

CHILD LABOUR ANALYSIS IN ETHIOPIA



UNICEF Ethiopia, CSA and C4ED
2020



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ABBREVIATIONS

AWP	Annual Work Plan
BOLSA	Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs
BoWCY	Bureau of Women, Children and Youth
C4ED	Center for Evaluation and Development
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EFY	Ethiopian Fiscal Year
ESSSWA	Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists
FGD	focus group discussion
GOE	Government of Ethiopia
HESPI	The Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRB	Institutional Review Board
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
KII	key informant interview
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoST	Ministry of Science and Technology
MoWCY	Ministry of Women, Children and Youth
NCLS	Ethiopia National Child Labour Survey
NEET	not employed, in education or training
NGO	non-governmental organisation
PDCE	Planning and Development Commission of Ethiopia
PSI	Policy Studies Institute
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
SNA	System of National Accounts
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labour

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2015 Ethiopia National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) is the most recent survey on child labour in Ethiopia providing detailed information on the extent and characteristics of child labour. However, due to its focus on children living in households—with adults who are legally responsible for them—NCLS omits vulnerable hard-to-reach children not living in traditional households.

The aim of this report is threefold. First, we use data from the 2015 NCLS and the 2013 Labour Force Survey (LFS) to deepen knowledge about the causes and consequences of child labour as well as the labour market for youth. Second, through qualitative interviews and analysis, we seek to enhance knowledge about hard-to-reach children working in urban areas. We want to know why they work, what risks and hazards they face, what makes them vulnerable, what their coping strategies are and what the possible solutions are according to stakeholders. Lastly, the report provides a mapping of national policies and programmes related to child labour and youth employment.

Quantitative approach

Using data from the 2015 NCLS, the quantitative component of the report further analyses the causes and consequences of child labour.

The main findings from the quantitative analysis suggest that both schooling and employment increase until children are 11 years old, with 79.9% of children enrolled in school and 59.5% working at age 11. Thereafter, employment continues to increase while school enrolment drops. The school life expectancy is lower for children engaged in child labour, suggesting that child labour is clearly linked to less schooling. This is further reflected in the age-grade distortion, which is more severe for child labourers. The education of the household head also matters, with higher education being associated with lower engagement in child labour and higher school attendance. Most parents believe that there is value in education. Among working children, more than 70% of parents think it is best for their children to attend school. However, only 70% of the children whose parents believe it is best for them to attend school actually attend school.

The autonomy of children increases with age and older children are more likely to decide whether they will work. Nonetheless, even for older children this decision is taken by the family in almost 73% of child labour instances. The household's decision for a child to work is seldom associated with a lack of access to or the affordability of education, with only 3.5% of respondents linking these issues with the decision to let a child work. Where women are the main decision maker, we find that the child labour rate is lowest, suggesting that women's empowerment has a role to play in reducing the prevalence of child labour. The level of child labour is lowest when the father is deceased but the mother is alive (40.7%) as compared to when both parents are alive (42.8%), both parents deceased (41.7%) and mother is deceased but the father is alive (44.4%).

Child labour decreases steadily with the wealth index. The relationship to household expenditure is less pronounced, with only those households in the highest expenditure quintile having lower prevalence of child labour. In contrast, households with more land are more likely to have their children engaged in child labour.

On average, for all ages, boys spend more time working while girls allocate more time to household chores. This gap between boys and girls increases as children get older. At every age, the gap for work is larger than for household chores, which means that boys spend more time in total on productive tasks encompassing economic activity and chores.

There is a decline in child labour around the age of 14. This is solely due to the definition of child labour and is not explained by children having safer jobs once they can legally access the labour market. Instead, exposure to hazards in the workplace seems to increase with age. Children in the domestic work industry are often viewed as particularly vulnerable to hazardous work with 0.5% of working children reported to be engaged in this industry. These workers are especially likely to be underreported in a household survey, however.

Data from the 2015 NCLS and 2013 LFS is used to analyse the youth labour market in Ethiopia for the age groups 15–17 years and 15–24 years, respectively. The main results from this analysis show that youth in these age brackets tend to combine school and work (47%) rather than to only work (20%) or only attend school (17%). The vulnerable population of NEETs (not in employment, education or training) is larger among females than males (11% and 3%, respectively). This difference is to some extent explained by higher involvement in household chores. The percentages further vary between districts with the highest rates of NEETs in Somali (13.5%) and lowest in Amhara and Benshangul (both 5%).

Labour underutilisation is more prevalent in urban (38.7%) than rural areas (25.2%) and for females (32.5%) compared to males (22.8%). Youth workers in Ethiopia in the NCLS data are mostly employed in low skilled jobs with 85.2% engaged in jobs requiring skill level 2 and 14.7% skill level 1 (following the ILO's ISCO-08 categories). The majority of youth aged 15-17 are employed as contributing family workers (90%), with the percentage higher for males and in rural areas. Overall, agriculture is the main sector of youth employment (81%), although the service sector dominates in urban areas (63%).

The most common level of education for youth is primary education, where 57% did not continue education past primary school. To have no education at all is more common for females and in rural areas (both 41%). There is a positive correlation between education and youth earnings. Thus, while youth with higher education earn more and have better jobs, they are still mostly engaged in low skilled jobs. With low returns to education, it is perhaps not surprising that children are sent to work at a young age.

Qualitative approach

The qualitative component focused on hard-to-reach children who are either not included or underrepresented in household surveys (that is, those less likely to live in formal dwellings or be reported as part of a household). Data collection was carried out by four local researchers hired and trained by C4ED. They conducted in-depth interviews with 25 hard-to-reach children engaged in child labour in the cities of Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Adama and Mekele. Researchers conducted 39 participant observations with 44 children in the street and/or their working locations to also collect contextual information about the children's activities, social and working dynamics and environment, daily routines, and shelter conditions. The research team further conducted key informant interviews with 31 relevant stakeholders at the federal, regional and local level. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed into written format. The collected data was analysed using MAXQDA software.

Our analysis identifies poverty as the underlying push factor accounting for the phenomenon of child labour, from which other push and pull factors are derived. The effects of poverty are further worsened by factors such as parental absence or death, parents' inability to work due to health issues, and the number of siblings. All these factors also make children more likely to work. Other factors include costs of and barriers to education and family disputes or abusive situations in the home causing children to run away.

For many children in rural areas, the city represents an attractive destination and is one of the reasons they decide to move from their homes and seek employment in urban areas. The influence of peers returning from the cities is another contributing factor together with

aspirations of self-improvement. However, when arriving in the cities, children often face a different situation than expected and are forced to take on exploitative jobs in order to survive. In the case of children who are sent to work and live with their employers, such as domestic workers or weavers, the promise of being enrolled in school was a major pull factor, although this promise was not always fulfilled.

Children in child labour encounter a variety of perils, such as low and unstable incomes, long working hours and verbal, physical and sexual abuse that may lead to long-term physical and psychological effects. Most children in the study had migrated from rural areas or small towns to the city. This makes them especially vulnerable to exploitation, as they commonly have more limited support networks and less information about how to find assistance, where to report abuse and their rights. We also found that different occupations dominate the employment of boys and girls, which makes them subject to distinct job-related hazards and risks.

Children use a number of strategies to cope with the often unbearable situations in which they find themselves. These include providing mutual support to each other, relying on supportive adults, begging, creating symbiotic relationships with businesses, performing self-care practices, playing, changing jobs frequently and diversifying their sources of income. A more harmful coping strategy is the use of drugs to cope with cold, hunger and distress, although few children interviewed reported drug use.

The interviewed stakeholders suggested several possible solutions to decrease the number of children involved in child labour and improve their living and working conditions. Among these were supporting families to prevent child labour, raising awareness and changing attitudes towards children engaged in child labour, stricter law enforcement and ensuring access to education. Stakeholders also emphasised the need to tailor the approach to the children's age. While younger children must first and foremost be protected by a guardian (whom the government should support if necessary), children over 14 who wish to be self-sufficient might benefit from vocational training and access to information and guidance. Furthermore, stakeholders highlighted that for a successful family reintegration of children who had run away to the city, the factors that pushed children away from home must first be addressed.

National response to child labour and youth employment

Child labour is a complex issue and eliminating it requires the coordinated response of several actors. In Ethiopia, some of the key actors include the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, regional Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Central Statistical Agency, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, and the police.

Ethiopia has ratified the key international conventions related to child labour including the Minimum Age Convention (ILO Convention 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (ILO Convention 182) and implemented national legislation to address the issue of child labour. In addition, a set of policies, programmes and national action plans have been put in place to combat child labour. While some of these are directly related to child labour, others are indirectly linked, addressing the causes or consequences of child labour.

One key aspect that is missing in the Ethiopian policy response to child labour is making education compulsory and encouraging the enrolment of children at age 7 years. This step has been planned by the education authorities but children often enter school later than age 7 in Ethiopia. Another important challenge is the implementation of strategies to improve coordination, integration and capacity building among stakeholders to strengthen the positive effects of commitments. In addition, outdated policies and action plans need to be replaced or renewed, including the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of the Worst forms of Child Labour which expires in 2020.

Conclusions and policy recommendations

A set of policy recommendations are derived from the quantitative and qualitative results as well as from the mapping of already existing laws and policies. One important step to eliminate child labour is to create awareness of its negative effects. Policymakers should further focus on law enforcement and provide more services for children exposed to child labour to help them cope with its consequences. Since poverty is one of the main reasons why children engage in child labour, the government and NGOs should provide support to families to meet their most basic needs.

The role of education in reducing child labour is another key aspect to consider. Focus should lie on ensuring the quality of education and children should be encouraged to start school at the age of 7 years to reduce the number of dropouts later on, since they are often linked to late enrolment. The government should further try to reduce the barriers to education and ideally, make schooling compulsory between the ages of 7–14 years.

Moreover, prioritising job creation is crucial to improve the situation for youth in the labour market. Policymakers should facilitate the transition of youth from the school system to the labour market and minimise the skill mismatches. While implementing interventions it is important to bear in mind the differences between rural and urban areas in order to ensure that policies and programmes are introduced where they are most needed.



1. INTRODUCTION

Produced as part of the UNICEF-financed study ‘Child Labour Analysis in Ethiopia’, this report aims to generate further evidence on child labour via the analysis of secondary quantitative data and primary qualitative data on vulnerable hard-to-reach children. We help to close the knowledge gap surrounding child labour among hard-to-reach children. Child and youth care practitioners and scholars understand child labour primarily as work carried out by children that is detrimental to a child’s potential, dignity or physical and mental development. Child labour continues to be an issue of global concern as reflected in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8.7. According to the 2015 National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) report prepared by the Ethiopian Central Statistical Agency (CSA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), child labour is particularly prevalent in Ethiopia with 42.7% of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour.

Using data from the 2015 CLS as well as primary qualitative data focusing on children often overlooked in large-scale household surveys, we aim to gain a deeper understanding of who these children are in order to provide useful information to policymakers. Combining these complementary approaches should provide a more complete picture of the children most vulnerable of entering into child labour and the consequences of these decisions. Throughout this report we consider the possible causes and consequences of child labour. In addition, we provide a mapping of the current key policies and strategies related to child labour and the programmes aiming to prevent child labour or to support those engaged in it.

Section 2 begins with a review of the main literature regarding child labour, followed by a description of the Ethiopian context. In Section 3, we present the findings of our quantitative analysis using the 2015 CLS as well as the 2013 Labour Force Survey (LFS). For an explanation of the methodology and sampling strategy used in each of these datasets, please see the original reports. Our analysis does not purport to establish causal links between variables, but the patterns and correlations found in the data go some way to understanding which characteristics are linked to child labour.

We explain the qualitative methods used and the findings in Section 4. Our aim here is to help fill the knowledge gap about those children likely missing from household surveys. We found that poverty, exacerbated by family situations such as orphanhood, a parent's inability to work, or a large number of siblings, together with barriers to education, combine to push children into labour for their own survival and, in some cases, for that of their families. High expectations of city life, mediated by stories from peers, together with general aspirations to improve their future, were the most commonly mentioned pull factors encouraging children to migrate to cities in search of work. Their testimonies revealed that the reality of city life was often much more difficult than these children had anticipated, and many found themselves in precarious working and living conditions. In spite of the hazards faced, most children moving to the city and working choose to stay there.

Our qualitative study found that the most common risks and hazards related to children's working conditions were low and unstable incomes; carrying of heavy loads and dangerous materials; environmental risks; long working hours; verbal, physical and sexual abuse; and the risk of drug use and drug addiction. In addition, long-term consequences of their working and living conditions included psychological and physical impacts and the lost opportunity to receive a formal education. The type of work children engage in appears to be influenced by age, migration status and gender. For example, migrant children are more likely to work in informal low-income jobs and girls are more likely to be domestic workers. These background characteristics also influence the living situations they experience and, subsequently, the hazards they face, as well as their capacity to deal with them.

We also explored the strategies children reported using to cope with these hazards. Some of these strategies were focused on solving immediate problems, some on finding ways to improve their conditions in the long-term and some were intended to bear and cope with the distress caused by the adversities experienced. These coping strategies included providing mutual support to each other, relying on supportive adults, begging, creating symbiotic relationship with businesses, performing self-care practices, playing, changing jobs and diversifying their sources of income and the use of drugs to cope with cold, hunger and distress.

Although this assignment is not an evaluation, the research team has reviewed programmes and policies to identify their roles in addressing child labour in Ethiopia.



2. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY: CHILD LABOUR AND THE ETHIOPIAN CONTEXT

2.1. Literature review on child labour

Child labour has moral costs to societies since it denies children of their childhood and compromises their dignity and potential (Martin & Tajman, 2002). Moreover, from an economic perspective, scholars consider child labour as economically inefficient due to the transfer of income from children to parents and the incentive of increasing present income at the cost of future income over a longer time horizon. This section presents a brief overview of the literature on child labour (primarily from the field of economics).

To evaluate the welfare implications of child labour, it is important to first identify its causes and consequences.¹ Table 1 shows a brief overview of the causes and consequences identified, mainly from the economics literature.² As a whole, the literature seems to suggest that poverty is a major determinant of child labour, which functions in conjunction with other aggravating circumstances such as adverse shocks in household economy and health, cultural considerations surrounding children, deaths of parents, violence at home and displacement or migration (both voluntary and involuntary).

Cash transfers are a common strategy adopted by governments to address poverty, the major determinant of child labour. Cash transfers are often distributed based on a set of conditions, such as children's school attendance. For example, Del Carpio et al. (2016) find that a conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme in Nicaragua reduced child labour. Other policies often used to combat child labour that have been evaluated include unconditional

¹ A comprehensive compilation of consequences of child labour is given by ILO-IPEC, 2011.

² The table includes references of medical and qualitative studies.

cash transfers, productive grants, insurance schemes, investment in education, and explicit regulation (see Table 1).

Among the economic costs of child labour, the most studied is the effect of child labour on schooling and human capital accumulation. Heady (2003) found that child work had a considerable negative effect on learning achievement in reading and mathematics, which can be explained by the insufficient time to study at home or by the exhaustion children in child labour feel. The author finds that mathematical scores are reduced only for children working outside the home and that reading scores for these children are as much as twice as bad as those for children working at home. These observations highlight the importance of the place of work, which in this case favoured home-based economic activities over out-of-home activities. Nevertheless, others have shown that household chores can also have an economic cost for children. For example, Ennew (1982) noted that, when children are required to care for younger siblings, the older child misses out on time in education and the younger sibling often fails to develop verbal and conceptual skills required to later succeed at school.

Several studies have examined the potential long-term effects of child labour on future earnings, intergenerational persistence and health outcomes. For example, Emerson and Souza (2011) find that child labour is associated with lower adult earnings for those entering the labour market while young, though this relationship reverses between the ages of 12 and 14, at which point entering the labour market is associated with higher adult earnings. A systematic review on the association between child labour and health by Batomen Kuimi et al. (2018) finds a relative consensus on the negative relationship between child labour and health.

