilfe and terre des hommes Germany, in collaboration with working children, and more than 50 civil society partners. Besides the child-friendly consultations across 36 countries, the project formed Children’s Advisory Committees (CACs) involving working children enabling their active role throughout the research process as advisers, analysts and advocates. 134 consultations with girls and boys aged 5-18 years were organized across 36 countries between April 2016 and May 2017. The girls and boys consulted were engaged in a diverse range of paid and unpaid work² in urban and rural settings. 76% of the children consulted were studying (including formal, informal or non-formal education), 22% were out of school, and 2% sometimes attended school. The majority of children consulted worked before and/or after school (59%), 10% only worked in the school holidays, and 5% worked at other times (for example, occasional seasonal work). 22% of the children consulted worked full time, and 4% were former child workers. The research used mixed methods, but was primarily qualitative and exploratory using focus group discussions and participatory activities with small groups of girls and boys. Individual interviews to complete questionnaires also allowed the collection of background data concerning each child, their family situation, their work, and whether they attended school or not. The data sample was purposeful and was not representative of any particular country, region, or a specific type of work.

Ten key gender-related findings from Time to Talk!

1. Differing responsibilities

Both girls and boys commonly undertake unpaid household and agricultural work for their families. Girls have increased responsibilities for household work, and in some socio-cultural contexts boys have increased responsibilities for agricultural work and paid work.

2. Influence of gender stereotypes

Work that children think they can and cannot do is influenced by gender stereotypes and expectations, and by their own assessments of risk.

3. Type of work influenced by wide range of factors

Gender, age, sibling order, sexual orientation, disability, family income, geographic setting, seasons, socio-cultural and religious, and socio-political factors combine to influence the nature of work undertaken by girls and boys.

4. Reasons and motivations for children to work

Girls and boys shared similar reasons and motivations for children’s work which placed emphasis on helping their parents or family members, overcoming family struggles and earning money to meet their basic needs.

5. Gender differences in having a say

Regional differences were greater than gender differences in results concerning how much say children have in decisions about their work.

6. Positive and negative aspects of work

Girls and boys shared many similar views regarding positive and negative aspects of their working lives.

7. Differing experiences of violence

Girls face increased risks of experiencing sexual harassment and abuse while working, and both girls and boys commonly experience verbal, emotional and physical abuse.

8. Being a girl as a potential risk factor

Being a girl was identified (both by girls and boys) as a significant risk factor for experiencing harm and abuse when working.

9. Being a boy as a potential protective and risk factor

Being a boy was identified as a protective factor by boys and girls in some socio-cultural contexts, but in other contexts being a boy was considered to be a risk factor due to expectations that boys are able to do heavy work, and as a result of adult’s power to exploit, abuse and mistreat children.

10. Particular female inconveniences

Girls face inconvenience on the way to and from work, and at work due to their menstruation and lack of access to sanitary facilities.

¹ 32% of the children came from Asia, 27% from Latin American countries, another 27% from Africa, and with a small sample 8% of the participants came from the Middle East, and 4% from Europe.

² Including unpaid household and agricultural work; paid domestic work; paid agricultural work; small-scale vendors; work in gold mines and stone mines; construction work; brick or stone making; waste collection; work in a shop; work in the weaving and textile industry; factory work; shoe-shining; hotel and restaurant work; making deliveries and porters; carpentry; work in the fishing industry; barbers and hairdressers; cleaning buses/ cars; begging; and work in massage and dance parlours and other entertainment industries.



