



**Issue 3: Quarterly Bulletin on Business & Children
December 2012**

Welcome to the third issue of the *Quarterly Bulletin on Business & Children*, produced by Business & Human Rights Resource Centre.

The purpose of this e-bulletin is to help keep everyone working in this field informed about recent key developments and forthcoming initiatives. Please encourage others to consider signing up. And if you would like to contribute to future issues, let us know.

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1. Announcements: Forthcoming activities and recent projects

i. United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child

Update on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's forthcoming General Comment on State Obligations regarding the Impact of Business on Child Rights

The [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child](#) ('the Committee') is at an advanced stage of drafting its "General Comment on **State Obligations regarding the Impact of Business on Child Rights**". The General Comment will be a pronouncement of the Committee's interpretation of the framework required by States parties for implementation of the Convention as a whole with regard to the business sector. It will include guidance to States on the measures of implementation they are required to take to: prevent and remedy violations of child rights by business actors; ensure business enterprises carry out their responsibilities in the realisation of the rights of the child; and encourage business to contribute positively to the realisation of these rights.

The Committee made public calls for submissions on an annotated outline of the General Comment in March 2012 and on a subsequent first draft in June 2012. The Committee also conducted multi-stakeholder consultations in Argentina, India and Kenya in March, April and August of 2012 respectively. The Committee's General Comment Working Group participated in an International Symposium on Child Rights and the Business Sector in Sion, Switzerland, in October 2012. With the support of Save the Children International, consultations on the first draft of the General Comment were also held with children in Argentina, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Kenya, Paraguay, Sudan and Tanzania. In addition, the Committee held a webinar with business hosted by UNICEF and has requested expert advice from key stakeholders at different points of the process.

The Committee expects to adopt the General Comment during its forthcoming Session in February 2013 along with a plan for implementation and follow-up. This will be the first time a UN human rights treaty body has developed a comprehensive set of standards for States to follow in the context of the business sector.

Further information on the Committee's General Comment is available at the Committee's website at: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/callsubmissionsCRC_BusinessSector.htm

→ *Contributed by the Secretariat for the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.*

ii. UNICEF

A Change of Business Behaviour – Advancing Children's Rights in Business

The [Children's Rights and Business Principles](#) (The Principles) were developed through a process led by UNICEF, Save the Children and the UN Global Compact. In line with Principle 1, implementation at the individual business level means following a continuous process of: policy commitment; assessing impacts; integration and action; tracking performance and reporting; and remediation. Tools for each stage form a repertoire from which companies and governments can select from based on their individual needs. The first corporate tool developed by UNICEF was the workbook "[Children are Everyone's Business](#)", which guides business integration and action on The Principles.

The [Children's Rights Checklist](#), the [Reporting Guidance](#) and the External Assessment implementation tools developed by UNICEF will be released for piloting by selected companies from 1 December 2012 to 31 March 2013, and for public access in April 2013. The pilot period will involve current and potential UNICEF partners providing direct feedback through an online collaboration platform, webinars and workshops.

More information on The Principles is available at <http://www.unicef.org/csr/>

Companies interested in providing feedback on or piloting one of the available tools, please contact csr@unicef.org.

→ *Contributed by Bo Viktor Nylund, Senior Advisor, Corporate Social Responsibility, Private Fundraising and Partnerships Division, UNICEF, [bvnylund \(at\) unicef.org](mailto:bvnylund@unicef.org)*

iii. UN Global Compact

Following the international release of the Children’s Rights and Business Principles in March 2012, the series of national releases continues. Recently, local networks and offices of the three sponsoring partners – UN Global Compact, UNICEF and Save the Children – have hosted events in Kenya and Colombia. Upcoming events will take place in Belgium on 3 December, and in the Netherlands on 10 December.

Additionally, the first global stocktaking event since the Principles were released will be held in Stockholm in March 2013, in collaboration with the World Child and Youth Forum. The event will provide an opportunity to review progress in business action, share best practices, and provide inspiration and feedback.

The sponsoring partners will launch the official Children’s Rights and Business Principles website in early 2013.