Table 1. Causes and consequences of child labour

Causes of Child Labour	References
• Poverty and socioeconomic status of households	Pellerano et al. (2018), Pinilla-Roncancio & Silva (2018), Edmonds and Schady (2012), Basu and Van (1998), Eswaran (1996).
• Adverse health and economic shocks	Bandara et al. (2015), Dillon (2013), Beegle et al. (2006), Duryea et al. (2007).
• Credit constraints	Ranjan (2001), Alvi and Dendir (2011), Frölich and Landmann (2018).
• Cultural considerations where children are considered an income-earning asset or old-age security asset.	Emerson and Knabb (2005), Eswaran (1996), Dasgupta (1995)
• Orphanhood, violence and displacement/migration	Mainly qualitative research: Makhoul et al. (2004), van Blerk (2008), Huijsmans (2008).
Consequences of Child Labour	References
• Lower levels of schooling, lack of formal education, low human capital accumulation	Heady (2003), Rosati and Rossi (2003), Gunnarsson et al. (2006)
• Child's future earning ability	Emerson and Souza (2011), Ilahi et al. (2001)
• Negative health outcomes and increased health hazard exposure	Batomen Kuimi et al. (2018), Guarcello et al. (2004), Forastieri (2002), Kassouf et al. (2001).
• Lack of social and cognitive skills, poor mental health, emotional and behavioural disorders	Ennew (1982), Woodhead (2004) Compilation from medical literature: Sturrock and Hodes (2016) Fekadu et al. (2006)
• Intergenerational persistence (correlation)	Emerson and Souza (2003)

Evaluation of policies (demand & supply side)	References
• Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCTs)	Pellerano et al. (2018), Edmonds & Shrestha (2014)
• CCTs	Tagliati (2019), Del Carpio & Macours (2009), Galiani & McEwan (2013), Edmonds & Shrestha (2014), Del Carpio et al., (2016), Heinrich & Cabrol (2005), Angrist et al. (2002), Sparrow (2007), Ravallion & Wodon (2000), Kazianga et al. (2009), Duryea & Morrison (2004).
• Productive grants	Del Carpio & Macours (2009), Del Carpio et al. (2016).
• Insurance	Landmann & Frölich (2015, 2017, 2018).
• Regulation (i.e., minimum working age)	Del Rey et al. (2018).
• Quality of education (i.e., improved infrastructure, equipment to schools, etc.)	Rosati & Rossi (2007), Guarcello & Rosati (2007), Andisha et al. (2009).

Estimating the population size of hard-to-reach children (e.g. child labourers living with their employers, sharing a room with peers in informal housing or homeless) is complicated by the lack of an appropriate sampling frame for conducting representative quantitative surveys with a large enough sample to accurately report statistics on this group. Due to these methodological challenges, researchers have primarily used qualitative methods to study this category of children.

2.2. Ethiopian context

Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa, with a population of roughly 112 million people in 2019 (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019) made up of over 90 ethnic and linguistic groups (MoE, 2015). Growing at an annual rate of 2.5% (World Bank, 2017), the population is young, with 43.8% aged below 18 years old (CSA, 2019). In 2016, the literacy rate was 42% for females and 68.8% for males (CSA, 2016), demonstrating the prevalence of gender disparities. While a large share of the population (80%) resides in rural areas (CSA, 2019), which makes Ethiopia one of the least urbanised countries in the world (MoE, 2015), there is large scale migration from rural to urban areas with 6% of all Ethiopians moving from rural to urban areas between 1999 and 2003 (Bundervoet, 2018).

Ethiopia has seen encouraging gains in the economic realm. In 2017, the GDP increased by 10.25% (World Bank, 2017), similar to the yearly average (10.3%) over the past decade (World Bank, 2018). The economic dynamics have placed Ethiopia as one of the fastest growing economies in sub-Saharan Africa. The per capita GDP had reached (in constant 2010) USD 550 as of 2017 (World Bank, 2017).³ Although about one in four people lives under the poverty line (23.5% in 2015–16), this represents a steep decline from 44.2% in 1999–2000 (CSA, 2019). Ethiopia's Gini coefficient has risen from 29.8 in 2004 to 39.1 in 2015, indicating that income inequality has risen during the last decade with the richer gaining more from growth (World Bank, 2017). As stated in the CIA World Factbook (2019), 70% of the working population is employed in agriculture, although services represent the main sector in the GDP (43.6%) followed by agriculture (34.8%) and industry (21.6%). Employment in agriculture has fallen over time reflecting a modernising economy, with people aspiring to jobs in sectors with higher incomes.

³ This is equal to USD 770 in current USD.

In the field of child protection, Ethiopia has several challenges to overcome. First, the country is in the process of establishing standardised vital events registration (such as birth, marriage, divorce and death), a relevant step to ensure the fulfilment of children's rights and the provision of services. Having an established and functional vital registration system guarantees children's right to identity and could help protecting them from abuse and exploitation. Birth registration was accomplished for 2.7% of children under 5 years of age, though the figure was higher in urban areas (11.5%) than in rural areas (1.6%) (CSA, 2016). Second, orphanhood incidence sheds light on the importance of policy measures and programmes aimed at protecting orphans and children not living with their biological parents, since they could be exposed to a higher risk of becoming street children. According to the DHS 2016 (CSA, 2016), the prevalence of orphanhood⁴ of children under 18 has declined slightly from 9% in 2011 to 7%. The percentage of children under the age of 18 who do not live with a biological parent also fell: 11% in 2011 and 10% in 2016. Third, child poverty and extreme child poverty rates are significantly higher than population poverty rates: in 2011 the poverty headcount for children was 32.4% compared to 29.6% for the entire population and the extreme poverty headcount was 5.3% for children compared to 4.5% (CSA, UNICEF, & OPM, 2015).⁵ UNICEF's multidimensional poverty analysis finds that 88% of children lacked access to at least three of the six basic human rights⁶ (UNICEF and CSA, 2018).

2.3. Child labour in Ethiopia

In 2016, 218 million children were engaged in child labour worldwide, 75 million of whom were in hazardous occupations according to ILO's global estimates.⁷ In the 2015 CLS, 8.7 million children in Ethiopia were found to be engaged in hazardous work. Considering the substantial effects on child welfare and development, these numbers are cause for concern. Research has proven the causal relationship between the intensity of children's work and their health, education and well-being (IPEC & Dorman, 2008).

Child Labour Surveys have not been performed on a regular basis in Ethiopia. Index monitoring and evaluation of the impact of anti-child labour programmes cannot therefore be undertaken. The most recent Child Labour Survey was conducted in 2015 by the CSA with the technical and financial support of the ILO, while that just previous was in 2001. The 2015 report presented two sets of results, one following the international definition of child labour according to the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) and the other according to Ethiopia's national definition. The main difference between the two is that the national definition only classifies child work as child labour if their work prevents them from attending school. In this report, we use the ILO statistical definition of child labour.⁸ The survey revealed an overall child labour incidence of 42.7%, (50.2% among boys, 34.5% among girls) with higher rates of child labour in rural areas than in urban areas (48.8% compared to 14.7%) (Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia & International Labour Organization,

4 Defined as a child with one or both parents who are deceased.

5 Poverty headcount is the share of the population that cannot afford to buy a basic basket of goods and services.

6 For children aged 5-17: education; health-related knowledge, information and participation; water, sanitation and housing.

7 ILO (2017). Global Estimates of Child Labour. Results and trends 2012-2016

8 We were unable to replicate the results of the original report for the national definition (despite following the guidance of the CSA) and so chose to use the ILO definition. Correlations of child labour with other variables should be similar across minor differences in the definition of child labour.

2018). Child labourers are, by definition, a subset of the 51% of children found to be working with a similar rural/urban difference. It should be noted that chores were not included in the definition of child labour, but girls were more likely to carry out household chores (79.3%) than boys (63.5%). The work carried out was hazardous for 47.4% of working urban children and 45.6% of working rural children—9.2% of all urban children and 26.4% of all rural children carried out hazardous work.

One key issue related to child labour is that of education, with 61.3% of all children found to be attending school. School in Ethiopia is intended to be universal from primary school starting at age 7, but school attendance it is not officially compulsory. Pre-primary education is offered for children aged 4–6, however most children in this age range do not attend any form of education, with only 13.8% enrolled in any form of education. Primary school consists of eight grades, split into two cycles of four years, followed by four years of secondary education, split into two cycles of two years. Students sit for the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate Examination upon the completion of these cycles.



3. QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

3.1 Child labour overall

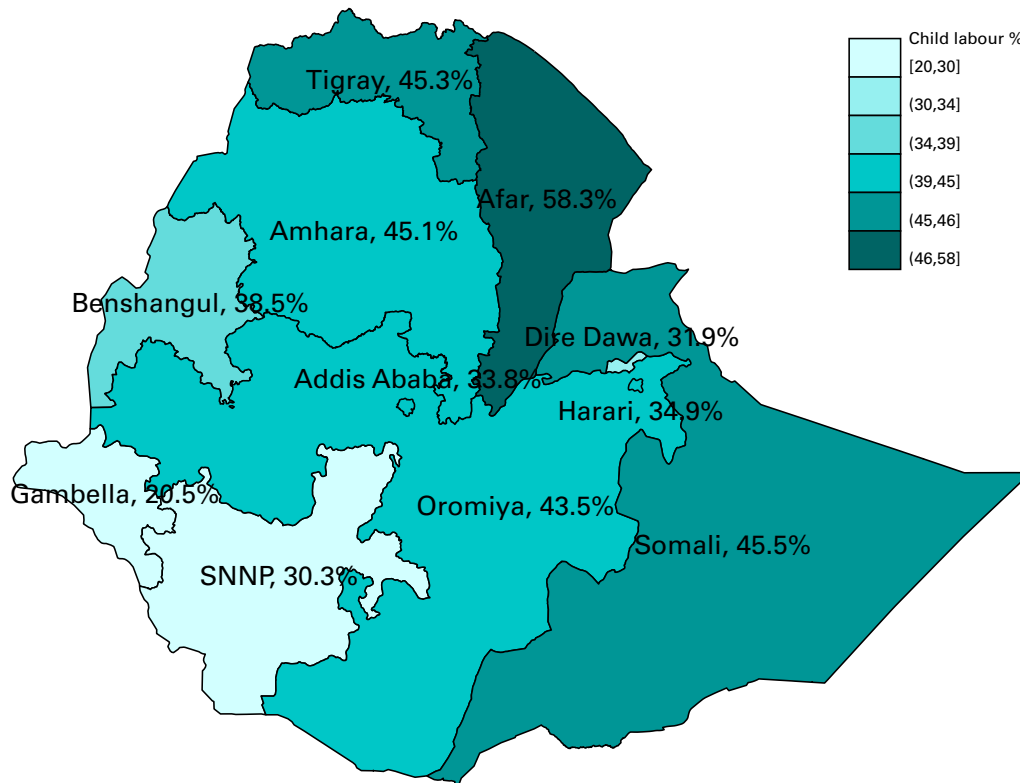
Incidence of child labour

Among the 37 million children represented in the CLS, over half were found to be working, either for payment or producing goods and services within the System of National Accounts (SNA) production boundary. Among this population of children, 43% were found to be in child labour⁹ with 23% of children in hazardous work. Hazardous work is automatically classified as child labour and is one component of the definition of Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL).

In Figure 1, we see that the child labour prevalence is higher in regions that are closer to the northeast and lower in the southwest, with the highest rate in Afar (58.3%) and the lowest in Gambella (20.6%). The chartered cities also exhibit relatively low levels of child labour, reflecting a general contrast between rural and urban areas.

⁹ According to the ILO definition of child labour.

Figure 1. Child labour prevalence by region



3.2 Causes and consequences of child labour

Who is engaged in child labour? What are the causes?

Age and Gender

- Age: school enrolment and employment increase together until children are 11 years old and thereafter school enrolment drops.
- Gender: On average, boys allocate more time to work, while girls spend more time on household chores, with boys spending more time on productive tasks.

Context

- Higher education of the household head is associated with a lower prevalence of child labour and higher school attendance.
- The decision about whether to work is taken by the family in almost 73% of child labour cases.
- Child labour decreases steadily as the wealth index increases.
- Households with more land are more likely to have children engaged in child labour.

In order to develop effective policies to reduce child labour, it is important to understand the factors that make children particularly likely to end up in child labour. We investigate these potential causes below using both descriptive techniques and regression models controlling for multiple variables. The decision to engage a child in work depends on several factors. The person making the decision may be one of the parents, the household head, another adult in the household or even the child him- or herself. As children become older, they are more

engaged in decision-making, with 26.6% of working children aged 14-17 years claiming it was their decision to work compared with 10.2% of working children aged 5–11 years. Despite an increase in autonomy, even for this older group 72.7% of working children state it was their family's decision for the child to work.

Age

The decision to work seems to change with age. As expected, we see in Figure 2 that the proportion of children reported in employment¹⁰ increases with age. Compulsory schooling is represented by the shaded area. Upon its completion, 61% of children aged 14 are in employment. School attendance peaks at age 11 and the percentage of children attending school only drops below the percentage employed after age 16. This overall trend masks some differences however, in particular between urban and rural areas. In urban areas, school attendance is higher while the proportion of children in employment is substantially lower. When looking at gender, employment of girls is lower, but their school enrolment is only marginally higher, likely due to girls' higher participation levels in household chores. It should be noted that the higher school enrolment rate for girls than for boys found in the CLS does not match with other statistics for 2015, such as those presented by UNESCO (UIS, 2020) in which school enrolment (both gross and net) is higher for boys than girls at both primary and secondary levels.

Not all child work is considered to be child labour, so it is also informative to consider child labour itself by age and residence. The increase seen in employment around age 7 is mirrored in Figure 3 for child labour, given that all children in employment below the age of 14 are classified as child labour. This dramatic rise is consistent with previous findings for Ethiopia that labour market participation rises dramatically between the ages of 6 and 8 (Bhalotra, 2003). Once children turn 14 and are permitted to be employed, the proportion in child labour drops to 28% (as compared with 61% in employment). Once again, there are clear differences by the residence of a child, with those living in urban areas less likely to be engaged in child labour across all ages.

10 Employment is defined as working during the last seven days or having a job they will be returning to, as presented in the results of Table 5.5 of the 2015 report (Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia & International Labour Organization, 2018).