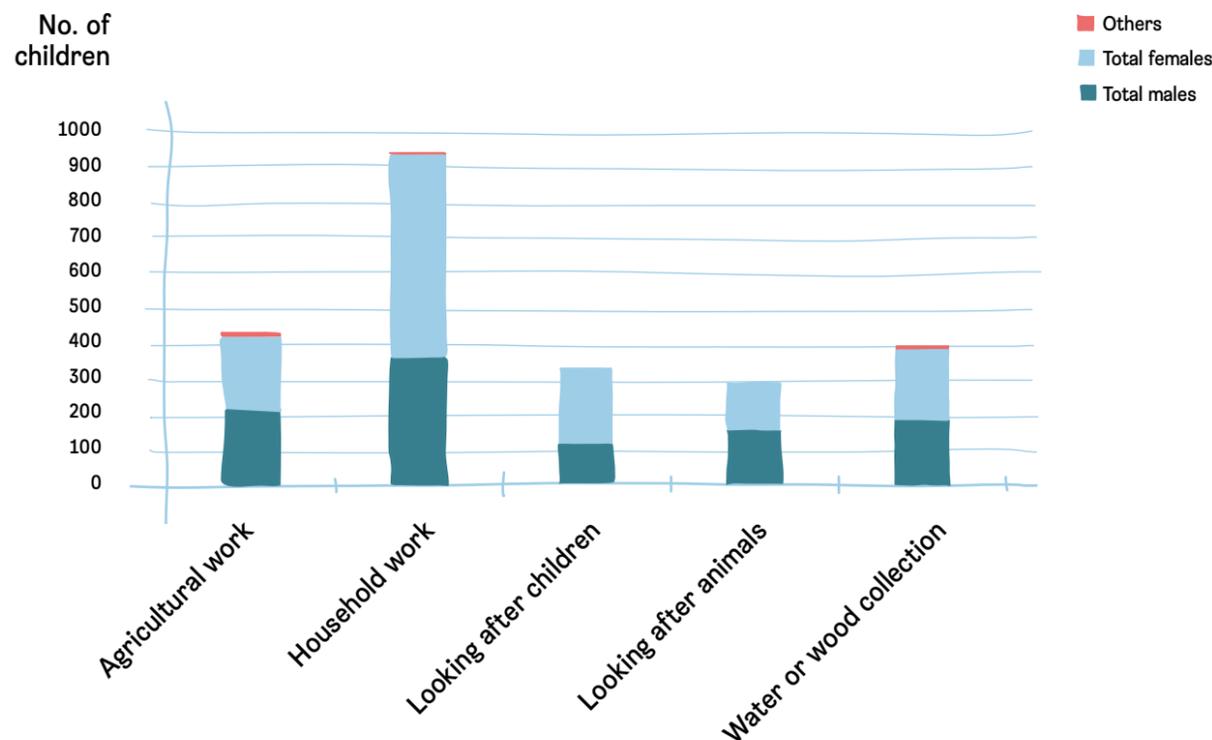
1. Differing responsibilities

The majority of girls and boys consulted through the Time to Talk! project emphasised their responsibilities to undertake household tasks to support their families. In diverse contexts especially in Africa, Asia, Latin America both girls and boys are undertaking housecleaning, dish washing, cooking, water and firewood collection, care of younger siblings, care of animals, and agricultural work for their families (see Bourdillon et al., 2011; Pankhurst, Bourdillon & Crivello, 2015; Morrow, 2015). Furthermore, in different regions both girls and boys are involved in diverse types of paid work including: agricultural work, brick and stone making, domestic work, gold mining, small-scale vending, textile and garment industry, and waste collection.

Although boys and girls are both taking on household and agricultural tasks, in many socio-cultural and religious contexts in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and

the Middle East there are different expectations about what work girls and boys are expected to do (see Woodhead, 2004). Parents and caregivers tend to reinforce existing gender norms, assigning girls and boys tasks that have been traditionally assigned according to gender (see Chandra, 2007; Morrow, 2015). In many countries across each of the regions, there are increased expectations on girls to help their mothers with household work; and there are sometimes increased expectations on boys to look after the livestock, to help with agricultural work, or to earn a living. For instance, adolescent girls from a rural community in Kyrgyzstan explained how “mothers try to teach daughters to manage house chores at early years since it is a shame not to be able to do house chores such as baking bread, cooking well, do laundry and milking a cow.” In a rural village in Zimbabwe children aged 9 to 14 years described how “boys tend to be involved in harder tasks than girls (...). Girls mainly clean, fetch water and cook whilst boys are involved in ploughing, weeding and cattle herding”.

No. of girls and boys consulted who undertake household and agricultural work



1. Differing responsibilities

While many children were balancing unpaid household work and studies, some girls and boys undertaking household work were working long hours, getting up early in the morning, and/or going to sleep late at night, and struggled to find sufficient time to study, play and rest. Due to increased household work responsibilities for girls in families, they had less time to play and rest.

For example, in a plenary discussion among male and female child workers in a town in Chad they commented that “the boys have more time for leisure; the girls have more responsibilities for domestic work”.

Read about the experience of a 13-year-old girl living in a city in Zimbabwe, doing household work:

Case example 1

My day starts at 4am every day. When I wake up early in the morning, I sweep the yard, clean the plates and fetch water. I bathe myself and then go to school. After school I'm busy in the field. It is hard digging the land. After all that, I fetch water, I collect firewood for cooking, and I start cooking. Come evening time, I become a sort of lawgiver, teaching my young sisters all the African rules, I do this to help and please my parents. My day starts at 4am and ends at 8pm. The only resting time is when I am sleeping. It is a blessing to be a working child because you will become self-reliant, but I should do children's work, not child labour, as you also should have more resting time as a child.



Drawings of an 11-year-old girl collecting water (left), and an 11-year-old boy looking after sheep (right), Burkina Faso