→ *Contributed by Anita Househam, Policy & Legal Adviser, UN Global Compact, [househam \(at\) un.org](mailto:househam@un.org)*

iv. Save the Children UK

Policy brief: “Shared Value. How can large businesses contribute to the post-2015 agenda?”

[Save the Children UK](#) has issued [a policy brief](#) on how the private sector can contribute to the post-2015 development agenda. Building on Michael Porter’s proposition that wealth creation can and should support social good rather than undermine it, Save the Children recommends that the debate on the role of business in development moves beyond its traditional focus on individual projects towards consideration of the impacts of core business practice.

The paper then sets out three significant steps to maximise businesses’ impact on development:

- The introduction of measures to ensure all firms apply a “do no harm” approach to their core business;
- The shaping of core business strategies to contribute to development goals;
- Companies advocating for change at the national and global level.

→ *Contributed by Francis West, Save the Children, [f.west \(at\) savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:f.west@savethechildren.org.uk)*

v. Save the Children Sweden

Consultations with young people on the draft General Comment

In relation to the General Comment on Child Rights and the Business Sector, being drafted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Save the Children has consulted over 400 young people ages 7–17 on their views and recommendations. The result is presented in the report “[Doing good work for us children](#)”. Key recommendations include:

- Children ask for active engagement and participation with the business sector beyond “being heard”. In parts of the world it is more about citizenship rights than being heard or seen or influencing a policy.
- Children also, as so many times before, highlighted issues of discrimination and in particular disability rights. Disability was especially discussed in the African consultations.
- One third notation is the governments’ responsibilities to address and combat environmental pollution and corruption, especially in relation to business activities.

Action building on Children’s Rights and Business Principles

Based on the Children’s Rights and Business Principles developed by Save the Children, UNICEF and UN Global Compact, [Save the Children Sweden](#) is building a Child Rights and Business Program supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

By engaging businesses as an actor in society, and by developing the capacity to advise and be a dialogue partner, children’s lives around the world can be improved enormously. Integrating children’s rights into already existing global reporting mechanisms and standards related to corporate responsibility; targeting key private actors such as investors, industry leaders and various business associations; encouraging individual companies to start integrating the principles; and building the capacity within Save the Children to provide professional support to businesses are key elements in the project.

A team to work with this has been developed, and there is a [Centre for Child Rights and CSR](#) in China. Planned activities include developing advocacy tools, information and training materials, concrete tools for businesses, and trainings for civil society partners.

→ *Contributed by Lina Höök, Communication Manager – Corporate Partnerships, Save the Children Sweden, [lina.hook \(at\) rb.se](mailto:lina.hook@rb.se)*

vi. ILO-IPEC

Some 60% of child labour is in agriculture and in order to meet the international goal of elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016, faster progress in tackling child labour in the sector is critical. Two important conferences on child labour in agriculture have helped mobilize greater support internationally and in Malawi.

The outcome documents of the [Global Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture](#) and the [Malawi National Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture](#) reflect a tripartite consensus that child labour cannot be addressed in isolation and that decent work gaps that are particularly prevalent in agriculture must be bridged in order to secure sustained progress against child labour. They call on governments to increase expenditure on education and labour law enforcement and align laws with core ILO labour standards; on industry to promote better wages and prices for workers and farmers in agricultural value chains; on trade unions to strengthen their organisations in the agricultural sector and in policy dialogue; and on the development community to increase support for the efforts of governments, employers, trade unions and civil society organisations. They also recognize the importance of integrated approaches to tackling child labour and of community-based child labour monitoring systems.

The delegates of the conferences explored how to better support farmers especially small scale farmers, agriculture workers, and their families, so that they have decent livelihoods and can send their children to school. They shared ideas to encourage youth, who are of the legal age in their country, to work on farms and plantations, under safe and healthy conditions; and to also ensure that agriculture becomes a sector in which youth want to work and not be seen as dirty and dangerous.