Figure 2 Overlap analysis between monetary and multidimensional child poverty

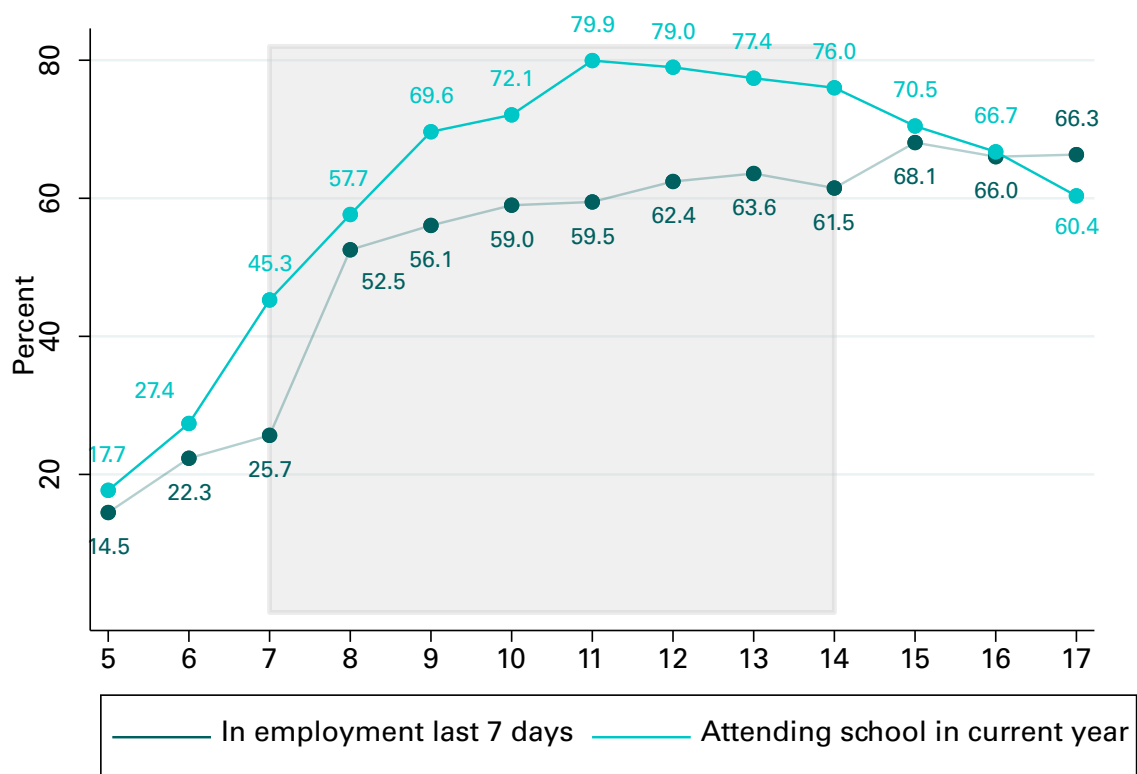
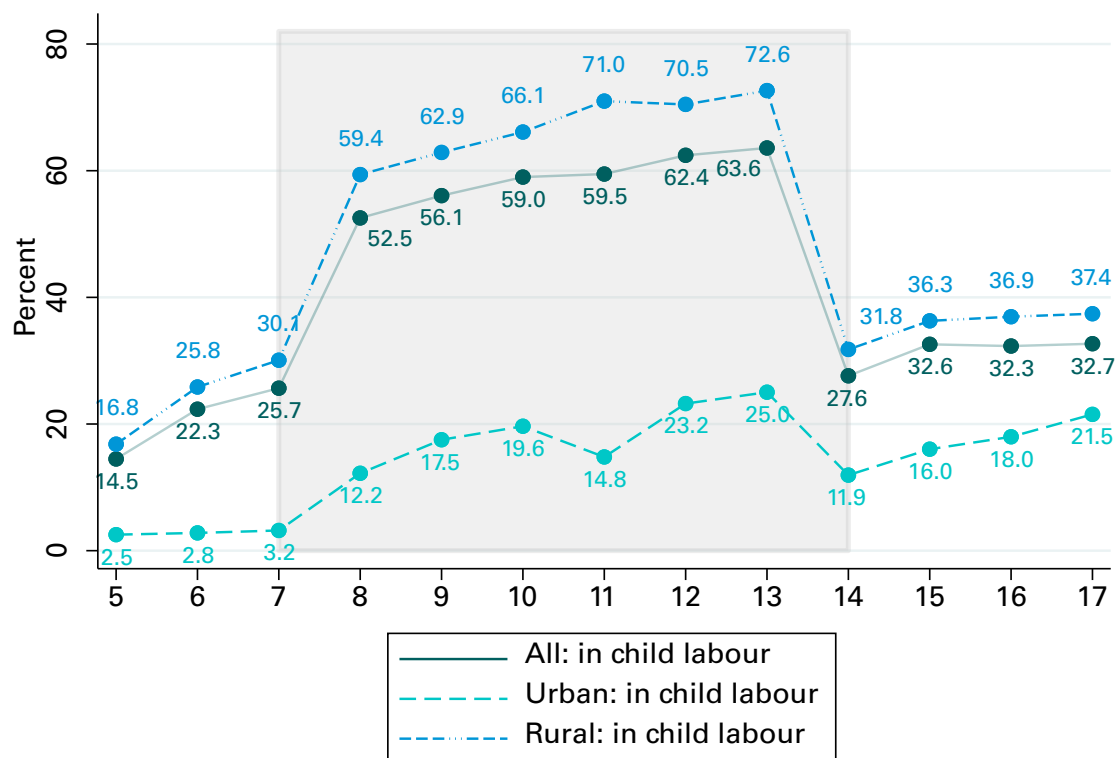
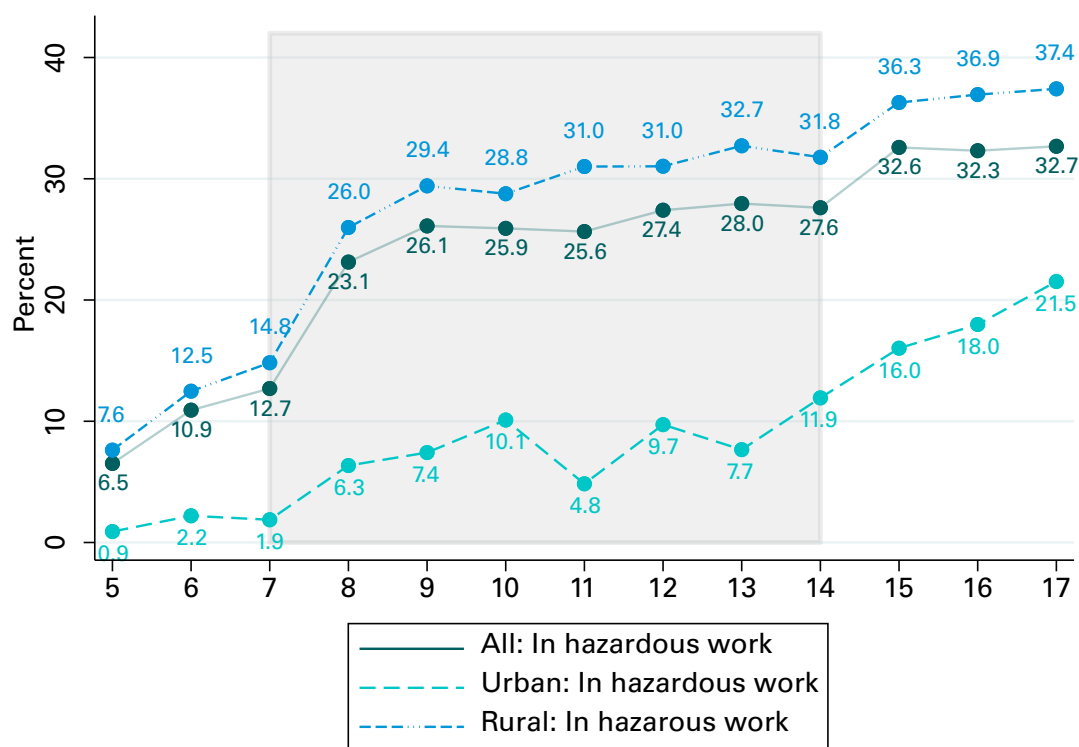


Figure 3. Child labour prevalence by age and area of residence



We see a large fall in the rate of child labour at the age of 14, which may have two causes. First, work which was previously counted as child labour due to the minimum age of work is no longer classified as child labour. This is a purely mechanical effect of a child turning 14, with no difference in the work one day before and after a child's 14th birthday. Second, children aged 14 may now have access to legal labour markets and to jobs which were previously not accessible to them. This may mean that children aged 14 now access better, potentially safer jobs. In Figure 4, we show there is no drop in hazardous work being carried out around the age of 14. Instead, participation in hazardous work rises with age across both urban and rural areas.

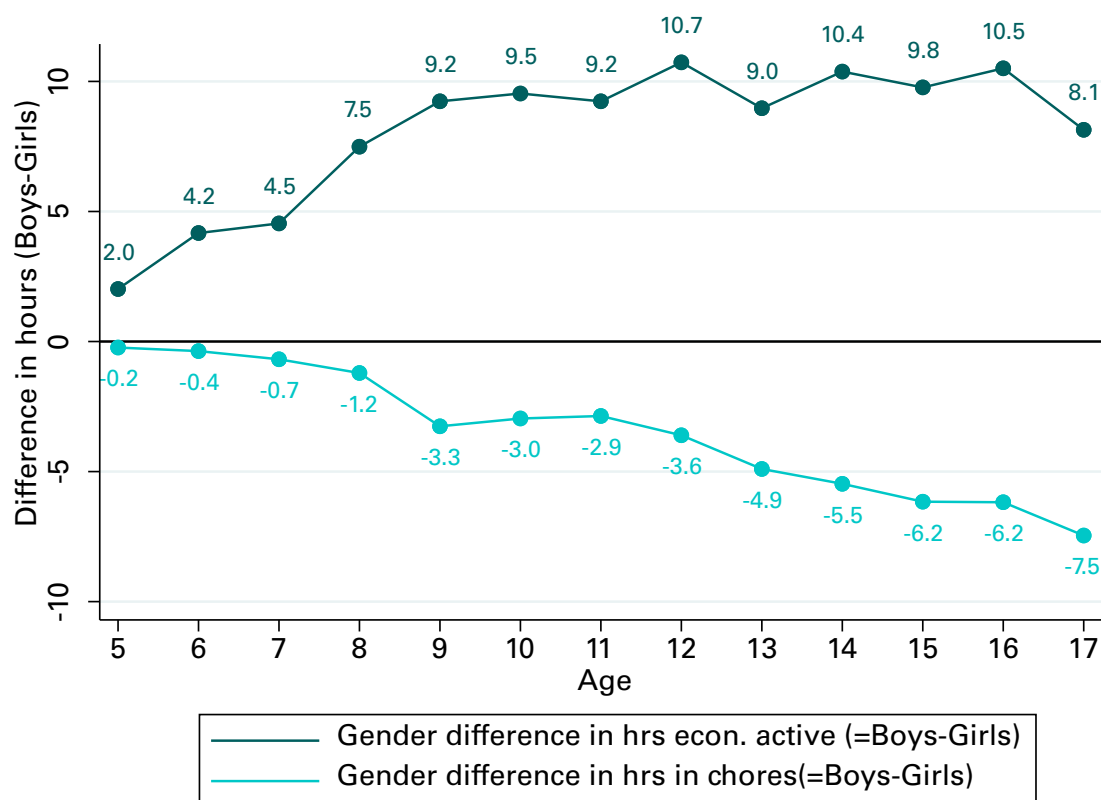
Figure 4. Hazardous work by age and area of residence



Gender

In the global statistics, boys are found to be in child labour more often than girls, with boys making up 58% of child labourers (ILO, 2017). The reverse is true for household chores, with girls carrying more of the burden of chores, which are typically not considered in estimates of child labour. This is also true for Ethiopia in the existing analysis where we see that boys (60.4%) are more likely than girls (40.7%) to be in work classified as economic activity (ILO & CSA, 2018). Below in Figure 5, we consider the number of hours spent working in economic activities and in household chores. We see that on average boys of all ages spend more hours in economic activities and girls spend more hours in household chores. The graph shows a positive difference in the boys' hours minus girls' hours for economic activities and vice versa for chores. This difference by gender grows as children get older, i.e. the gap in hours spent in economic activities versus chores grows as children get older. It can also be seen that at all ages boys are spending more time in total on productive activities, encompassing both economic activities and household chores. This may suggest either that girls now have more time for school and leisure activities or that chores are more likely to be underreported. Over time, girls have caught up in terms of school attendance, and in the CLS data even have a higher level of attendance than boys. This may be in part due to the patterns found in hours spent working and in chores.

Figure 5. Gender gap of the hours of productive activities between girls and boys by age



Poverty

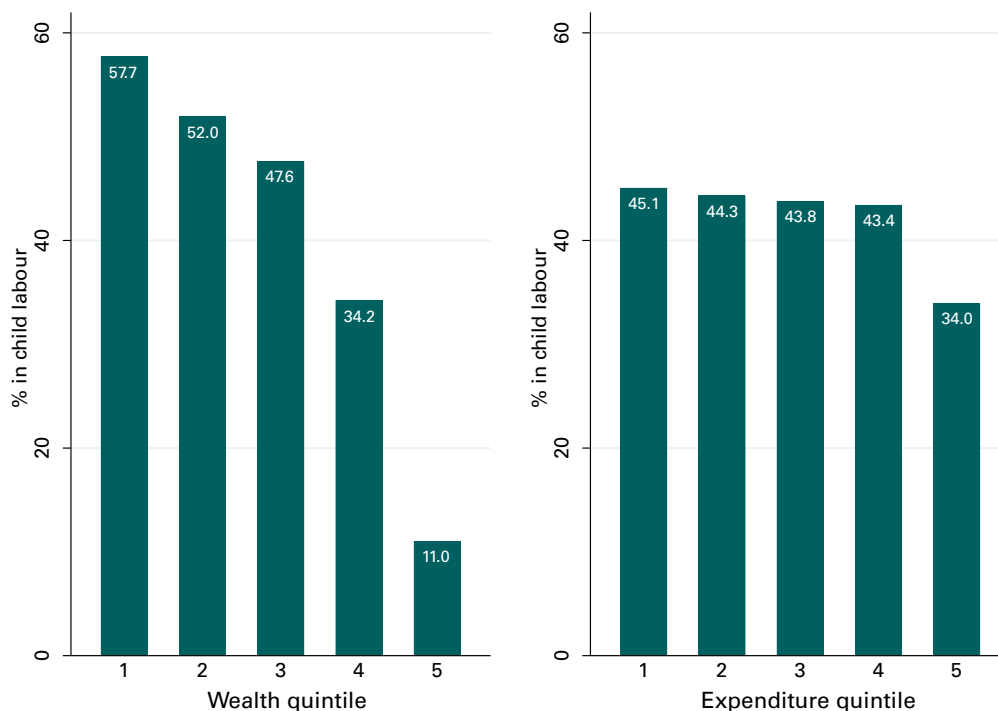
In the literature, a link is often found between poverty and child labour, suggesting that children may be required to engage in child labour out of necessity.¹¹ We therefore investigate child labour using wealth and expenditure as measures of poverty. We follow the DHS methodology as closely as possible in constructing a wealth index¹² and then sort the population into quintiles. Reported monthly income and expenditure are also used to generate quintiles. We choose to report expenditure rather than income as expenditure is often considered more reliable in measuring welfare than income, expenditure suffers less from recall bias and is also likely to be more regular over time. In Figure 6, we see that children in wealthier households are less likely to be engaged in child labour. The pattern according to expenditures in the right panel is less clear. Only households with the highest monthly expenditures are less likely to have children engaged in child labour. The average levels of expenditure in the first four quintiles increase only moderately. There is a large jump in the level of expenditure for the final quintile, however. The mean increases by around 500 Birr per month for the first four

11 See for example Pellerano et al. (2018), Pinilla-Roncanio & Silva (2018), Edmonds and Schady (2012), Basu and Van (1998), Eswaran (1996)

12 We include the following variables on the household level in calculating a wealth index for the household: the number of household members, whether the toilet is shared, the number of household members per room, livestock owned (camels, horses, mules, donkeys, cows, sheep, goats, poultry, bee hives and other animals), ownership of multiple assets (automobile, tractor, motorbike/bicycle, animal drawn cart, TV, iron, DVD player, oven, farm tools, refrigerator, sewing machine, landline telephone, mobile phone and radio) and indicators on: household having a domestic worker, household owning land, a set of indicators for the main water source and indicator for having no access to a toilet. The following standard DHS variables are not in the CLS data and so could not be included: type of toilet, wall material, floor material and roof material. The first component from a principal component analysis is used as the wealth index, with the population then divided into five quintiles.

quintiles and by 1500 Birr per month in the final quintile (500 Birr was equivalent to roughly 24 USD¹³ on 21 June 2015 when data collection ended).

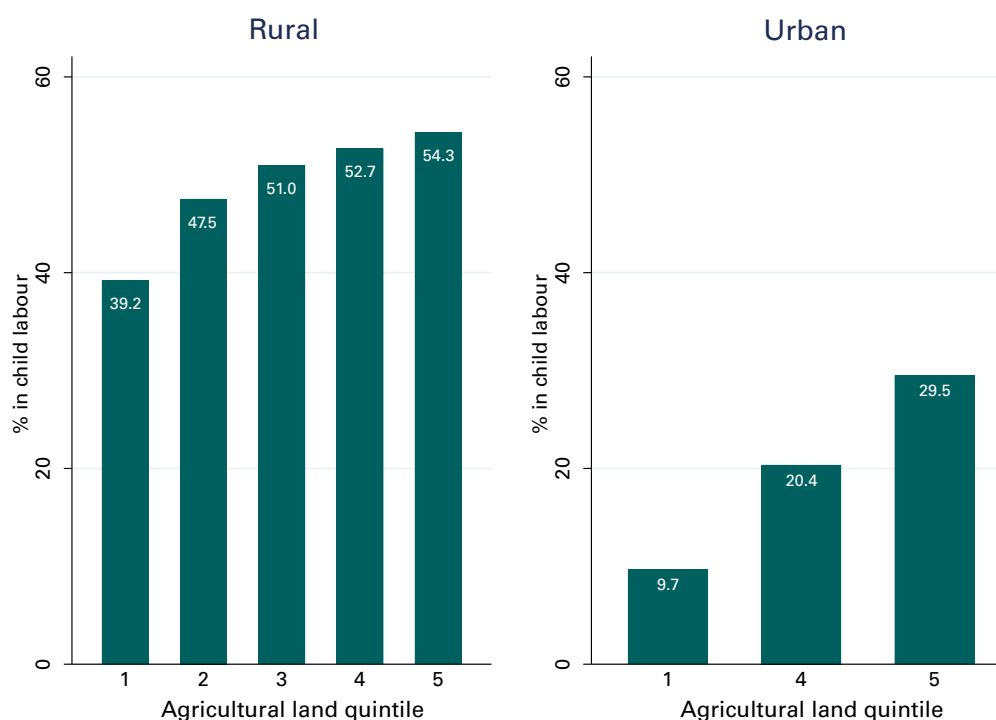
Figure 6. Child labour by wealth and expenditure quintile



The wealth index seen in Figure 6 incorporates many different assets as noted above, including agricultural land. Agriculture land ownership may hide some patterns in the data on child labour, thus below in Figure 7, we consider agricultural land ownership separately for the prevalence of child labour.