2. Influence of gender stereotypes

Girls and boys discussed and identified work they could and could not do, and any necessary conditions or reasons (see table). Some types of work that were suggested as suitable by both girls and boys groups, included: household work; cooking; agricultural work and gardening; fetching water; small-scale vending; working in a shop; washing clothes; and wood collection. More girls groups suggested that they could cook, wash dishes, fetch water, look after younger siblings, do tailoring or sewing and hairdressing. In contrast more boys groups suggested they could be involved in agricultural work and gardening, mechanics or repair work. Thus, children's suggestions for work they could do reflected efforts by girls and boys to fulfil prevalent gender stereotypes and expectations³ (see Chandra, 2007; Pankhurst, Crivello & Tiemelissan, 2015; Woodhead, 2004). Some girls and boys mentioned dissatisfaction if asked to do tasks that were not considered gender appropriate (Bourdillon, 2007; Morrow, 2015). For example, boys in Kosovo described how "boys should do the "boys' jobs" and girls should take care of their siblings and do chores at home". In one consultation in India, the boys said that they were ready to take up household work that demanded some amount of strength like cutting firewood, fetching water from the well, while the girls felt that lending a helping hand in cooking and washing was a life skill that would help them to lead an independent life. However, in some consultations in Guatemala and Argentina girls questioned the gender division of tasks and existing inequalities. A 13-year-old girl in Argentina said "I think that there is a bad division of roles between what we [girls] do and what boys do, I do everything, even making my brother's bed".

While both girls and boys in many contexts emphasised how they should do household tasks to support their families and to be responsible individuals, adolescent girls and boys in Paraguay discussed challenges associated with the low value and lack of recognition that is attributed to household work, emphasizing "the invisibility of domestic work (...) so that nobody realizes the results of our work".

There were many types of work that girls and boys felt they could not do, including: carrying heavy things; construction work; selling goods on the street (e.g. on busy roads); difficult agricultural work (e.g. ploughing); driving; stealing⁴; prostitution; producing or selling alcohol and selling drugs; working in mines; and heavy digging. Boys groups more frequently suggested that they could not do construction work, steal, sell drugs or do heavy digging. In contrast, more girls groups suggested they could not be involved in prostitution, wood collection, mine work, and paid domestic work. Furthermore, girls particularly emphasized dangers of sexual harassment when collecting wood and when undertaking paid domestic work for other families. In contrast boys and girls emphasised the risks of physical harm, such as cutting themselves when chopping the wood.

Mapping of what work we can do by a boys group, the Philippines



³ Unless they lived in a context that was characterised by significant social change, such as being displaced and affected by conflict.
⁴ 15 groups of children consulted mentioned stealing as a type of work that they could not do.



Key conditions for work that children cannot do⁵

- Work that:**
- is harmful – unhealthy, unsafe or includes the risk of causing pain, injury or accident;
 - is too difficult or heavy for their age or capacity;
 - is exploitative, too long working hours;
 - is illegal or it increases the risk of being in conflict with the law;
 - increases risks of abuse and violence;
 - has a negative impact on their studies;
 - is against their religion or culture.



Key conditions for work that children can do⁶

- Work that:**
- is light and easy to do;
 - does not harm them and is in a safe environment;
 - is near to their home or in their home and/or where they have support from family members, adults or peers;
 - does not interfere with their education;
 - allows them enough time to play and rest;
 - is supported by necessary tools and materials.

Girls highlighted the importance of working environments that did not expose them to increased risks of sexual harassment and abuse. For example, girls in India emphasised that they do not feel safe going outside of their home to work, but they prefer jobs that they can do from home, unless they are accompanied by their parents. In contrast, boys from the same community said they were comfortable working both at home and also outside their home, even if they have to work alone.

Girls in Chad who were working as small-scale vendors suggested that they could do sewing which would be home based work, so as "not to be raped and assaulted by boys". Syrian adolescent girls who were working in Jordan suggested they could work in beauty salons, or in home based wool or embroidery making where girls and boys have separate working areas. Iraqi and Syrian boys also emphasised the importance of girls working in safe locations within the home. ●

⁵ By girls and boys in mixed and separate groups.
⁶ Ibid.

3. Type of work influenced by wide range of factors



Children's childhood experiences are diverse (see Morrow, 2015; Pankhurst, Bourdillon & Crivello, 2015). Gender interacts with other factors including age, sibling order, sexual orientation, family structure, family income, ethnicity, religion, socio-political context (including the degree of conflict and migration), and other factors to influence the nature of work undertaken by girls and boys (see Morrow, 2015). In many socio-cultural contexts elder siblings tend to take on more responsibilities within households, including taking responsibility for care of younger siblings (see Boyden, Porter, Zharkevich & Heissler, 2016; Morrow, 2015). When parents or other family members have poor health or were unable to work for other reasons, there were also increased pressures placed on children, particularly on the eldest children to earn an income (see Morrow, 2015).

The consultations findings reveal that children contribute to household work in urban and rural settings; but children living in rural settings have far more agricultural and animal husbandry responsibilities, compared with children in urban settings or in camps (see Cussianovich & Rojas, 2014; Morrow, 2015). Furthermore, some children in rural areas had longer distances to travel to reach school, and they had less access to public transport. Thus, some children in rural areas struggled to find time for all their household and agricultural work, while also taking sufficient time to do their homework, and to travel to and from school in a timely way. Poor school infrastructure and poor quality teaching in rural areas led to some children dropping out of school, and others to migrating to urban settings to access school (see Morrow, 2015).