→ *Contributed by Benjamin Smith, ILO-IPEC, [smithb \(at\) ilo.org](mailto:smithb@ilo.org)*

vii. ECPAT International

ECPAT International releases new journal: “Corporate Social Responsibility – Strengthening Accountability in the Fight Against Sexual Exploitation of Children”

This latest journal takes a specific look at the issue of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The first article of this journal captures some of the key debates surrounding CSR and the links to commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC): should it be voluntary or obligatory and to what extent can corporations be actually held accountable through CSR for child protection issues? The journal can be accessed [here](#).

In Azerbaijan, ECPAT International organised workshops, led sessions and made interventions in a [series of workshops focusing on child protection online](#) at the Internet Governance Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan on 6-9 November 2012. Private sector participants included people from Facebook, GSMA (a mobile communications association) and Microsoft.

→ *Contributed by Miroslav Kalniev, ECPAT International, [miroslavk \(at\) ecpat.net](mailto:miroslavk@ecpat.net)*

viii. The Code

World’s Leading Tourism Companies together with GIZ and The Code Launch a Joint Project to Combat Child Sex Tourism

Project partners: TUI Travel, Accor group, Kuoni Group and ITB aim to ensure and inspire action on the issue, through testing and optimization of the tools put in place in Thailand, as a pilot country. The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism (The Code), as a multi-stakeholder organization, has been created as a practical tool for the tourism industry to protect children. To ensure that companies signing The Code implement the criteria they commit to as well as report on their work, a line of cloud-based, online services is being developed. The services will include an E-learning system and a new online reporting system. “It is crucial that the industry gets involved in testing, strengthening and adapting the new tools, which is why we are supporting this new private project,” says Matthias Leisinger, Head of Corporate Responsibility at Kuoni.

→ *Contributed by Andreas Astrup, General Manager of The Code, [andreas.astrup \(at\) thecode.org](mailto:andreas.astrup@thecode.org)*

ix. Bank Information Center

Incorporating a Focus on Children’s Rights in the World Bank’s Safeguard Policies

The World Bank is currently reviewing the environmental and social safeguards that apply to its investment lending. These safeguards are designed to mitigate any harm resulting from World Bank development projects but the current policies do not directly address the needs of children.

The [Child Rights and World Bank Safeguards Campaign](#), part of a broader global campaign of civil society organizations from the South and North to hold the Bank accountable to stronger safeguards, aims to change this by calling for the inclusion of provisions to protect the rights of the child in the revised World Bank safeguards. The campaign argues that safeguards should include, at minimum, a requirement that social environmental impact assessments specifically assess the impact of projects on children, prohibitions on the use of child labour in World Bank funded projects, and a guarantee that access to education is not interrupted due to resettlement resulting from Bank projects.

→ *Contributed by Elana Berger, Child Rights Program Associate, [Bank Information Center](#), [eberger \(at\) bicusa.org](mailto:eberger@bicusa.org)*

x. Ethical Trading Initiative

Child labour briefing

The [Ethical Trading Initiative](#) (ETI) is an alliance of companies, trade unions and NGOs, working together to improve the lives of workers around the world. The organisation's Base Code of labour practice enshrines core international workers' rights principles, including that child labour shall not be used.

Retailers and buying companies face huge challenges in tackling child labour. ETI has produced a child labour briefing, designed to support companies, and promote due diligence in global supply chains. The briefing outlines responsibilities, gives guidance on preventative measures and remediation, and signposts to other helpful resources.

ETI's child labour briefing can be accessed [here](#).

→ Contributed by Esme Gibbins, Ethical Trading Initiative, [esme.gibbins \(at\) eti.org.uk](mailto:esme.gibbins@eti.org.uk)

xi. International Institute for the Rights of the Child

Child Rights and the Business Sector: Urging States and Private Companies to meet their obligations

On 14-17 October 2012, the [International Institute for the Rights of the Child](#), in collaboration with other organizations, hosted an [international seminar on child rights and the business sector](#).

The focus of this international seminar was to raise awareness and discuss ways and means to enhance the protection of the rights of the child in a business environment. It primarily addressed the obligation of the States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to provide a protective framework, and remedy possible violations committed through the activities of companies from the perspective of the rights of the child.