¹³ The current exchange rate (as of 31 March 2020) is roughly 33 Birr to 1 USD, meaning 500 Birr are now close to 15 USD.

Figure 7. Child labour by agricultural land area ownership quintile and rural-urban split



We split the population into rural and urban areas to investigate how area of residence impacts child labour. It is important to note that 68% of urban children's households do not own any agricultural land and so there is no second or third quintile in the graph for urban areas given that all are bundled together on zero land ownership in the first reported quintile. In both rural and urban households, we see that the probability of a child being engaged in child labour increases as the area of agricultural land owned increases. More land seems to translate to a greater demand for work from households and therefore an increase in child labour. Including non-agricultural land in the land owned helps to split the first quintile of the urban households, but likely complicates the channel by which land ownership affects child labour prevalence. Nonetheless, the same pattern remains with more land owned being associated with more child labour (see Figure A - 1 in Annex 3). This result is consistent with the findings of Bhalotra and Heady (2003), who point to a wealth paradox, in which child work prevalence is higher for land-rich households. The ownership of livestock is similarly correlated with child labour, likely due to the increased demand for labour.

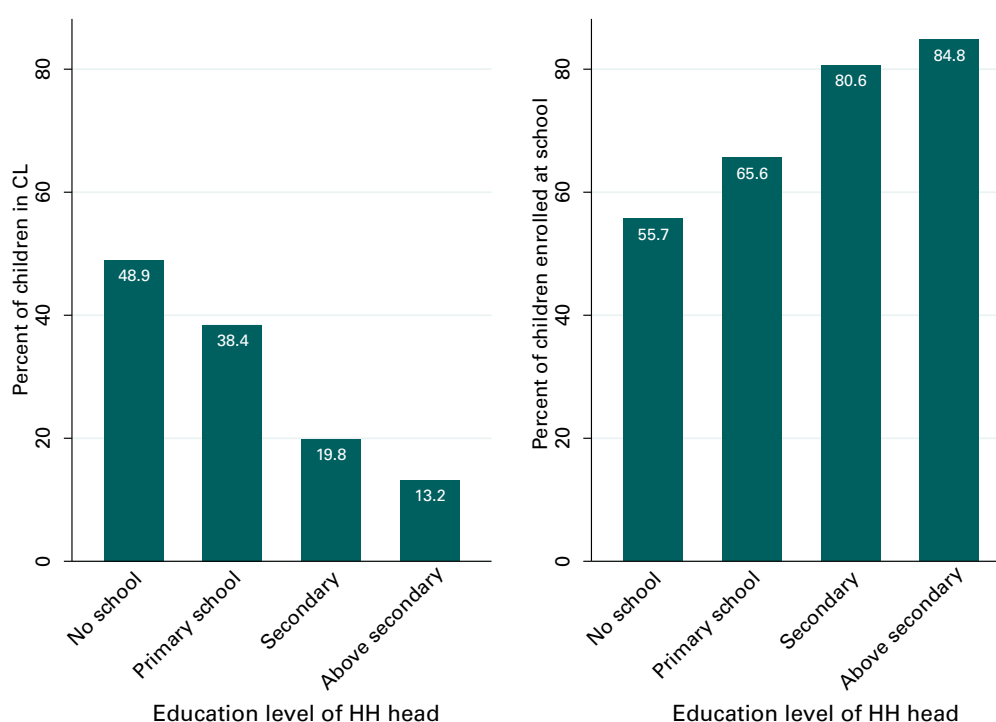
Opportunity

Closely linked to the issue of poverty are the life prospects that people have, that is, whether they believe they can be better off in the future. Much of the economic literature assumes that earnings will increase with more education. If parents do not believe that education has value, either because there are no job opportunities for the well-educated or because the education system is of poor quality, then it becomes a rational decision not to invest in education. In the CLS, respondents whose children were working were asked what they felt would be best for their child. The parents of 33% of working children reported believing it would be best for the child to only attend school, while 41% said it would be best to both attend school and work for income. Most children in these categories can attend school while working (68% among those who think it would be best to combine school and work and 70% among those who think it would be best to only attend school). Nonetheless, among those who did not mention

attending school as being best for the child, 33% of children were attending school. Thus, a parent believing school attendance is worthwhile is linked to a roughly 36-percentage point increase in the probability that a child attends school.

Respondents also provided up to three reasons why a child is permitted to work. A total of 26% of respondents did not explicitly mention education as part of what parents view as best for a child, 3.5% stated that they allow a child to work due to the lack of value given to education, the lack of affordability of education, the difficulty of physical access to education or a lack of interest on the part of the child. In most cases (94.6%), the adult respondent stated that the child works to support household income, pay off debt or support the family business. This suggests that children are primarily working to increase family income. Allowing a child to work for reasons related to education is associated with a 3.5-percentage point increased probability that the work they are doing is classified as child labour, though it should be noted that the relevant sample is small. Allowing a child to work for income-related reasons is not statistically associated with any change in the prevalence of child labour. The education of the household head appears to be linked to the choice of whether a child is engaged in child labour and whether he or she is enrolled at school. In Figure 8, we observe a decrease in child labour exposure for children in households headed by more educated individuals with a noticeable drop if the household head has completed secondary education. The jump is not as noticeable between primary and secondary education of the household head for child school enrolment. The same pattern is observed for the relationship between child labour and the education of each of the parents, as shown in Figure A - 4 in Annex 3 in which the two panels, the left side for the mother and the right side for the father, are equivalent to the left panel of Figure 8 here below.

Figure 8. Child labour and enrolment by education level of household head

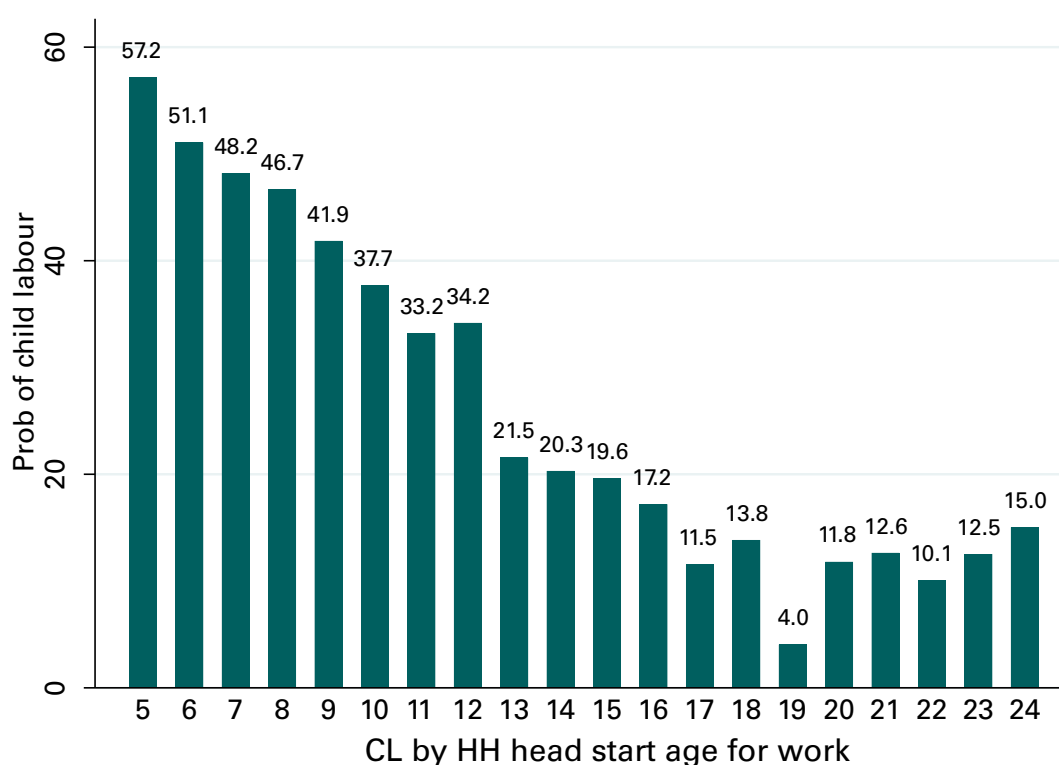


Among children aged 7–14, a total of 25% have never attended school, despite the intention for all children to be in full-time education across this age range. When asked why the child has never attended school, parents most commonly responded that the child is too young (this is even more likely for younger children, as should be expected), while very few adults stated that education is not valuable as their reason (only 1.7% of parents stated this reason

for children of compulsory school age who never attended school). Such a small proportion of respondents stating this reason suggests that children are not being kept out of school because parents do not believe in the value of education.

The choice of a household to migrate would typically be viewed as a decision made in order to improve the welfare of the household. If a higher income is secured through migration, this may allow a household to reduce the engagement of children in child labour as that income source is no longer needed. In the CLS data, children in households that migrated show a lower prevalence of child labour (35.2%) than those that did not migrate (43.4%). When subdividing further those that migrated, we see that those migrating to an urban area show the lowest prevalence of child labour, with 17.5% for those migrating from a rural to an urban area and 14.4% for urban-urban migration. It should however be noted that children from households in urban areas that did not migrate also have a child labour prevalence of 14.4%. The full results on migration can be found in Table A - 2 in Annex 3. As seen previously, families living in urban areas (migrants and non-migrants) have a lower child labour prevalence. Now we see that this is also achievable for households moving from rural to urban areas, suggesting that the general attraction of moving to the city to improve welfare found in qualitative interviews and as described later in more detail, does have some foundation in reality.

Figure 9. Child labour by age at which the HH head had started to work



The parents of 93% of children had themselves started work by the age of 14. Above in Figure 9, we show that the older the household head was when starting to work, the lower is the probability that a child is found in child labour. This suggests that child labour is persistent across generations. Reducing child labour today would thus also benefit future generations.

Circumstances

The circumstances in which a child lives influence the likelihood of his or her engagement in child labour. This may include recent shocks experienced by a household that hinder their usual means of living or may be something with more far-reaching impacts. Key informants

suggested that family dissolution through divorce or the death of a parent may lead to a child needing to work for the household to make a living.

Where shocks have been experienced by a household or family dissolution has occurred, single parent households or other constellations of households with only one adult may result. In 87% of these households, the household head is female, suggesting that most households with only one adult are in fact single mothers raising their children. The children in single adult households are less likely to be in child labour (38%) than children living in households with multiple adults (43%). We also consider orphanhood more specifically as a factor that may lead to more child labour. In Table 2, we consider children in four categories: both parents alive, father alive only, mother alive only and both parents deceased. The lowest rate of child labour is found among children where only the mother is alive. This is also the only group that showed a statistically significant difference from those children whose parents are both alive. Both other categories did not show a statistically significant difference, though the rate with only the father alive is highest in magnitude. Often orphanhood is associated with poverty and is therefore linked to child labour in people's perceptions. However, in this data, children who were orphaned (at least one parent deceased) were most often found living in households in the 3rd or 4th wealth quintiles, suggesting that they are not suffering from poverty. Alongside orphanhood, we also consider with whom the child is living. Among those with both parents deceased, 87.4% are living with other relatives. Table A - 3 in Annex 3 shows that those living with only their mother (4.7 percentage points) or with other relatives (7.5 percentage points) are less likely to be in child labour than those living with both parents. The difference between living only with the father or both parents is not statistically significant and 73.6% of children living with their employer are in child labour, meaning they are 30 percentage points more likely to be in child labour than the next highest category.

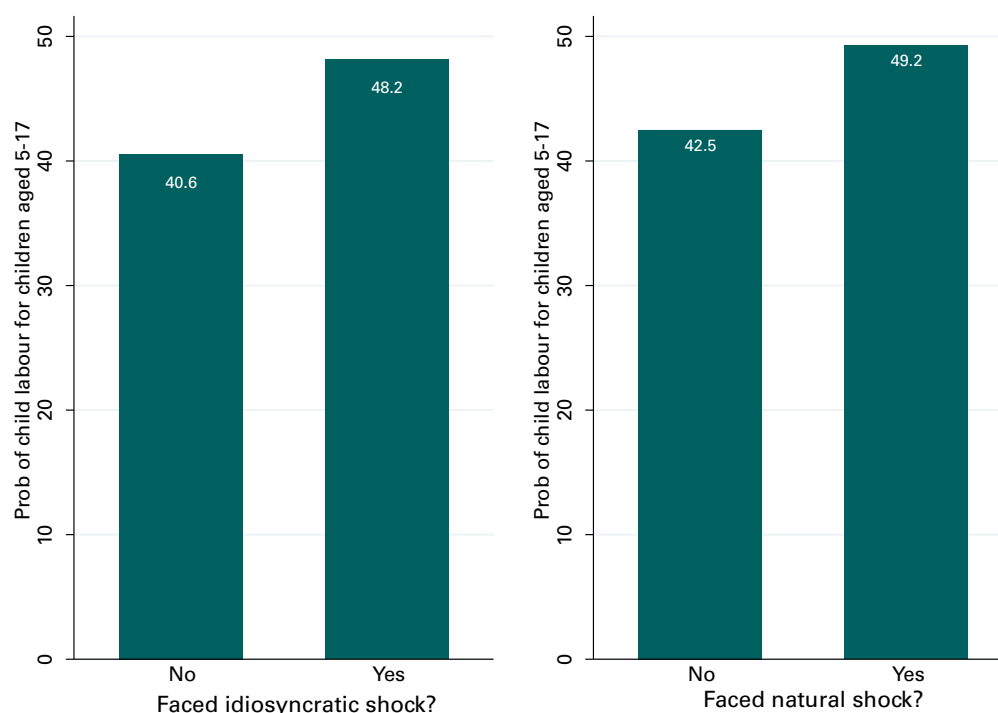
Table 2. Child labour by orphanhood status

Parents alive?	Not Child Labour		Child Labour		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Both alive	19215788	57.2	14376381	42.8	33592170	100.0
Mother alive - Father deceased	1458132	59.3	998709	40.7	2456841	100.0
Mother deceased - Father alive	370270	55.6	295814	44.4	666085	100.0
Both parents deceased	96611	58.3	69178	41.7	165789	100.0
Total	21140802	57.3	15740083	42.7	36880885	100.0

The CLS data suggest that children living in households where the household head is married¹⁴ are *more* likely than children in households with unmarried household heads to be engaged in child labour. This remains true in the sample restricted to children who are the son or daughter of the household head. Children of divorced household heads are 9–10 percentage points less likely than children in 'married' households to be in child labour. This suggests that family stability is not essential to reducing child labour. Instead, the gender of the household head or decision maker appears to play a role, with 41.6% of children in male-headed households in child labour compared to 36.9% of children in female-headed households. This is in line with the result on orphanhood that children with only their mother alive are least likely to be in child labour.

¹⁴ Note this is a statement about the marital status of the household head, not the relationship of the child to the household head. This includes children who are not a daughter or son of the household head.

Figure 10. Child labour and household adverse shocks



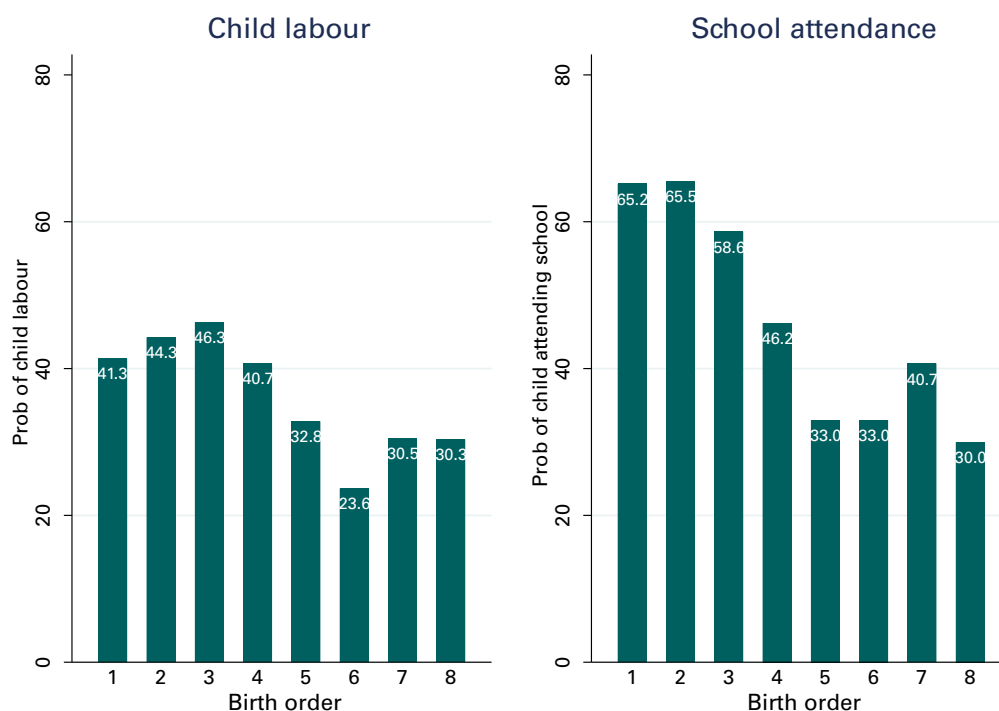
Immediate circumstances faced by a household can also influence a child's involvement in child labour as shown in Figure 10. Children living in households which have experienced an idiosyncratic shock and an accompanying loss of income¹⁵ are 7.6 percentage points more likely to be in child labour (with a 48.2% probability of being in child labour). Children in a household who claim to have suffered adversely due to a natural shock¹⁶ face a similar increase in the probability to be in child labour at 6.8 percentage points.