Different seasons influenced the type or amount of work undertaken by children who were engaged in agricultural work (paid or unpaid) with more intense work during the sowing and harvesting seasons. A 16-year-old girl from Argentina explained, *"during harvesting season we do things like looking after younger siblings or cooking because our parents are not there, they are harvesting"*. Seasons also influenced tasks associated with water collection. In diverse locations children are assigned responsibility to collect water, and during dry seasons

girls and boys travel for longer distances or stand in long queues in order to collect water. Girls aged 8 to 12 years who were consulted in one rural community in India described how water shortages led to migration: *"If there is no cultivation in our village due to lack of water we move to different places with our parents in search of work, or we are left with the relatives to take care of the sheep at home"*.

Conflict and disaster has multiple negative impacts on children and their families, and contributes to changes in gender and age allocations of work within and outside of households (UNICEF, 2009). Syrian refugee children who were consulted in Jordan, Lebanon, Serbia and Turkey, as well as children who were IDPs in Iraq emphasised how the conflict led to family separation, migration, poverty, lack of access to education and health services, discrimination, and circumstances that compelled them to work and earn a living (see Child Protection Working Group, 2016; Küppers & Ruhmann, 2016). Despite socio-cultural religious beliefs that contributed to preferences for girls to remain at home and to undertake home based work, Syrian girls were being sent out to earn an income. In Jordan and Lebanon, children consulted mentioned that it was difficult for Syrian refugee adults to obtain a work permit. Combined with costs of high rent, these were push factors for girls and boys to work. Adolescent Syrian girls who were working in the agricultural sector in Jordan explained how they were working as *"the police do not focus and chase girls compared to boys and adults, as adult need a work permit"*. Furthermore, some Syrian girls were married, and they were working inside and outside of the home to meet their families' needs. A 15-year-old Syrian girl in Jordan said she was *"working to support my husband for the apartment rent and other expenses"*.

⁷ Terre des Hommes in Nepal was directly engaging with these young people in an ongoing programme to enhance their protection from sexual exploitation.

Gender identity and sexual orientation also influence children and young people's opportunities and work experiences. Consultations with a group of 16 to 18-year-olds, including transgender youth in Nepal indicated how these young people sought each other out to access a community of support, but in doing so they also exposed themselves to increased risks and sexual exploitation. An earlier study by Save the Children and the Institute of Social and Medical Studies (2015) with LGBT young people who were working on the streets of Vietnam identified that *"many LGBT young people migrate out of their communities to the cities where they live and work, seeking a means to not only transcend poverty, but also to find an accepting community, or simply to extract themselves from oppressive discrimination from their families and communities to live independently and freely"*. ●



Adolescent, female, Syrian refugees working in the paid agricultural sector in Jordan

16 to 18-year-old males and young transgender people making a living as working in commercial sexual exploitation in Nepal⁷

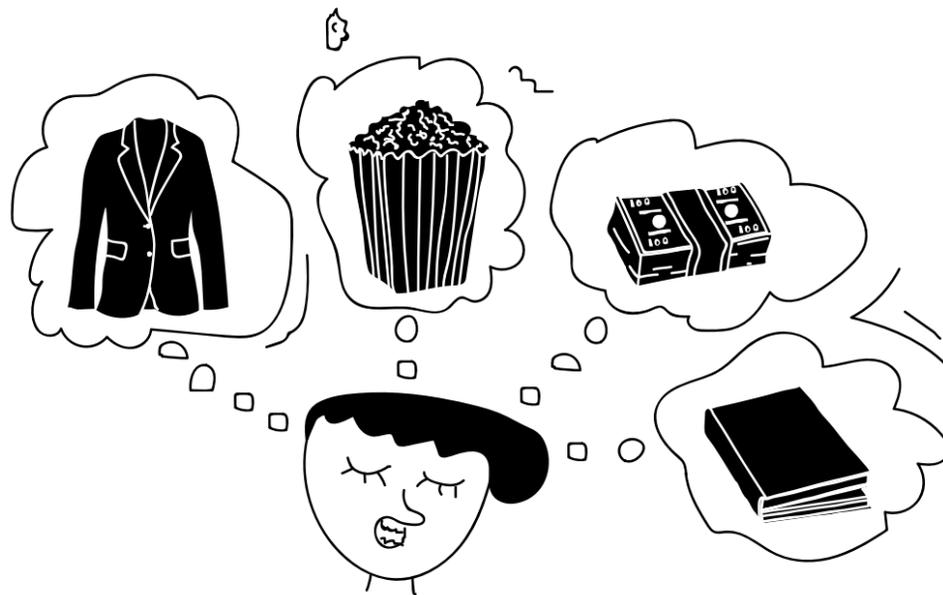
Case example 3

Eleven males aged 16 to 18-year-old who were sex workers were consulted in a city in Nepal. Three of the boys were attending school or university, while eight of the boys had previously dropped out of school. Some of the boys met clients in hotels, and others met their clients on the roadside. Some of the boys were transgender, and a majority of them would dress up as girls to work. The boys explained that the most significant benefits of their work were: meeting friends in similar situations who understood their feelings well; and learning the art of adaptation, which enabled them to adjust to difficult situations on their own. The most difficult challenges they faced while working were: they are prone to different forms of abuse from different people; they are underpaid; and as a result of inadequate academic qualifications, they may not be able to get a better job in the future. In order to have a better future, it was important for them to receive proper, income-generating skill training and access to formal education, which would focus on cultivating their inherent talents, and help them get off the streets. They also suggested that their parents should find employment, which would allow them to focus on their education. Furthermore, the boys emphasised that the government must ensure the enforcement of non-discrimination laws in the workplace. They despised it when people called them humiliating names such as: Chakka (Hermaphrodite), Hinjada (Hermaphrodite), Maal (Item/Thing), prostitute, or drama queen.