The seminar hosted well-known international specialists and closed with a high level debate involving professionals from a variety of backgrounds. In addition to plenary presentations, participants also participated in workshops to discuss concrete issues, cases and examples.

The proceedings of the seminar will be published in spring 2013.

Click [here](#) for more information & conference programme.

→ Contributed by Jean Zermatten, International Institute for the Rights of the Child, [ide \(at\) childsrightrights.org](mailto:ide@childsrightrights.org)

xii. International Institute for Child Rights and Development

IICRD and Royal Roads University new Applied Bachelors in Social Science (Canada)

The [International Institute for Child Rights and Development](#) (IICRD) in partnership with Royal Roads University (Victoria, Canada) are planning a postsecondary specialization entitled *Child and Youth Protection in Development (CYPID)* as part of the third and fourth year of the upcoming Bachelors in Interdisciplinary Studies (BAIS) degree program. It will be offered as an integrated distance and residential program focusing on systems strengthening for the most vulnerable children and youth and their communities. It will link to IICRD's global child and youth protection programming and highlight opportunities and challenges of private sector partnerships. The program builds on IICRD's multi-sector work in the context of information and communication

technologies (ICT's), extractive energy, and youth-led social innovation. It will combine real life, practice-based experience with on-sight mentoring and application of theory such as the forthcoming General Comment on Business and Children's Rights and the Children's Rights and Business Principles.

→ Contributed by International Institute for Child Rights and Development. Contact [iicrd \(at\) uvic.ca](mailto:iicrd@uvic.ca) for information.

xiii. Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

The Resource Centre will continue to add new stories each week to its "[Business & Children Portal](#)." The aim is to highlight allegations of abuses, positive initiatives by business, and guidance material, in keeping with the broader work of the Resource Centre.

We welcome suggested additions from all regions and in any language.

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2. Other news and developments

Below are some recent news stories and developments that the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre has highlighted. For more, see the Resource Centre's [full archive of news](#) on business and children.

Global

- In September, the US Department of Labor released an [updated list](#) of products produced with child labour or forced labour. The list now includes 134 goods. Four new goods (baked goods, beef, fish, and thread/yarn) and three new countries (South Sudan, Suriname and Vietnam) were added to the list in 2012, and none were removed. Child labour continues to be prevalent in the agriculture, manufacturing, and mining sectors. Individual country reports on progress towards combatting child labour can be accessed [here](#).
- The UN Working Group business & human rights [highlighted the need](#) to address the human rights impact of companies on vulnerable groups - including children - due to their "*heightened risk of vulnerability, discrimination and marginalization*."
- Germany-based [Grünenthal Group apologised](#) for consequences of the morning sickness drug Thalidomide that led to birth defects in 1950s and 60s. The group said it regrets not reaching out to victims for more than 50 years. The apology was dismissed by a UK-based organization representing victims, which calls for financial compensation for people affected by the drug.
- UK insurance company Aviva says its [efforts to help street children](#) are closely linked to the company's "culture of recognition." Aviva established a five-year global programme for street children in 2009. It involves 23 charity partnerships and has reached 400,000 children through its access to education programmes. Recently the company provided support for [a report on street children](#) by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and advocated for the Children's Rights and Business Principles to include an explicit reference to street children.
- A new guide [emphasizes the importance of partnerships](#) involving the private sector in order to meet UN Millennium Development Goals on women's and children's health. The guide is entitled: "[Private Enterprise for Public Health: Opportunities for Business to Improve Women's and Children's Health](#)".

- [A documentary alleged](#) US security firms hire former child soldiers from Uganda to work in Iraq and Afghanistan. In an interview, a former child soldier says, *"The people here are desperate for a job in Iraq because they see it as an opportunity to earn an extra few dollars. In the end it is like modern-day slavery."*
- German advocacy group Active Against Child Labour launched an [internet plug-in](#) that blocks out clothing brands suspected of using child labour on shopping websites.
- [Timberland was praised for its programmes](#) providing a better quality of life for factory workers' children. Initiatives include partnering with a local NGO to provide companionship & education programmes for children living far from their migrant worker parents in China, providing day care and improving access to water in India, and building a school in the Dominican Republic.
- Unilever and Save the Children launched a [three-year partnership to combat mortality among children and mothers](#) by improving access to healthcare and life-saving medicines. It focuses on the priority countries of China, Bangladesh, Kenya and Nigeria.