Below in Figure 11, we show the probability of engaging in child labour and the probability of currently attending school according to birth order. In the graph, we see that children who are second and third in the birth order are more likely to be in child labour and those who are fifth or higher are less likely. The first and second child also appear most likely to be in school, suggesting that households invest in the first child most, which is in line with the results of Alvi & Dendir (2011) using data from 1999. We check that the differences found in the graph below are not a result of children's age, i.e. that younger children are not yet working, by running a probit regression for child labour on birth order and controlling for age with a linear and squared term (the full results can be found in Table A - 5 in Annex 3). Here, the lower probability of high birth order children being in child labour or school is no longer significant, and hence appears to be more related to age than birth order. In fact, controlling for age, it is the third and fourth born children who are more likely to be in child labour. For school attendance, it is the fourth and fifth born children who are less likely to attend school, while the second born child is in fact the most likely to attend school. Nonetheless, there appears to be a first-child preference for parental investment.

15 Including having faced any of the following: Loss of employment of any household member, bankruptcy of a family business, illness or serious accident of a working member of the household, death of a working member of the household, abandonment by the household head, fire in the house/business/property, criminal act by household member, land dispute, loss of cash support or in-kind assistance, fall in prices of products of the household business, loss of harvest, loss of livestock.

16 This includes a natural disaster (drought, flood, storms, hurricane, landslides forest fires) or drought/famine.

Figure 11. Child labour, school attendance by birth order



Vulnerable children

Some groups of children are viewed as more vulnerable to child labour, such as those entering into child marriage, those without birth registration, migrants, domestic workers and children living outside of households. These vulnerable groups are often only represented by very small numbers of children within the sample. For example, married children are only 1.3% of the population according to the CLS sample, which were represented by only 323 interviewed children. Such a small sample makes it difficult to analyse differences between children's child labour participation or school attendance by this variable. Results below should be viewed as exploratory due to the small sample size.

We show a tabulation below of the percentage of children engaged in child labour by gender and marriage status. This question was asked of children aged 10 or older for whom we see that the prevalence of child labour appears slightly higher for married children (52.1%) than for single children (48.4%). This is true for both male and female children, though more female children were married than male children.

Table 3. Child labour by marital status of children 10–17

Marital status of child	Not Child Labour		Child Labour		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All children 10–17						
Single or never married	10864208	51.6	10177858	48.4	21042066	100.0
Married	129914	47.9	141367	52.1	271281	100.0
Total	10994122	51.6	10319225	48.4	21313347	100.0
Male 10–17						
Single or never married	4744712	43.1	6260242	56.9	11004954	100.0
Married	32659	37.7	53918	62.3	86577	100.0
Total	4777371	43.1	6314160	56.9	11091531	100.0
Female 10–17						
Single or never married	6119496	61.0	3917617	39.0	10037113	100.0
Married	97255	52.7	87449	47.3	184704	100.0
Total	6216751	60.8	4005066	39.2	10221817	100.0

While the extent of increased child labour for married children did not vary significantly by gender, the number of hours spent per week on household chores did indeed vary, with married girls spending more time on chores than unmarried girls, as can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Hours in chores by marital status of children 10–17

Marital status of child	Mean hours in chores		
	Gender		
	Male	Female	All
Single or never married	13.5	15.7	14.7
Married	12.1	19.8	17.6
Total	13.5	15.8	14.8

Children employed as domestic workers are especially vulnerable to child labour due to the economic exploitation and hazardous working conditions they face (Flores-Oebanda, 2006; Black, 2002; Blagbrough, 2013), often as a result of unclear terms of employment and exclusion from labour laws (ILO, 2020). The aforementioned studies find that this often leads them to work long hours for low salaries (or to engage in unpaid work) with limited time to rest. Moreover, the working situation of child domestic workers makes them susceptible to emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This was further confirmed during the qualitative interviews with children that are described later in this report. Similar to married children, there were very few domestic workers included in the CLS, with only 248 of the 47,157 surveyed children reported as domestic workers, representing less than 0.5% of the population. Given the prevalence of domestic workers in Ethiopia, this suggests that households in which such children are living may not report them when interviewed for the CLS. More focussed research is required to understand the situations in which domestic child labourers are working.

Regression Approach

While the abovementioned variables help to build a picture of who is engaged in child labour and why, it is useful to recognise that the decision made about whether a child should work depends on many factors. Typically, parents or guardians decide how a child's time is allocated to different activities. Two key outcomes of interest are whether a child engages in work and whether a child attends school. This complex decision is often framed as the choice to either

send a child to school or to work, however the two often coexist as seen in Table 5.13 of the Ethiopia National Child Labour Survey 2015 (ILO & CSA, 2018).

Given the nature of the decision being made (to work or not to work), the outcome variable in our regressions is a binary dependent variable taking the value one if something is true and zero if false (e.g. 1 if a child works and 0 if they do not). We therefore use probit regressions in what follows, thus avoiding predicted probabilities outside the range zero to one for the three variables: working/attending school/being engaged in child labour. Not only will such decisions depend on several factors, but the decisions of whether a child attends school and the decision of whether a child works are likely to be interrelated. For example, a child from a richer family may be more likely to be sent to school and potentially less likely to be sent to work, thus entering the error term in both estimation equations. The most common approach to estimate such a decision that takes the joint nature of the decision into account is to jointly estimate the probability of a child working and attending school using a bivariate probit model (Edmonds, 2007). This allows for the error terms in the estimation of both decisions to be correlated, and thereby models the fact that the decisions are likely to be interrelated. This approach follows the assumption that the error terms are jointly normally distributed. Such an estimation would therefore be inappropriate if children only partake in either the labour market or in full time education, in which case the error distribution would become degenerate (Edmonds, 2007). If parents view the two choices as substitutes to some extent then we would expect the errors to be negatively correlated.

As shown in Table 5, the marginal effects are calculated for the four possible combinations of decisions for the activity of a child, namely to only work, only attend school, combine work and school or remain idle (partaking in neither activity). This allows us to describe the correlations between the four choices and the included characteristics related to a child and their household.

We can see that age is related to each of the four possible statuses. For each of the four categories, the direction of the effect changes around the age 12 or 13. This means that a child is less likely to be only in employment until the age of 12, after which the likelihood they are only in employment increases with age. For being idle, this pattern and turning point is similar with a decrease in probability with age up to the age of 13. The probability of only going to school or partaking in both activities shows the opposite trend, increasing up to the age of 12 and 13 respectively and then dropping. From this, we can see that school attendance seems to change with age, first increasing and then dropping as we also saw in Figure 2.

We also see that girls are less likely to be in paid employment, with the marginal effect on being only in employment and in both activities being significantly negative. This masks the involvement of girls in household tasks, which was reported to be 79.3% vs. 63.5% for boys in Table 5.9 of the CLS report (ILO & CSA, 2018). Education of the household head is significantly associated with the activities carried out by children. More education of the household head is associated with a lower probability of a child being only in employment, greater probability to be only in school. For the combination of school and work the pattern is less clear. Where the household head has primary school education only, the child is more likely to be both in school and work than where a household head has no education, but having secondary education is not significantly different from no education and having above secondary is associated with a lower probability of being in both activities. This is likely because children in which the household head is more educated are less likely to work and instead only attend school.

In qualitative interviews about the causes of child labour, family structure and integrity were themes which were raised, particularly in key informant interviews. We therefore include the gender of the household head and their marital status as potential correlates of a child's work and schooling participation status. Here we see that children living in female-headed households are less likely to be only working, with no discernible difference according to marital status. These children are also more likely to be only in school. The most likely children

to be combining schooling with work are living in traditional households headed by a married male. Where the household head is male and unmarried the child seems to be less likely to be combining school and work and more likely to be idle.

Higher household expenditure is associated with a higher probability to be solely in education or idle and a lower probability to be in work, though the correlation is insignificant for working only. While the number of assets is perhaps a poor proxy for wealth, many of the other factors in our index are listed individually within the regression equation, so we consider this as an indicator of wealth. Also, we chose not to use the wealth index as it includes land owned which is instructive to include separately in the regression. Similar to expenditure, households with more assets are less likely to have children only in work and more likely to have children who are only in school. However, ownership of more assets is associated with a higher probability to combine the two activities and a lower probability of being idle. Despite having value as an asset, land area owned shows a different pattern, with more land owned by a household associated with a lower probability of being only in school or being idle, with a higher probability of working, either in the category of only working as well as combining work and schooling. Another factor often incorporated into a wealth index is that of a household's water source. As well as indicating wealth, a water source may be directly linked to a child working (or even being in child labour) due to the need to fetch water for the household from a source far from the house or fields. We see that having any source other than a pipe inside the compound is associated with a higher probability to work. This result reflecting the previous finding in Table 9.1 of the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (NCLS, 2015), that child labourers and working children are more likely to live in households sourcing water from wells/ponds/rivers, remains significant even with the inclusion of other measures of income and wealth, suggesting that the act of collecting water is indeed linked to child work. We also consider a dummy for using electricity as light source as an indicator of wealth as well as for the fact that a child cannot be sent to collect fuel for lighting in this case. Children in households lit with electricity are less likely to work (whether they attend school or not) and are more likely to only be in school. Overall, these results paint a picture that households which are more well off are less likely to have children working, with a marked difference in the rate of children only working without attending school.

Facing a natural shock that is common to all households in a geographical area does not seem to have a major impact on the probability to be working or in school, with the category only attending school marginally significantly positively correlated with having faced a natural shock. Idiosyncratic shocks which are specific to a household, on the other hand, seem to be strongly correlated with the options of only working and only attending school, with the former increasing and the latter seeming to decrease following a shock to the household. This suggests the use of child labour as a coping mechanism when facing idiosyncratic shocks unique to the household, but not to shocks facing the community as a whole, where crops potentially fail and so less harvest labour is demanded.

Children living in rural areas are more likely to be working, whether it is combined with school or not. The higher probability of working for these two groups (rural + only employment; rural + both activities) is equal to the lower probability in the category only attending school.

Table 5. Marginal effects of bivariate probit regression for the employment and school attendance decision

	Only employment		Only school		Both activities		Neither activity	
	dy/dx	Robust Std. Err.	dy/dx	Robust Std. Err.	dy/dx	Robust Std. Err.	dy/dx	Robust Std. Err.
Age	-0.074***	0.002	0.024***	0.003	0.237***	0.003	-0.187***	0.002
Age ²	0.003***	0.000	-0.002***	0.000	-0.009***	0.000	0.007***	0.000
Female	-0.052***	0.003	0.085***	0.003	-0.085***	0.003	0.052***	0.002
Dependency Ratio	0.006***	0.001	-0.006***	0.002	-0.003*	0.002	0.003**	0.001
<i>Education HH head (excluded: no education)</i>								
Primary school	-0.056***	0.003	0.065***	0.004	0.015***	0.004	-0.024***	0.003
Secondary	-0.088***	0.006	0.119***	0.010	-0.003	0.008	-0.027***	0.006
Above secondary	-0.099***	0.007	0.146***	0.012	-0.034***	0.009	-0.013	0.007
<i>Gender and marital status HH head (excluded: male married)</i>								
Male not married	0.013	0.010	-0.007	0.011	-0.041***	0.009	0.034***	0.008
Female married	-0.031***	0.005	0.046***	0.007	-0.032***	0.006	0.017***	0.005
Female not married	-0.026***	0.004	0.034***	0.005	-0.010*	0.005	0.001	0.004
ln(Expenditure)	-0.003	0.002	0.007**	0.003	-0.011***	0.002	0.007***	0.002
Number of assets ¹ owned	-0.009***	0.001	0.007***	0.001	0.013***	0.001	-0.011***	0.001
Land area (ha)	0.008***	0.001	-0.013***	0.001	0.012***	0.001	-0.007***	0.001
<i>Water source (excluded: pipe inside compound)</i>								
Pipe outside compound	0.021***	0.005	-0.034***	0.009	0.014*	0.007	-0.001	0.006
Well/spring/river/pond	0.069***	0.006	-0.101***	0.009	0.036***	0.008	-0.004	0.006
Other	0.087***	0.009	-0.117***	0.011	0.017	0.010	0.012	0.008
Electric light source	-0.088***	0.004	0.134***	0.007	-0.038***	0.006	-0.009	0.005
Natural shock	-0.011	0.007	0.018*	0.009	-0.014	0.008	0.008	0.006
Idiosyncratic shock	0.019***	0.003	-0.024***	0.004	0.007*	0.003	-0.002	0.003
Rural	0.115***	0.004	-0.204***	0.009	0.107***	0.007	-0.018**	0.006

Notes: The table shows average marginal effects of the named variables on the probability that the activity combination is chosen for the child

1. The 18 possible assets which can be owned include: automobile, tractor, motorcycle/bicycle, housing unit, animal-drawn cart, TV, Iron, DVD player, washing machine, oven, farm tools, refrigerator, computer, sewing machine, satellite/cable TV, landline telephone, mobile phone, radio/tape player

Consequences of child labour

- School life expectancy is lower for child labourers and the age-grade distortion is more severe.
- Exposure to hazards in the workplace increases with age.
- Both hours of work and hours of chores begin to have a negative effect on school attendance after 20 hours of chores.

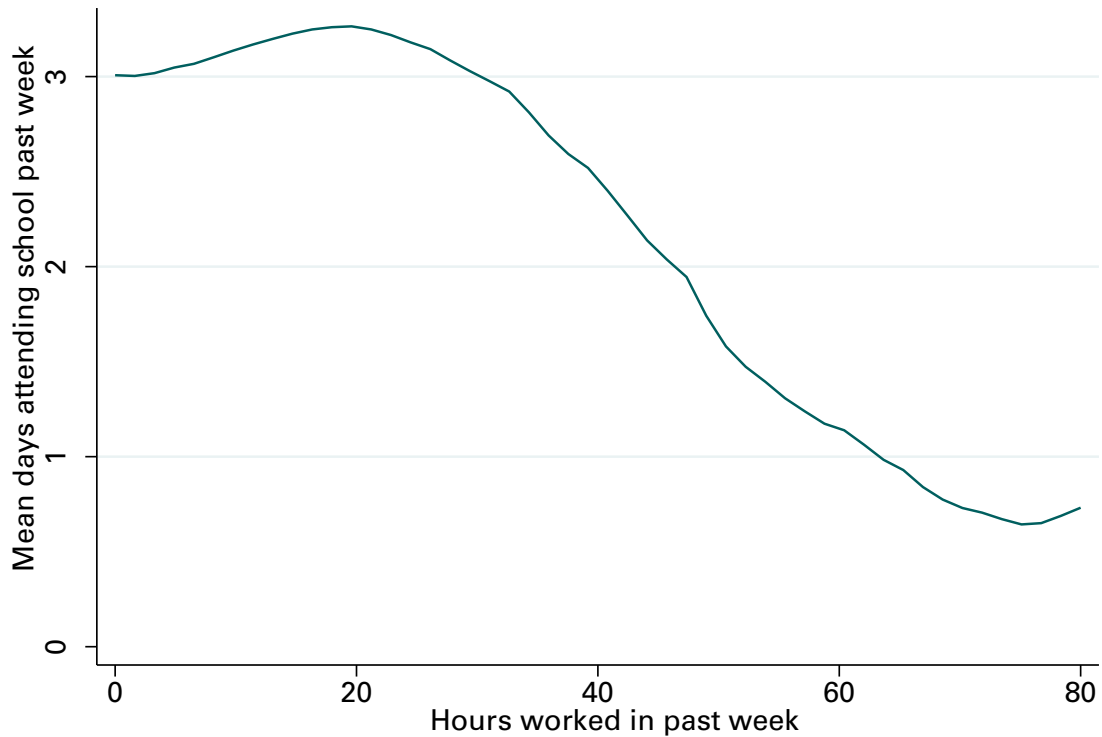
While it is difficult to disentangle the direction of causality between variables in a cross-section of data, it may nonetheless be instructive to consider some outcomes that may be affected by children working or being engaged in child labour.