4. Reasons and motivations for children to work

The top reasons and motivations for their work expressed by girls and boys were similar, with the top reason to help their parents or family members. However, boys placed slightly more emphasis on the practicalities of working to meet their basic needs, while girls placed slightly more emphasis on family struggles and poverty affecting their family. Both girls and boys were

motivated to work to continue their education. Overall, boys placed slightly more emphasis on their desire to earn money, as compared with learning skills; whereas girls placed equal emphasis on these two aspects. Enjoyment of work was similarly emphasised by both girls and boys.



Children's contributions to families, and the importance of reciprocity among children and adults in families were often valued and explained by children in a positive way (see Boyden et al., 2016; Morrow, 1996, 2015; Ramirez Sanchez, 2007; Wihstutz, 2007). For example, members of a Children's Advisory Committee in Kosovo emphasised that children work "to help our families. They raised us, helped us and we should do the same". Similar sentiments were shared by girls and boys in consultations in other countries and regions. Some children work with or for their parents in order to spend time with them, and to maintain or improve harmonious family relationships; and some children emphasised their motivation to help their parents and caregivers so that their parents can be more productive, or so that their parents can rest. However, some children described their family obligations in a negative way. For example, a 10-year-old girl in India said "due to poverty, my parents are forcing me to work".

More than 500 children consulted emphasised that they were working due to poverty and family struggle. Overall, children demonstrated knowledgeable insights into struggles faced by their families and how this impacted upon them as children. Furthermore, girls and boys were actively involved in efforts to help alleviate family difficulties, while also trying to pursue and reach their own aspirations. For instance, in describing his motivations to work a 15-year-old boy in Zambia explained "My family is poor so I want to help in any way I can, so that I can remain in school and achieve my dream becoming a teacher". ●



Top reasons mentioned by girls⁸

To help parents or family members (585)

Poverty/family struggle (297)

To meet basic needs (280)

To continue education (190)

Enjoyment (118)

To learn skills (105)

Desire to earn money (103)



Top reasons mentioned by boys⁹

To help parents or family members (479)

To meet basic needs (310)

Poverty/family struggle (246)

To continue education (156)

Desire to earn money (105)

Enjoyment (84)

To learn skills (77)

⁸ The number in brackets is the number of times this reason was mentioned by girls during an individual interview question about the three top reasons or motivations for their work.

⁹ The number in brackets is the number of times this reason was mentioned by boys during an individual interview question about the three top reasons or motivations for their work.