Africa

- **Kenya:** The union of Sugarcane Planters & Allied Workers announced a plan to [eliminate child labour with a focus on the agricultural sector](#), which is where more than 70% of hazardous child labour in Kenya takes place.
- **So. Africa:** [Sewage pollution in Johannesburg](#) has been endangering children's health for the past decade. Children suffer from waterborne illnesses, diarrhea, vomiting, etc., and many have been hospitalized as a result. (Linked article includes comments by spokesperson from supplier Johannesburg Water).
- **West Africa:** A US civil society campaign criticised Whole Foods and its supplier, United Natural Foods, for [failing to sign an appeal asking Hershey's to fully commit to using ethically sourced cocoa](#). Responses from all three companies, obtained by Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, are [here](#). In a move that surprised critics, Hershey's has since committed to sourcing 100% certified cocoa by 2020. Nevertheless, Hershey's continues to face criticism and has been [sued by an investor](#) alleging it does not provide adequate information about child labour in its supply chain. The International Cocoa Initiative's External Stakeholders Meeting on 1 November [reaffirmed the industry's commitment to work with government and civil society to tackle child labour in the cocoa sector](#). Recently, companies such as [Nestlé](#) and [Cadbury](#) have been applauded for their work to combat the issue.

Americas

- **Argentina:** [A court convicted](#) a farmer and pilot for spraying pesticides causing illness, birth defects and deaths particularly among mothers and children. The decision marked the first time fumigation has been condemned by the country's courts. (Also [available in Spanish](#)).
- **Bolivia:** The Bolivian Union of Child and Adolescent Workers (Unatsbo), [represents thousands of workers under the age of 18](#). Rodrigo Medrano Calle, aged 14, says, *"I lived on the street for a time and was going in the wrong direction, but then I found the movement, and it gave me a reason to be. I'm going to fight for my compañeros' rights, not just my own."*

- **Colombia:** 20 businesses [sign up to](#) “The Code”, an initiative against sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism that trains employees to identify and report child prostitution.
- **Peru:** The country's first children's [union was launched](#) to monitor and support underage workers. The union provides food and education to children and already has 2500 members. However, the numbers of child workers in Peru is estimated to be over 3 million. (Video includes interviews with children, parents, and union staff).
- **USA:** GlaxoSmithKline settled criminal charges that it [illegally marketed anti-depressants encouraging prescriptions to children](#) despite warnings the drugs could make teens suicidal
- company to pay \$3 billion.
- **USA:** The programme granting temporary relief from deportation for unauthorised immigrants [overlooks immigrant children working in agriculture](#), said Human Rights Watch. Certain schooling and residence requirements for the programme are difficult to fulfill for children working in agriculture who move and change schools frequently. A previous report by Human Rights Watch also cites a particularly [high risk of sexual violence and harassment](#) for immigrant women and girls working on farms.