School attendance and attainment

One of the most-often mentioned potential consequences of child labour, or children working, is claimed to be reduced school attendance. Children have a finite number of hours in the day, which they can allocate to different activities such as working or attending school. Below in Figure 12, we plot weekly working hours against the probability of school attendance and see a negative correlation, which means that as the number of working hours increases, the probability of school attendance declines. It should be noted, however, that the highest probability of attending school is not at zero hours, i.e. for children not working, but rather for those working a small number of hours. Beyond roughly 30 hours per week the likelihood of attending school drops markedly. While the graph does initially slope upwards (positive relationship between the two variables), this is not a steep rise and so the key message is perhaps that attendance does not begin to drop until children are working more than 20 hours per week. A quadratic fit estimation suggests that the probability of attending school is maximised at 21 hours of work per week. A similar result was found for rural children in 1999–2000 where the peak probability of school enrolment was for those children who worked around 30 hours per week (Bedi & Admassie, 2015). This somewhat surprising result suggests that carrying out some work may have had a positive impact on school attendance in 2015 and so the complete elimination of child work may not improve school enrolment. This result also holds for the number of days attending school in the past week, with the number of days increasing by hours worked up to around 20 hours, meaning that both on the margin of school enrolment and actually attending access to education does not drop until more than 20 hours are worked.

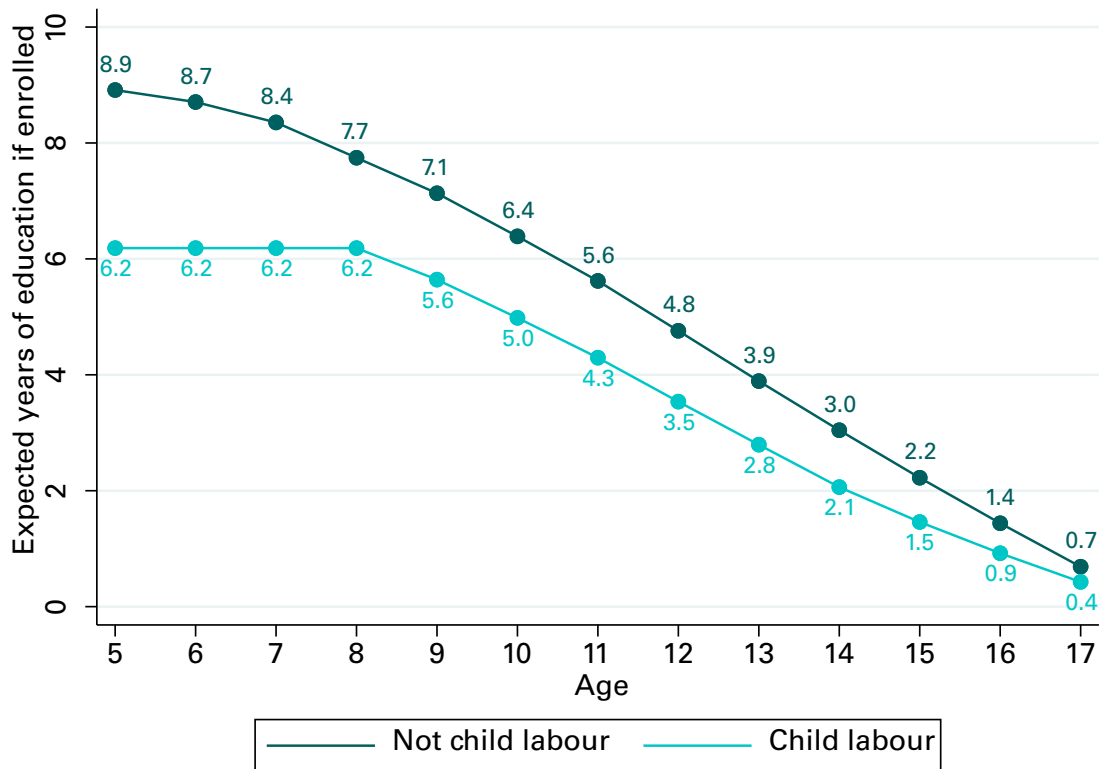
Similar to the results for hours of work, hours of chores also begin to have a negative effect on school attendance after 20 hours of chores, as can be seen in Annex 3 in Figure A - 3. Together, this suggests that policy should be concerned specifically with children having responsibilities in terms of productive activities for more than 20 hours per week as school attendance drops after reaching this number of hours.

Figure 12. School attendance by hours worked



Note: non-parametric estimates

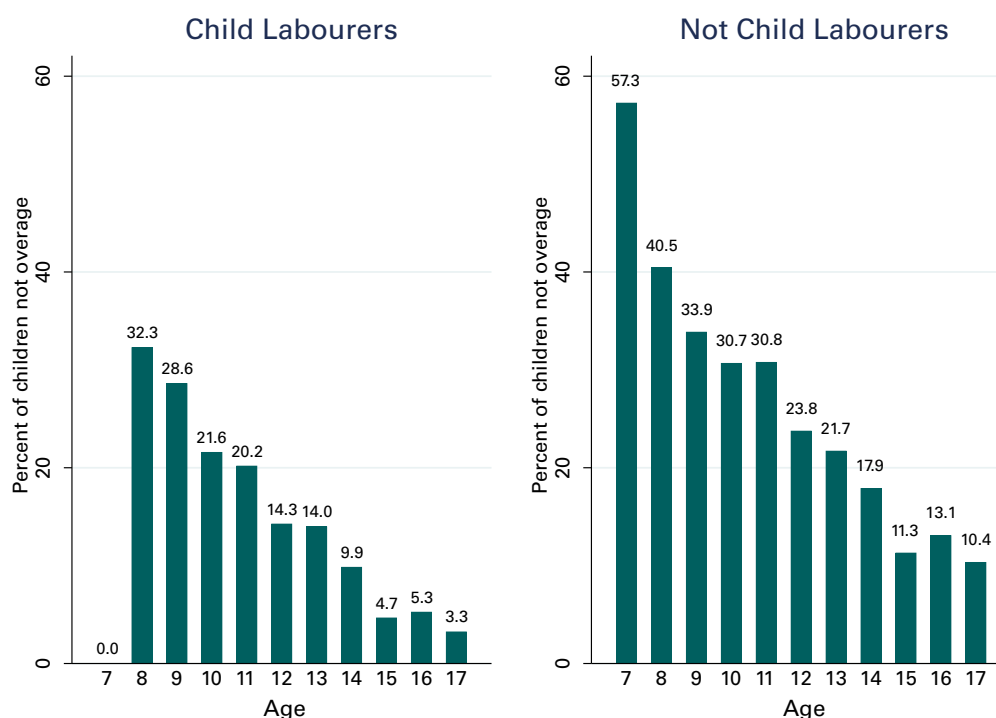
Figure 13. School life expectancy by child labour status and age



School life expectancy (SLE) is a measure of the number of years of education that a child of a given age can expect to complete. It is calculated as the sum of age-specific enrolment

rates for the specified levels of education (UNESCO, 2020) and is shown in Figure 13. Child labourers' SLE is lower than for children not in child labour at all ages. At age 7, the usual age of entering school, the gap is more than two years, but narrows over time, in particular after the age of 14. This helps illustrate that child labourers are less likely to stay in school and so attain a lower level of education. These numbers reflect both those who never attend school as well as dropout rates, increasing as age increases.

Figure 14. Child labour and age-grade distortion



In Figure 14, we show the percentage of children who are in the correct grade for their age or in a higher grade. More than half are in the correct grade or above only for those aged 7 and not in child labour, i.e. in first grade. Note that children engaged in child labour are more likely to be overage for the class they are in at all ages, in particular at age 7 where no child labourers are enrolled in school. Children being overage for the class they are in may partially be due to children falling behind while already enrolled in school or may be due to children beginning school late. Of school aged children (aged 7–17), 47.75% began school by their seventh birthday. This figure is higher in urban areas at 72.31% than rural areas at 39.65%. An alternative is that children fall behind during school, having to repeat years of school.

Health

Among working children, 11% declared suffering a health problem because of their work. In Figure 15 we show that children carrying out work classified as child labour are more likely to suffer an injury or illness due to work. Taking the weighted average across urban and rural areas for both genders in the lower panel we find that 12.4% of child labourers suffer an illness or injury due to work vs. 5.7% of children working but not classified as child labourers. We also see that the risk of illness or injury is higher in rural areas for both genders, while there are no major differences by gender, with urban females only marginally more likely to suffer injury or illness and no differences between rural males and females.

Figure 15. Injury or illness due to work by gender, urban-rural split and child labour status

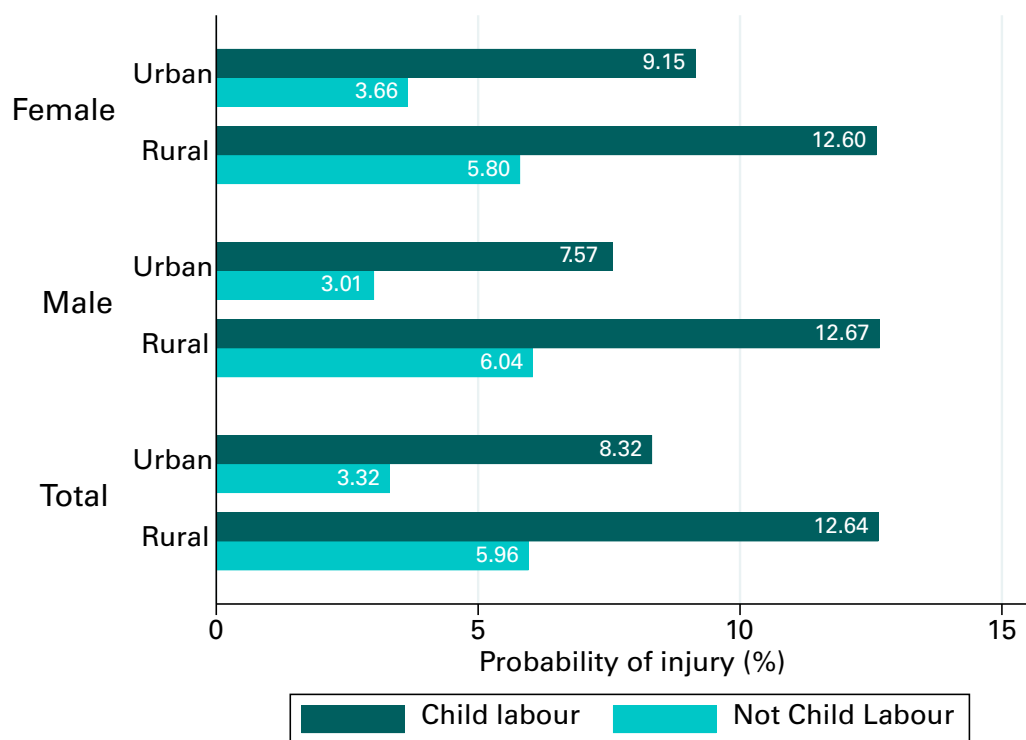
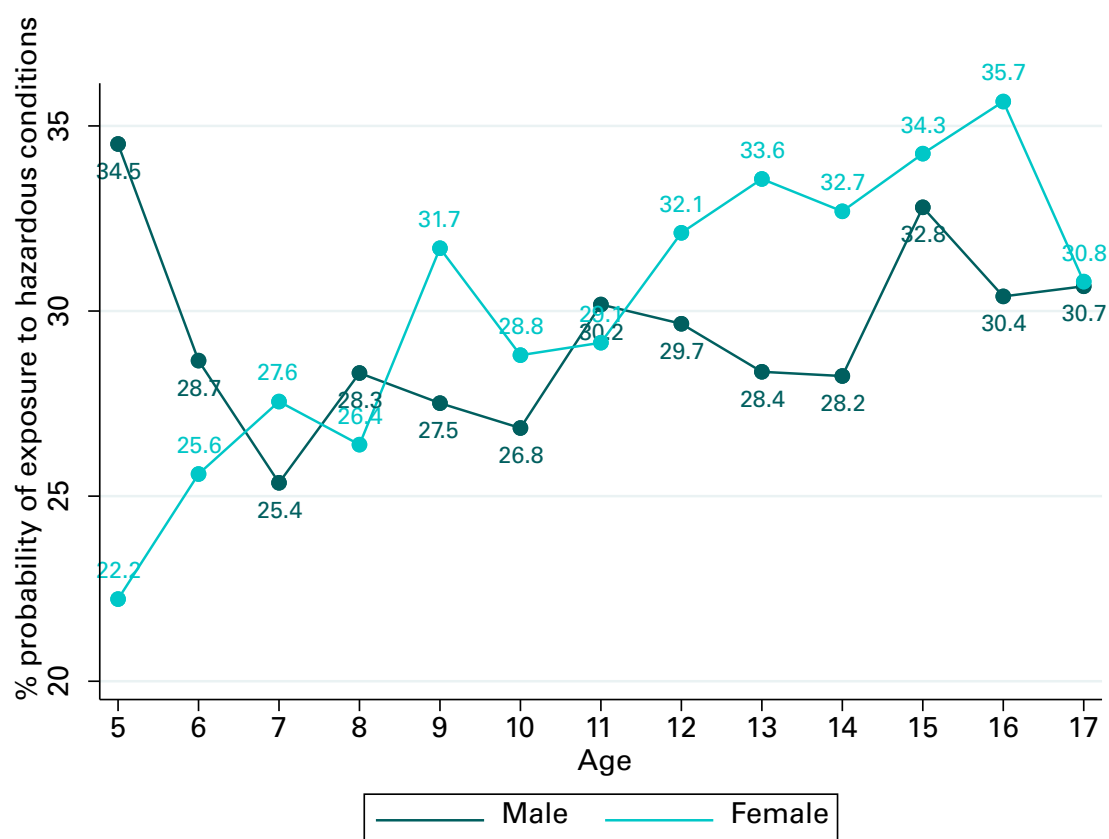


Figure 16. Health hazard exposure by gender and age



Of working children, 29.7% report facing specific hazards at work¹⁷, accounting for 15.2% of all children in Ethiopia. Due to the fact that more children are economically active in rural areas, this leads to more children being exposed to potentially hazardous work (and therefore being in child labour). More boys than girls are exposed to hazards at work because they are more likely to be economically active. However, when considering the working population of children, the picture is less clear. At young ages, fewer children are working, but those boys who are working seem to be relatively likely to face hazards. Across the rest of the age distribution, working girls seem to be at least as likely to face hazards as working boys.

3.3 Youth and the labour market

- Youth tend to combine school and work, rather than only go to school or only to work.
- The vulnerable population of NEETs is larger among females and in urban areas.
- Labour underutilisation is more prevalent in rural areas and for females.
- Youth workers are mostly employed in low-skilled jobs.
- The majority of youth are employed as contributing family workers (90%).
- Agriculture is the main sector of employment (81%), although the service sector dominates in urban areas (63%).
- 57% of youth have some grade of primary school as their highest education. It is more common in rural areas and for females to have no education at all (41%).
- There is a positive correlation between education and youth earnings.

In this section, we explore the labour-market outcomes of youth, focussing on those aged 15–17 for three main reasons. First, focusing on children above the age of 15 allows us to discuss outcomes such as unemployment and underemployment. Although these outcomes can be mathematically computed for the group of children aged 5 to 14, the interpretation has limitations in terms of the policy response expected for this group. This is the case, for instance, of the unemployment rate, as children should not be seeking work when they are young and therefore policy action is not expected to focus on providing these opportunities for them. Second, the group of children aged 15–17 is not only important for policies regarding child labour, but also for those addressing youth employment and decent work, as specified in SDG 8.¹⁸ Thirdly, children who are involved in child work are less likely than children not in child labour to attend school or complete schooling and this is particularly relevant for the older bracket of children aged 15–17 where only 49.7% of child workers are attending school compared to 81.3% of non-working children. Hence, by the time they can join the labour market they will be lacking skills to access better jobs.