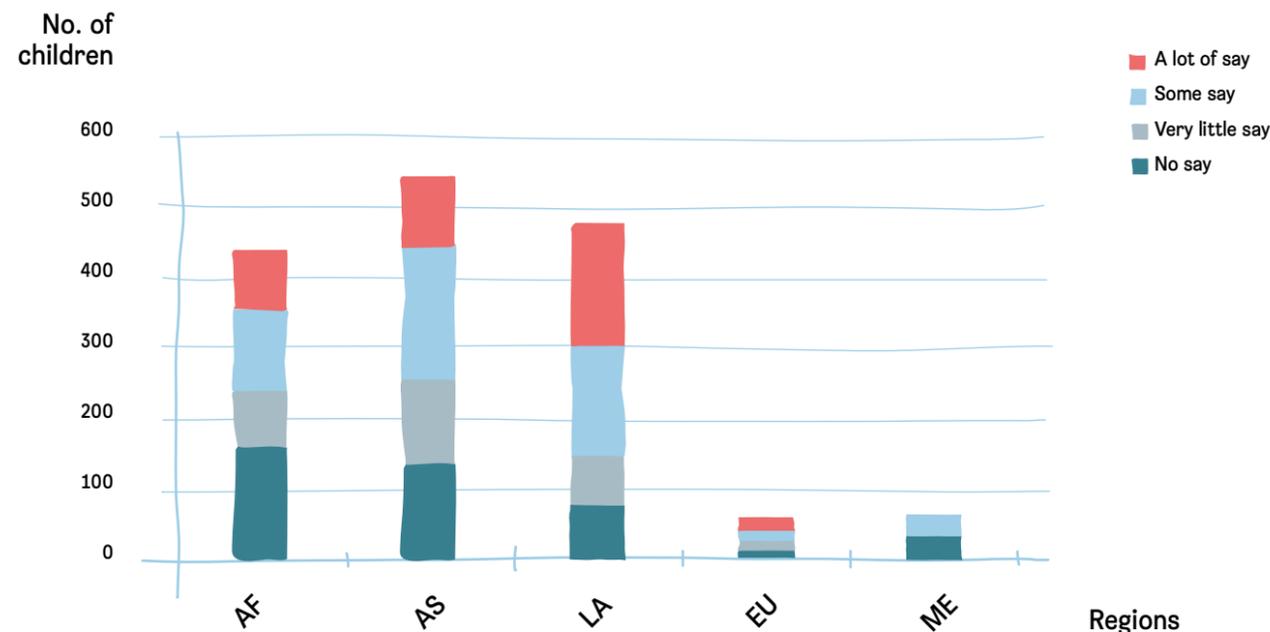


5. Gender differences in having a say

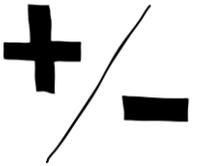
It is important to understand the degree to which girls and boys express their views and whether their views influence decisions about their work. Local constructions of childhoods and gender norms influence whether girls and boys express their views and influence decisions affecting them within their families and in wider settings. In many socio-cultural contexts, particularly in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, girls and boys are not expected to speak up in front of adults or to ask questions, rather they are expected to obey their parents and other elders (O'Kane, 2003a). One group of children who were consulted in rural Ethiopia said "all children's work has been influenced by our parents. They control what, why, when and how children work". However, even in contexts where children are not expected to have a say, girls and boys often find ways to navigate and influence social relationships, decisions and actions concerning them (see Boyden, 2009; O'Kane, 2003b; Morrow, 2015; Pankhurst, Crivello & Tiemelissan, 2015; Punch, 2003; Woodhead, 2004).

While recognising the limitation of the question, responses from individual questions about how much say children have in decisions about their work revealed that: 26.5% of children felt that they had no say, 18.5% of children have very little say, 31.5% have some say, and 23.5% of children have a lot of say¹⁰. Proportionately more children in Latin America felt that they have a say in decisions about their work compared with children from other regions, especially among organised working children who valued their work. Considering the prevalence of patriarchy in many regions and countries, we had expected boys to have more say in decision making than girls. However, there were similar results for girls and boys, except in Asia where girls have slightly less say than boys. As children get older they have slightly more say, adolescents aged 13-18-year-olds have slightly more say than children under the age of 12 years. ●

How much say children have in decisions about their work



6. Positive and negative aspects of work



The most common recurrent themes expressed both by boys and girls about what they liked about their work were similar among girls and boys groups, and across regions. They included¹¹: i) Good working conditions, which were especially characterised by respectful communication with their employers/ parents/ customers; ii) Being praised and appreciated by family members, employers and others; iii) Feeling proud and responsible; iv) Earning an income; v) Learning skills; vi) Helping and spending time with families; vii) Support, solidarity and protection from friends, parents, and adults; viii) Seeing and playing with friends while working; and ix) Working outside and appreciating nature.

Children who were engaged in paid work placed more emphasis on the advantages of earning money, than children who were involved in unpaid work. However, overall the findings indicate that children place a lot of importance on their immediate relationships and styles of communication with their parents/ caregivers, employers, and peers. Woodhead (2004) has described how the psychosocial impact of children's work is embedded in social relationships and practices, and it is mediated by cultural beliefs and values of parents, caregivers, employers and children themselves. Girls and boys are strongly affected by how others value and appreciate their work, and children's pride in their own achievements contributes to their self-esteem (see Aufseeser, Bourdillon, Carothers, & Lecoufle, 2017; Boyden, 2009; Liborio & Ungar, 2010; Morrow, 2015; Woodhead, 2004).



Working children during a Time to Talk! consultation, Tanzania

¹⁰ Based on a sample of 1,566 children (434 from Africa, 539 from Asia, 472 from Latin America, 58 from Europe, and 63 from Middle East) who answered questions about how much say they have in decisions about their work. More precise indicators as to whether children felt they had a lot of some, some say, very little say, or no say were not elaborated, thus the responses depend on the child's own interpretation.

¹¹ In order of the frequency mentioned.

Case example 4

Benefits of work:

1. When they work in a shop, they can leave early.
2. If they earn money, they are happy.
3. They sometimes get a gift from the shop owner as they work well.
4. At the time of their exams, if they are granted leave, it is good for them.
5. They can buy things based on their own choices.
6. If the owner arranges food and snacks it is a very good initiative for them to work harder.
7. If they have a good environment and pure water at the work place, they feel happy.

Challenges faced in work and the working environment:

1. They are being sexually abused on the road or at the work place.
2. They don't get equal and proper salary.
3. If they spoil anything at the time of work, the employer admonishes and beats them.
4. They have to work in a bad environment where there are hazards.
5. They cannot commute safely and securely on the road to work due to their disabilities.