Asia & Pacific

- **Bangladesh:** [H&M extended its collaboration with UNICEF](#) to include Bangladesh, where it will promote access to education and children's health.
- **China:** Following a [report by China Labor Watch](#) raising concerns about child labour at HEG Electronics, a Samsung supplier, Samsung announced plans to conduct an audit of the factory. The audit did not find any underage children at the factory, but uncovered other illegal practices and emphasised that if HEG fails to meet Samsung's zero tolerance policy on child labour, its contract will be immediately severed. (Sequence of events and responses from companies can be found [here](#))
- **China:** Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng [called on Apple](#) to criticise China for its one-child policy. Chen says that given Apple's strong presence in China, a public stance by the company could help stop forced abortions and other coercive population control measures.
- **China:** Nearly 200 children living near Guangdong Yudean power plant were found to have [excessive lead levels in their blood](#). The plant suspended operations in June. Response from the company, obtained by Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, available in [English](#) and [Chinese](#).
- **India:** A [study](#) based on a survey of 300 women revealed that working mothers in Bangalore garment factories are [unable to access adequate childcare](#) due to lack of facilities or information.
- **India:** The National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights requested that [BT cotton seed firms incorporate an anti child labour clause](#) in contracts with farmers due to the hazardous nature of the work and the prevalence of child labour in the sector.
- **India:** A briefing paper provided updates to previous reports examining the [ongoing exploitation of child workers and Dalit children in Tamil Nadu](#). The paper cites examples of when pressure by international clothing brands helped improve labour conditions, but notes that most brands have not taken adequate action. Responses obtained by Business & Human Rights Resource Centre from [Tesco](#), [Quicksilver](#), [Eastman](#), [Inditex](#), [Marks & Spencer](#), [Mothercare](#), and [Diesel](#). Next and Ralph Lauren did not respond.

- **India:** IKEA Foundation and UNICEF celebrated [10 years of their partnership aimed at promoting child rights](#) focusing on states active in the carpet and cotton industry. (Also available in French).
- **Philippines:** A reporting and photojournalism project supported by Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting highlighted the [increase in child labour in mining](#) as families rush to *"exploit the worldwide craze for gold"*.
- **Thailand:** Tourism firms Accor, ITB, Kuoni and TUI joined with the German Agency for International Cooperation and "The Code" to launch a [pilot project testing tools to help protect children from sex tourism](#).

Europe & Central Asia

- **Afghanistan:** UNICEF estimated [30 percent of primary school age children in Afghanistan work](#), jeopardizing their education. Experts attribute an increase in sexual abuse of children partly to a [lack of protection of child workers](#). Ariana Rugs, a carpet company owned by a pair of Afghan siblings, demonstrated the role companies can play in helping to improve the situation of child workers by becoming the [first importer of Afghan rugs to be certified by GoodWeave as free from child labour](#).
- **UK:** Celebrity chef Jamie Oliver [criticised companies for using athletes to advertise junk food to children](#), saying it leads to poor health and obesity.
- **Uzbekistan:** Child labour continues to plague Uzbekistan's cotton production. In an effort to tackle the issue, [over 100 global apparel brands have pledged to boycott Uzbek cotton and textiles](#). Companies have also been pressured to rid their supply chain of child labour through [7 complaints filed to OECD National Contact Points between 2010 and 2011](#). Out of the 7 companies implicated in the complaints, 6 admitted to sourcing from Uzbekistan and committed to taking steps to improve child labourers' situation in the country. In the last case, the French National Contact point said that [Devcot has not violated the OECD Guidelines](#) as it has not supplied cotton from Uzbekistan in recent years. Devcot has committed not to do so as long as child and forced labour is in place.

Middle East & North Africa

- **Egypt:** According to government estimates approximately 10% of children in Egypt work, often in hazardous conditions. Child rights activists are concerned that the situation may be aggravated as [drafts of a new Constitution do not include adequate protection against child labour](#).
- **Jordan:** At the Eleventh International Conference of national human rights institutions in Amman in November, the ICC Working Group on Business and Human Rights organised a side event on Business, Women's and Children's Rights. The background note for the side event is available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).
- **Jordan:** "Illegal and immoral practices" by laboratories and pharmaceutical companies [testing drugs on people brought up in care centres for children born out of wedlock](#) were uncovered. Drug-testing volunteer says the *"impact on health could appear in months or years to come, when it is too late to claim for compensation or even seek treatment."*
- **Tunisia:** Official statistics estimate [more than 7000 minors are engaged in child labour](#) working in dangerous jobs that threaten their health and future.
- **Yemen:** [Child labour has increased](#) due to poverty and lack of legal protections. According to the manager of the Child Labour Combat division at the Ministry of Social

Affairs and Labour, families are often aware of the hazards child labourers face, but are burdened by their own nominal earning power. The government is [preparing amendments related to children's rights](#) to align legislation with international agreements and conventions.