We describe the main activities performed by Ethiopian youth aged 15–17 in the CLS, their participation in education and in the labour market, the industry where they are occupied, and the skill level required for the activities they perform. For the skill levels, we follow the ISCO-08

17 This includes carrying heavy loads, operating machinery/heavy equipment, or exposure to any of the following: fire, gas, flames, loud noise or vibration, extreme cold or heat, dangerous tools, working underground, working at heights, working in water, working in dark or confined spaces, insufficient ventilation, chemicals (pesticides, glues etc.), explosives, and other conditions bad for your health.

18 Generally, youth are considered to be individuals aged 15-24. However, the NCLS data is representative only for individuals aged 5-17. Those aged 18-24 may therefore be underrepresented in the case that they live in households without any individual within the target age group for the NCLS. If the portion of youth missing from the NCLS sample are systematically different from those included, this would bias our results. We therefore chose to exclude those aged 18-24.

standards (ILO, 2008).¹⁹ Additionally, we analyse the labour market and labour underutilisation indicators for Ethiopian youth aged 15–24 using the LFS. This survey is particularly relevant for the analysis of youth prospects since it allows us to identify youth that are unemployed, reflecting to what extent the Ethiopian economy is able to absorb youth entrants, and, most interestingly, youth that are not in the active labour force but that enter in the extended labour force, taking into consideration, for instance, youth that are available to work but due to not actively seeking work, are not considered to be part of the active labour force.

3.3.1 Youth use of time

Table 6 shows the activities of Ethiopian youth aged 15–17 in four categories: work only, study only, work and study, neither work nor study. Around 26% of Ethiopian youth only works, while around 41% combines work and study. Youths living in rural areas are more likely to be engaged only in work (30%), and work and study (46%) than youth living in urban areas (13% only in work and 21% work and study). This goes in conjunction with the observation that youth in urban areas are more likely to devote their time only to school (59%) compared to youth in rural areas (17%). Additionally, there are important gender differences in youth use of time. Females are more likely than males to study only (36% vs. 17%) and to be neither working nor studying (11% vs. 3%), and less likely to work only (21% vs. 31%) and work and study (32% vs. 48%). Although there are no big differences between rural and urban areas in the incidence of youth neither studying nor working (6.9% rural vs. 6.5% urban), females are more likely to fall in this category if they live in rural areas (13% rural vs. 7% urban), whereas the reverse is true for males (3% rural vs. 6% urban). Difficulty accessing jobs, a lack of willingness, natural or idiosyncratic household shocks, feeling discouraged and social norms are some of the reasons that could explain why a youth is neither engaged in work nor education. Note that most children aged 15–17 years are engaged in household chores. Once accounting also for chores, the extent of idleness is very low and equal between male and female youth (at 0.8%, see Table A - 4 in Annex 2).

Table 6. Activities of youth aged 15–17

Activities	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total						
Work only	1,073,945	31.3	614,816	20.6	1,688,761	26.3
Study only	595,577	17.4	1,085,616	36.4	1,681,193	26.2
Work and study	1,651,007	48.2	952,682	31.9	2,603,688	40.6
Neither working nor Studying	107,232	3.1	329,594	11.1	436,826	6.8
Total	3,427,762	100.0	2,982,707	100.0	6,410,469	100.0
Urban						
Work only	79,496	12.6	118,248	13.9	197,744	13.4
Study only	344,550	54.8	525,080	61.8	869,630	58.8
Work and study	166,629	26.5	148,804	17.5	315,433	21.3
Neither working nor Studying	37,988	6.0	57,930	6.8	95,919	6.5
Total	628,663	100.0	850,063	100.0	1,478,726	100.0
Rural						
Work only	994,449	35.5	496,567	23.3	1,491,017	30.2
Study only	251,028	9.0	560,536	26.3	811,563	16.5
Work and study	1,484,378	53.0	803,878	37.7	2,288,255	46.4
Neither working nor studying	69,244	2.5	271,664	12.7	340,908	6.9
Total	2,799,099	100.0	2,132,644	100.0	4,931,743	100.0

Note: Population of children aged 15 to 17 years old. *Source:* Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015

19 Further details of the classification can be found in Annex 1 in Table A - 1.

3.3.2 Youth activities: status in the labour force

Around seven out of every ten young persons aged 15 to 17 years old in Ethiopia are in the labour force and the same proportion in education. However, around 7% of Ethiopia's youth is neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET youth). The NEET population differs from the inactive and out-of-school population in that it also includes those who are unemployed and therefore considered part of the labour force. This is a highly vulnerable group, since they are not developing their productive potential either by acquiring skills at school or in the labour market. Moreover, the prevalence of NEETs is often related to a reduced capacity that youth have to find employment, with the aggravating factor that the longer the time spent in NEET status, the lower the work prospects and income-generation capacities (OECD, 2015).

The labour force participation rate is higher in rural areas (76.7%), highest in the Benshangul region (76.3%) and lowest in Addis Ababa (17.7%), which also has a high unemployment rate (7.2%). In general, the region Benshangul has the highest labour force participation and the lowest percentage of NEET youth (5%). By area of residence, 80.1% of youths are in education in urban areas compared to 63% in rural areas. The percentages of youth in NEET status are higher in urban areas and for females which could be driven by different factors such as women having problems accessing the labour market or staying at home to do household chores.

Table 7. Labour market indicators for youth by area of residence, sex and region

Category		% of total population					% of active population
		Labour force participation	Education participation	Inactive and out of school	NEET	Employment ratio	Unemployment rate
Area of residence	Urban	36.1	80.1	5.8	7.2	34.7	3.8
	Rural	76.7	62.9	6.9	6.9	76.6	0.1
Sex	Male	79.8	65.5	3.0	3.3	79.5	0.4
	Female	53.0	68.3	10.8	11.3	52.6	0.9
Region	Tigray	66.8	69.0	7.4	8.3	65.9	1.3
	Afar	66.1	53.7	7.7	8.2	65.7	0.7
	Amhara	76.1	63.6	4.6	5.0	75.7	0.5
	Oromiya	70.1	63.4	7.5	7.8	69.8	0.4
	Somali	57.1	50.4	13.5	13.5	57.1	0.0
	Benshangul	76.3	71.7	4.8	5.0	76.1	0.3
	SNNP	65.0	74.6	6.7	6.8	64.9	0.2
	Gambella	45.0	89.6	5.5	5.5	45.0	0.0
	Harari	38.9	74.8	8.9	9.2	38.6	0.8
	Addis Ababa	17.7	83.9	5.7	7.0	16.4	7.2
	Dire Dawa	23.2	77.0	10.3	12.5	21.0	9.3
	Total	67.3	66.8	6.6	7.0	67.0	0.5

Note: Population of children aged 15 to 17 years old. *Source:* Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

3.3.3 Youth job characteristics: labour underutilisation

In order to provide insights into the existing opportunities in the labour market for young adults and the quality of the available employment, we use the LFS 2013 since it provides more information to measure the labour underutilisation (LU) indicators as per the 19th ICLS (p. 15). The most widespread of these indicators is the unemployment rate. However, working people

might not have the luxury of a decent job and end up working fewer hours than they would like (underemployed), while inactive people might be willing to have a job but have not found one (potential labour force). Hence, adding these groups in the analysis brings new insights on the access to the Ethiopian labour market that youth have in terms of unemployment rate (LU1), combined rate of time-related employment and unemployment (LU2), combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (LU3), composite measure of labour underutilisation (LU4).^{20, 21}

Box 1. Labour underutilisation

LU 1: Unemployment rate: $\frac{\text{Persons in unemployment}}{\text{labour force}} * 100$

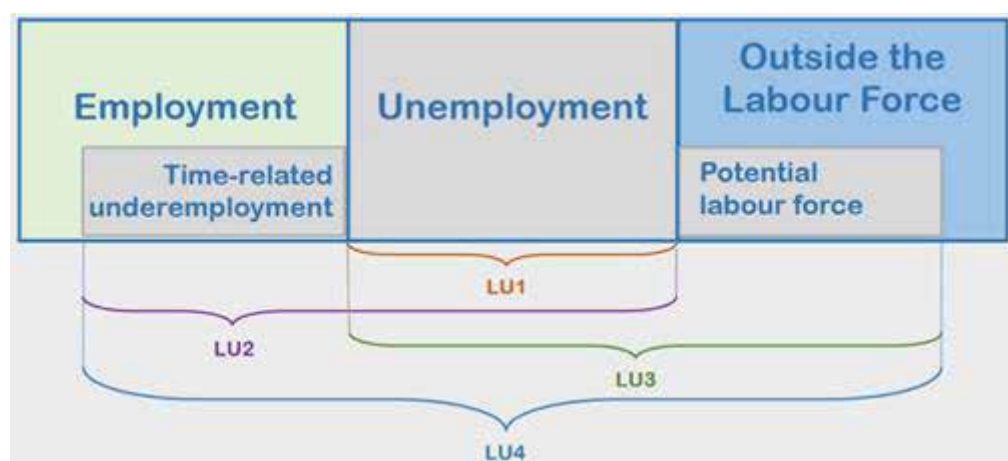
LU2: Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment:
 $\frac{(\text{Persons in time-related underemployment} + \text{persons in unemployment})}{\text{labour force}} * 100$

LU3: Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force:
 $\frac{(\text{Persons in unemployment} + \text{potential labour force})}{\text{extended labour force}} * 100$

LU4: Composite measure of labour underutilisation:
 $\frac{(\text{Persons in time-related underemployment} + \text{persons in unemployment} + \text{potential labour force})}{\text{extended labour force}} * 100$

The relation between these indicators is depicted in the following graph. Labour underutilisation is represented by the blocks in grey.

Figure 17. Composition of the working-age population in terms of labour-force status



Source: ILO, ILOSTAT - Spotlight on Work Statistics, 2018

20 For more information about the computation of the measures (see Annex 1 – Definitions).

21 As a general note, the “relaxed” unemployment rate was used in the LFS 2013 Analytical Report (CSA). The difference between the “strict” and the “relaxed” definition is that the seeking-work criterion is relaxed, i.e. relaxed unemployment would refer only to people not having worked in the reference week but being available to work. For the purpose of international comparisons, this report will use the strict unemployment definition.

The provision of unemployment benefits is difficult in developing countries, where informal markets play an important role in the economy. As noted in ILO (2018), other measures of labour underutilisation—such as underemployment and potential labour force—therefore seem more appropriate than merely looking at the unemployment rate.

Table 8. Labour underutilisation indicators for the youth

Category		Unemployment rate (LU1) %	Combined rate of time-related under-employment and unemployment (LU2) %	Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (LU3) %	Composite measure of labour under-utilisation (LU4) %
Area of residence	Rural	1.3	23.5	3.5	25.2
	Urban	14.6	30.4	24.8	38.7
Sex	Male	2.6	20.9	5.0	22.8
	Female	4.4	28.6	9.6	32.5
Region	15–19 years	2.1	21.9	5.6	24.7
	20–24 years	4.9	27.6	9.1	30.7
	Tigray	3.7	22.4	8.4	26.2
	Afar	3.4	14.1	8.8	19.0
	Amhara	2.9	24.2	6.0	26.7
	Oromiya	2.7	25.5	5.6	27.8
	Somali	3.1	11.0	8.6	16.1
	Benshangul	2.2	20.0	4.9	22.2
	SNNP	2.8	26.5	7.0	29.7
	Gambella	2.5	16.1	8.1	20.9
	Harari	9.0	18.6	14.1	23.1
	Addis Ababa	20.0	24.2	30.9	34.5
	Dire Dawa	12.1	21.0	20.7	28.8
Total		3.5	24.6	7.3	27.6

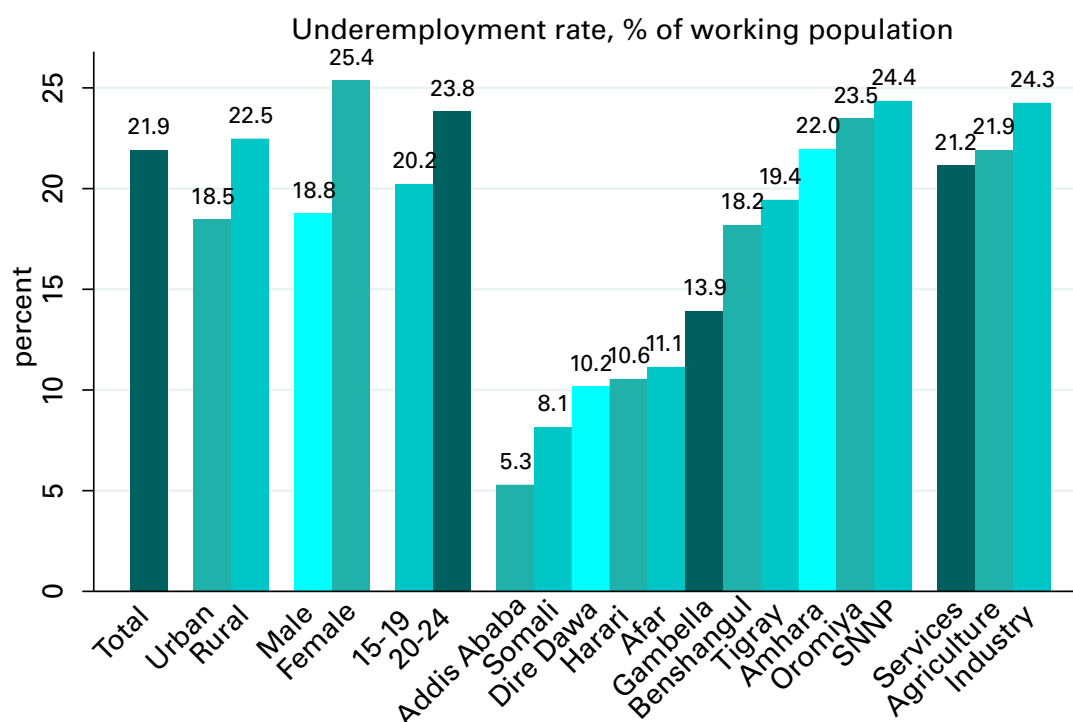
Source: Authors' calculations using the LFS 2013.

The unemployment rate for the Ethiopian youth aged 15–24 is 3.5%. However, when we consider unemployment and underemployment together, the ratio rises to almost 25%, suggesting that access to jobs in one instance and *better* jobs in another poses a problem for a quarter of the Ethiopian youth in the labour force. This combined ratio (LU2) is higher in urban (30.4%) than in rural areas (23.5%). Although the potential labour force represents only around 3% of the youth, there are significant differences between the unemployment rate (LU1) and the combined rate of unemployment (LU3). Particularly, there is a 2-percentage-points difference between LU1 and LU3 for rural areas, whereas the difference for urban areas rises to around 10 percentage points, meaning that in urban areas there is a meaningful proportion of youth that would enter in the potential labour force, that is, youth that were unavailable to start immediately but are now seeking a job, or potential job seekers who had not previously sought a job but were willing and able to start a job.

Since time-related underemployment seems to be the main component of the LU4 indicator, the following graph describes time-related unemployment in more detail. Of working Ethiopian youth, 22% is underemployed with the rates higher in rural areas (22.5% rural vs. 18.5% urban) for females (25.4% females vs. 18.8% males). The region with the highest percentage

is SNNP (24.4%) and about one out of every four young people working in the industry sector is underemployed.

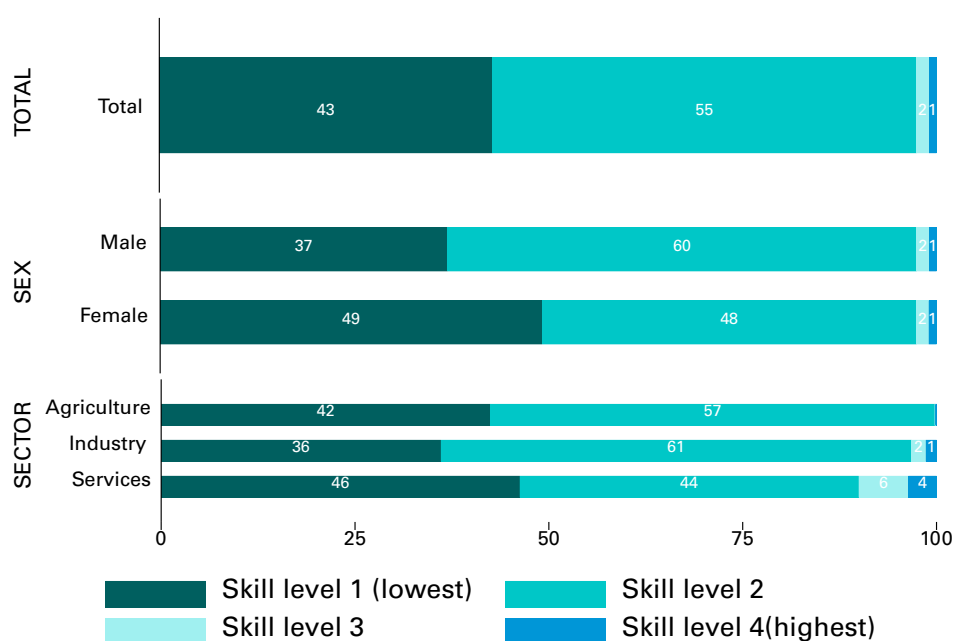
Figure 18. Time-related underemployment rate, by area of residence, sex, age group and region



In general, unemployment seems to be an urban problem, while underemployment is more prevalent in rural areas. This is a key finding, since it shows that even when youth are employed, they do not work as much as they would like to. Although major urban cities such as Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa have high unemployment rates compared to the rest of the Ethiopian regions, the underemployment rates are among the lowest (between 5.3% to 10.2%).