Children's views on the most important benefits and challenges of children's work by adolescent girls working in shops in Dhaka, Bangladesh



The most recurrent themes for dislikes were very similar across every region. The themes were also similar for girls and boys, although girls placed more emphasis on the dangers of sexual abuse and harassment while working. The most common recurrent themes expressed by children when sharing what they dislike about their work were: i) Exposure to violence; ii) Risks and experiencing harm, injury and accidents; iii) Bad working conditions; iv) Frustrations relating to their work efforts and the way they are treated; v) Feeling tired; vi) Being negatively judged and discriminated by others due to their work; vii) Feeling sad and isolated; and viii) Negative impact on studies.



Children's dislikes primarily relate to violence, harm, mistreatment and judgements which affect individual children's physical, social, and emotional well-being (see Bourdillon, 2007; Crivello & Boyden, 2014; Liborio & Ungar, 2010; Morrow, 2015; Morrow & Vennam, 2012; Morrow et al., 2013; Woodhead, 2004). Adult-child power relationships contribute to environments where both boys and girls face increased risk of violence and harm in the workplace, as well as to scenarios where children may be requested to compromise their time for studies in order to work. Children from 89 consultations covering each region reflected on their struggles to balance their study, work, rest and play opportunities. It was particularly hard for children to balance their study and work responsibilities when they were combining unpaid and paid work on school days.

Different types of working conditions were identified that helped and hindered both girls and boys children in reaching their aspirations: ●

Working conditions that help children to fulfil their aspirations

Working conditions that hinder children from fulfilling their aspirations

Work that allows them to continue their studies – when their work helps to pay school costs and when light workloads do not hamper studies

Learning skills from work including household, agricultural, trade or business skills that will help them in current and future occupations.

Earning money that helps them meet their current and future needs

Work that hampers their education – when there is not enough time to study, when they are too tired to study, when they attend school irregularly or drop out

Manual work without skill development or work that they have not chosen or prefer to do

Violence and hardships experienced while working are harmful to their current and future well-being

7. Differing experiences of violence

During the Time to Talk! consultations girls described increased risks of sexual harassment and abuse. Concerns relating to sexual harassment were particularly emphasised by girls from Asia, Latin America and the Middle East who were working as agricultural workers, domestic workers, small-scale vendors, in textile or woodwork workshops, and as waste collectors. Girls in different types of work expressed fears of sexual abuse in the work place, and while travelling to or from work, including fears of being abused when collecting firewood or water. Girls disliked hearing sexual comments and teasing from male employers, co-workers and members of the general public. Adolescent girls working in shops in India described how they did not like it *“when the wrong people touch them in the wrong places”*. Syrian adolescent girls who were engaged in agricultural work in Jordan also described how their employers had inappropriate behaviour, touching them while showing them how to work. A 15-year-old boy from Indonesia who worked on the streets also observed how *“girls are vulnerable to sexual abuse”*. Adolescent girls who worked in massage parlours and as dancers in Nepal faced significant risks of sexual harassment. One 16-year-old Nepali girl who was a dancer described how the clients were abusive as *“they sit very closely with us, dancing with us, asking for our contact numbers, and they propose that we go with them for night stay”*.

Although sexual harassment and abuse was raised as a concern more frequently by girls, boys from India, Indonesia, and Peru also mentioned concerns about sexual abuse from their peers and from adults in the workplace. A boy who was working as a waste collector in Indonesia said *“I feel really ashamed when my friend asks me to open my pants and touches me in my private area”*. An adolescent boy working as a small-scale vendor in Peru also described his fears when female prostitutes and transgender approached him.



8. Being a girl as a potential risk factor



Children's Advisory Committee (CAC) members had interesting discussions about gender, and whether being a girl or boy was a risk or a protection factor. The range of scores given for “being a girl” was -5 to +3, and the average score was -2.7.¹² In the majority of CAC discussions in Asia and Europe, both male and female members described how girls face increased risks of harm from work, especially if they work outside of their home due to increased risks of sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation. CAC members in Indonesia described how girls were vulnerable to debt bondage, as their parents may arrange their daughter's marriage in order to pay off their debts. However, some female CAC members in India and Nepal described how they gained confidence and strength from working outside of their home, as they had improved communication and negotiation skills that helped them tackle everyday problems. CAC members from Peru, Thailand and members of two CACs in India said both girls and boys are vulnerable to a wide range of risks and need protection from adults, irrespective of their gender. CAC members in Kenya suggested that girls are protected if they live with and cared for by their family members; but risks to abuse increase if they lack parental care and protection.

Other key risk factors that increase the likelihood of negative outcomes of children's work included: the child is requested to do heavy or hazardous work; the child is forced to work; the child works late at night; the child works on the street; the child does not live with their parents; the child has long working hours; the child/ family is affected by conflict or disaster (especially if they are refugees or stateless); the child's parents/ caregivers have no stable job; the child's family is affected by poverty; the child works for someone outside of their family; and the child/ family migrates. Key protection factors included: the child regularly goes to school or studies; the child is a member of a working children's association; the child's views are heard in decisions about their work; the child is only asked to do light work; the child experiences love, care and guidance from their family; the parents have good employment opportunities in their own villages and towns; and the government investments in school infrastructure and other basic services. ●



Protection and risk factor analysis by another children's advisory committee in India

¹² CACs could score from -1 to -5 for a risk factor which -5 being the most significant risk, and they could score from +1 to +5 for a protection factor, with +5 being the most significant protection factor. They could score a factor 0 if they did not think it was a risk or protection factor.

9. Being a boy as a potential protective and risk factor

CAC members had very diverse views in relation to whether being a boy was protection or a risk factor, or a neutral factor. The range of scores given by CACs for being a boy was -5 to +4, and the average score was -0.1. CAC members from Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Nepal, and from 1 CAC in India felt that being a boy was a protection factor as boys have freedom to play, to move around inside and outside of the home to earn money, and they can work independently without the control and harassment of employers. Some boys in Kenya and Kosovo perceived work as an opportunity to show

their strength, and to be recognised as men who have increased decision-making power. CAC members from Peru, Thailand and 2 CACs in India felt that being a child irrespectively of whether they are a boy or a girl makes them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse if they are sent to work. Boys, as well as girls are vulnerable to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse in the workplace. Furthermore, due to gender stereotypes and ideas about masculinity there is often more expectation on boys to carry heavy things and to undertake hazardous jobs. Thus, a number of CAC members in India and Kenya, felt that boys were also very vulnerable to negative outcomes of work, especially if are expected to do heavy work, and if they are requested to work instead of going to school. ●



10. Particular female inconveniences

Girls from India, Indonesia, and Thailand described inconvenience and discomforts that they faced when they had their menstruation. A lack of sanitation facilities in the work place, and pain experienced during the period made it more difficult for them to work. Adolescent girls who were involved in stone-mining work said *“during menstruation there is no possibility to take leave and the work in the hot weather aggravated the pain”*. Girls from another rural location of India also described increased risks of bear attacks during their menstruation. ●



Working girls from India discussing particular female experiences

Policy and practice implications of the gender-related findings

The Time to Talk! results illustrate the interdependency and interrelatedness of human rights that require multi-sectoral strategies in order to effectively realise children's rights. The consultation findings highlight how crucial it is to understand and approach working children as social and economic actors in their wider context. The type and amount of work taken on by children in different settings is influenced by children's gender, age, sibling order, care status, sexual orientation, disability, family income, parents' value for education vis-à-vis children's work, rural/urban settings, seasons, access to quality education, conflict, migration, citizenship, and other factors. The main reason for children's work is to help their families. While some girls and boys emphasised that they were compelled to work due to poverty, family struggles or adult pressure, other children were more positive about their motivations to work and valued their work. They helped their parents as integral family members, they earned money to continue their studies and meet other needs, and they learnt new skills. It is of importance to see children's work on a broader continuum (see Bourdillon et al., 2011; White, 1996).

A socio-ecological framework can be applied as a practical tool to inform assessment, planning, and monitoring that is in the best interests of the child (see Time to Talk!, 2018). Approaching children in the wider context, adopting gender sensitive approaches to listen to and take into account the views of girls, boys, mothers, fathers and other caregivers is fundamentally important to efforts to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and practices to enhance children's development, well-being and protection. Moreover to address the holistic needs of children and families increased co-ordinated multi-sectoral efforts are needed to reduce poverty, to promote gender equality, good governance, child sensitive social protection, and to strengthen of education, health and protection systems. ●

Governments, international agencies, civil society organisations, donors, and other key actors should:

Ensure co-ordinated, child-focused, gender sensitive, policy and practice developments that are locally relevant, flexible and responsive to the needs, rights, and aspirations of children and families in their contexts.

Refine, implement, monitor and enforce laws, policies and programmes considering gender differences to protect children from hazardous, harmful, and/or forced work. Support safe and dignified work taking into account the views of working boys and girls and their best interests.

Support ongoing gender sensitive research, and participatory monitoring and evaluation to inform and assess the impact of gender on existing child labour laws, policies and programmes.

Strengthen realisation of children's rights to information, expression, participation and association, ensuring genuine opportunities for decision-makers to listen to and take into account the views of working girls and boys in policy and practice developments concerning them.

Strengthen the development of education systems that provide inclusive, free, safe, relevant, quality education to all children irrespective of gender, disability, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, citizenship etc., in remote, rural, urban and camp localities.

Increase investments in gender and disability sensitive vocational skill training and on the job mentoring schemes for adolescents, while also promoting and supporting non-discriminatory access to formal education.

Strengthen child protection systems to prevent and protect children from violence, including different forms of gender based violence in families, work places, schools, streets, communities, and wider society.

Increase efforts to address discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation, and to transform harmful social norms which contribute to gender discrimination, inequality and acceptance of violence or exploitation experienced by children due to gender stereotypes and norms relating to masculinity and femininity.

Increase humanitarian support for children and families affected by conflict, disaster or other shocks, ensuring sufficient gender and child-sensitive support to families to meet their basic needs; and increase government investments in emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction to strengthen families' resilience and to reduce vulnerability.

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