The above-described indicators (LU1-LU4) refer to quantitative labour underutilisation, i.e. they describe the amount of labour that could potentially be used or better used that is not. To this end, inquiring about the Skill levels that the market demand is crucial. Figure 19 shows the frequency of occupations falling in four categories of Skill level as per the ISCO-08. The Skill levels are defined over the complexity and the range of tasks that the duties performed carry, with Skill level 1 and 2 being the lowest. Of the youth, 85% are engaged in activities requiring Skill level 2, and 15% in Skill level 1. This figure implies that most of the occupations in which youth are engaged require relatively advanced literacy, ability to perform basic arithmetical operations, and communication skills. On the other hand, the second most important Skill level in this context, Skill level 1, typically entails simple and routine physical or manual tasks, and in some cases might require basic literacy and numeracy. Females are more likely to perform tasks of Skill level 1 compared to males (17% vs. 13%), and industry and services are the industries absorbing people in jobs of this level, with 28% of the youth population working in these sectors in Skill level 1 for both sectors. It should be noted that subsistence farming is classified as Skill level 2, while in some countries children under 18 working in agriculture are more likely to be classified under elementary occupations (and thereby Skill level 1). In the next section, we investigate the labour underutilisation through skill-jobs mismatches, also referred to as 'skill-related inadequate employment' or 'over-education'.

Figure 19. Occupation skill levels for the youth



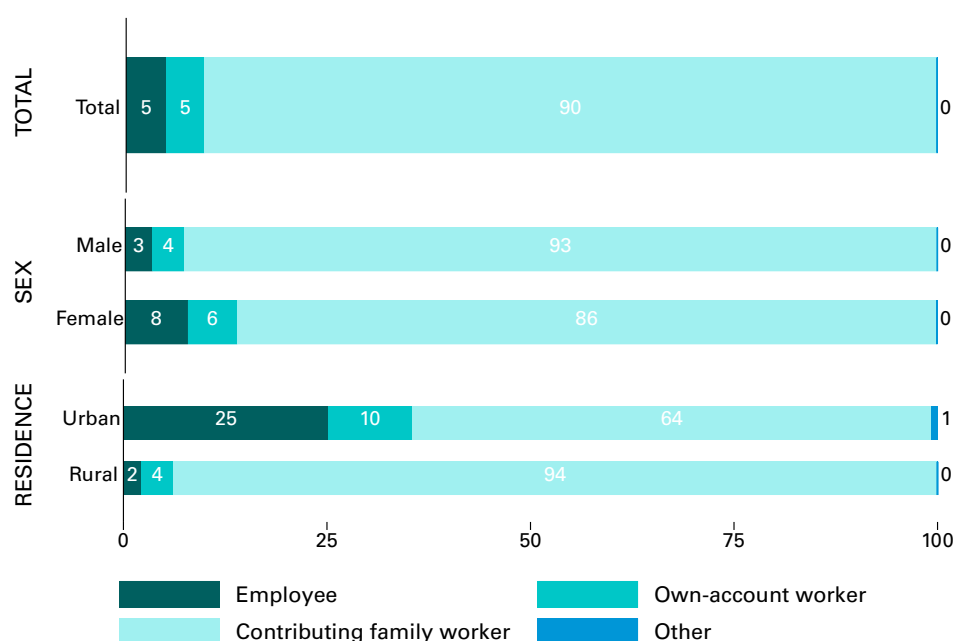
3.3.4 Youth job characteristics and education

In the previous section, we discussed the labour market access that youth have in terms of unemployment, underemployment and labour underutilisation. In this section, we explore the extent to which labour market access is aligned with the characteristics of the youth labour force in the Ethiopian context. We discuss the employment status of youth, the sector where they work, the skill levels required, and the education levels attended as key indicators to evaluate whether the market is absorbing the labour force according to its characteristics.

The analysis performed in this section uses the data of the CLS 2015 Ethiopia and focuses on the population of youth 15–17 years old. The reduced sample is adopted due to the limited representativeness of populations outside the group of children 5–17 years old. The sample, nevertheless, allows for disaggregation of gender, place of residence, economic sector, among other characteristics.

First, we observe that 90% of the Ethiopian working youth are family workers, with a higher percentage in rural areas (94%) and for males (93%). In urban areas, around 35% of youth work as an employee or own-account worker. Family workers often face a narrow development scope given that they are mostly unpaid (or their remuneration is destined for the pool of household income) and have limited job growth perspectives. Moreover, among family workers, there are important aspects to discern in the kind of activities that they perform. We find, for instance, that (family workers are mostly found in rural areas (91.55% of total family workers); (family workers are more likely to be engaged in hazardous work (82% of youth doing hazardous work are family workers) in hazardous industries (61.8% of youth in hazardous industries are family workers) and have a hazardous occupation (52.7% of youth working in hazardous occupations); (family workers are more prone to work for hazardous long periods (82.4% of youth working for long periods are family workers) and to work in hazardous conditions (88.4% of youth working in hazardous conditions are family workers); but (family workers are less likely to work at night (0.97% of youth working at night).

Figure 20. Employment status of youth (age 15–17)



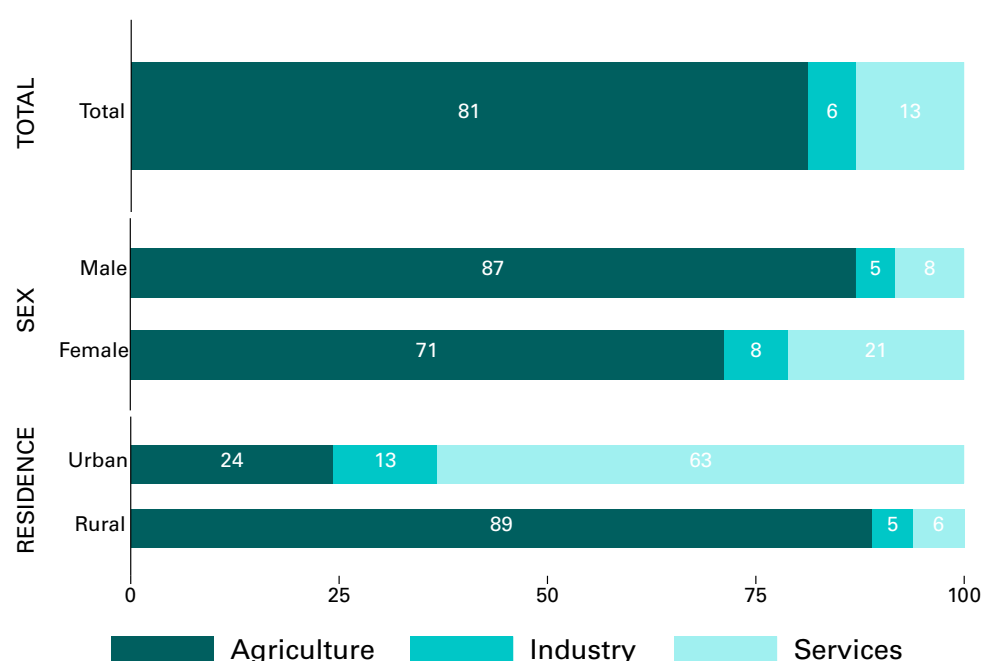
Source: Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

In relation to the productive sectors where the youth work, we find that eight out of ten young working Ethiopians are engaged in agriculture. The percentage is higher in rural areas (89%) and for males (87%). Even though it is expected that youth support their family's agricultural activities, for example in the form of subsistence farming, the large incidence of youth working in agriculture raises at least two concerns over the quality of work with which youth are confronted. First, according to (Forastieri, 2000), agricultural conditions for workers are characterised by low earnings, little access to social protection, and underlying precarious working conditions (e.g. higher chances of injuries, no damage compensation, long hours of work and competing tasks such as household chores and food production). Second, agricultural income is often subject to climate shocks (e.g. droughts and cyclones), local and international price shocks and land insecurity, making workers of this sector vulnerable to poverty. This situation is reflected in the Ethiopian context where annual growth in the agriculture sector was found to be 3.5% in 2018, compared to industry (12.2%), and services (8.8%), despite the fact that agriculture represents 31% of the national GDP, a similar percentage prevalent for industry (27%), and services (36.5%).²²

While females are mostly engaged in agriculture (71%), a significant percentage work in services (21%). In urban areas, the major economic sector is services (63%), followed by agriculture (24%). It is observed, therefore, that in urban areas the services sector provides the most opportunities to the youth. Overall, these findings are consistent with the economic situation of the labour force in Ethiopia, where ILO estimated that agriculture accounted for 68% of the labour force in 2016, followed by services with 21%, and industry 10.9% (modelled ILO estimates). The youth, nevertheless, are more concentrated in agriculture, and less in services and industry according to the estimates we find using the CLS 2015.

22 Data source: World Bank national accounts data, and OECD National Accounts data files.

Figure 21. Sector of employment of the youth



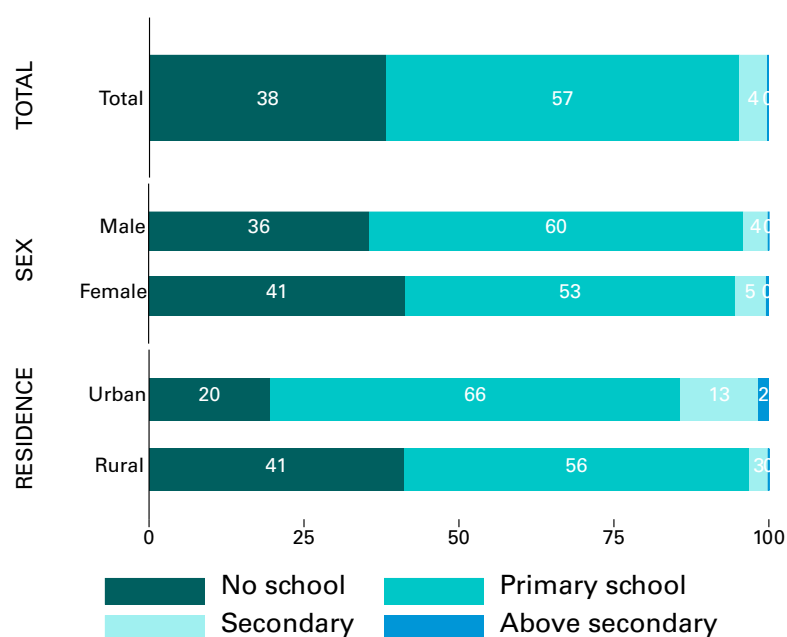
Source: Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

The situation of the youth 15–17 years old that are not currently attending school²³ in terms of education level last attended can be seen in Figure 22. Around 57% of the youth achieved at least one grade in primary school, whereas 38% never attended school. The percentage of youth that never attended school is larger in rural areas, where it is found to be 41% compared to 20% in urban areas, an observation that is consistent with the lower proportion of youth that attended primary and secondary school in rural areas. We disaggregate the youth educational attainment into individual grades by urban and rural areas in Table 9. Overall, the incidence of youth with the highest grade from Grades 2 to 6 seems to be rather uniform, as there is no clear increasing or decreasing pattern. However, when comparing rural and urban areas, it is evidenced that in rural areas the youth tend to drop out more during the first four grades, whereas in urban areas, dropouts tend to occur more after Grade 5.

These results refer to two different dimensions of schooling. First, education access seems to be a challenge for the youth, especially those living in rural areas, where the prevalence of youth without any education doubles that found in urban areas. Secondly, school retention seems to be an equally relevant aspect for rural and urban regions, although the timing of the dropouts tends to favour urban areas. Although females display a higher percentage of no education, there is no clear evidence that they also drop out from school earlier than males.

²³ Of all youth aged 15–17 years, a total of 33% are not attending school.

Figure 22. Highest education level of youth aged 15–17 currently not attending school



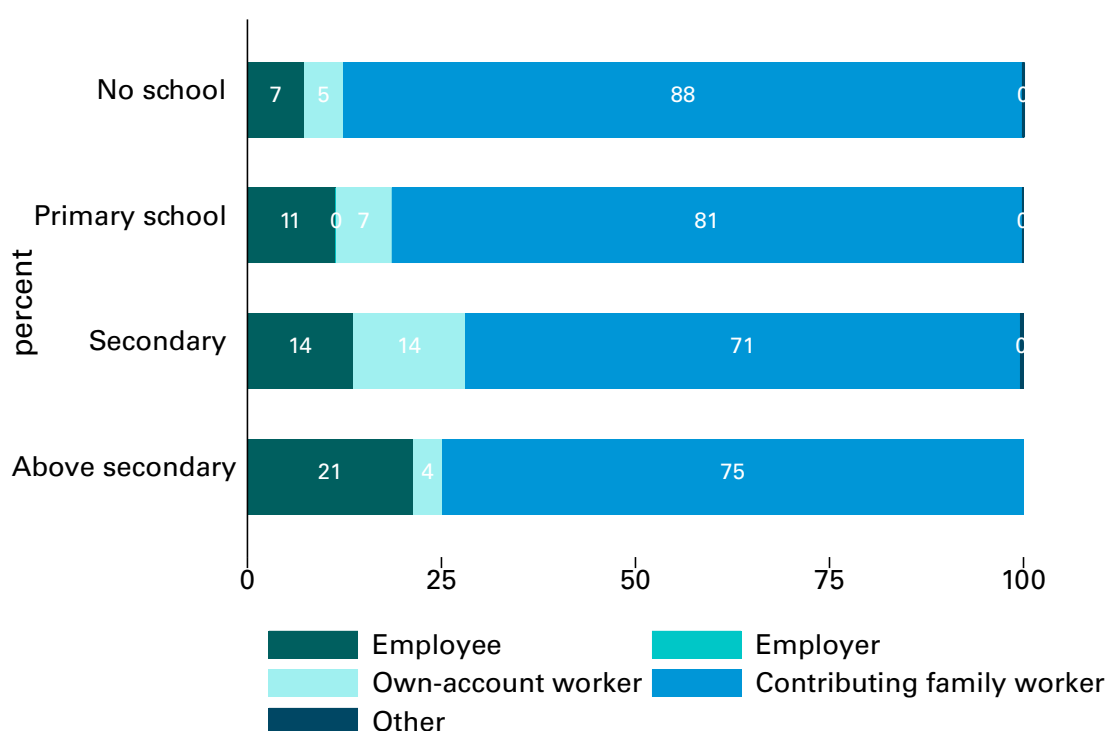
Note: Youth that achieved any grade between Grade 1 and Grade 8, are counted in Primary school. This means that the percentages include youth that did not complete primary school but attended and achieved a grade in this grade range. Source: Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

Table 9. Youth not attending school that attended primary school in the past

Primary school	Overall %	Urban %	Rural %
Grade 1	8.3	2.8	9.3
Grade 2	17.7	11.0	19.0
Grade 3	15.3	10.9	16.2
Grade 4	16.1	14.8	16.4
Grade 5	13.1	13.6	13.0
Grade 6	12.6	21.0	11.0
Grade 7	8.3	14.4	7.1
Grade 8	8.6	11.7	8.0
Total	100	100	100

When we analyse the highest level of education and employment status, the percentage of unpaid family workers reduces as the level of education increases. Of the working youth who are currently not attending school and have no education, 88% work as a family worker; while this is the case for 71% with secondary education. The percentage working as employees consistently increases with the level of education, reaching 21% for the youth with above secondary education. This shows that improving the human capital of the youth could potentially increase their employment status. However, it is difficult to separate this effect from a rural-urban divide.

Figure 23. Youth currently working but not in education by highest education level and status in employment

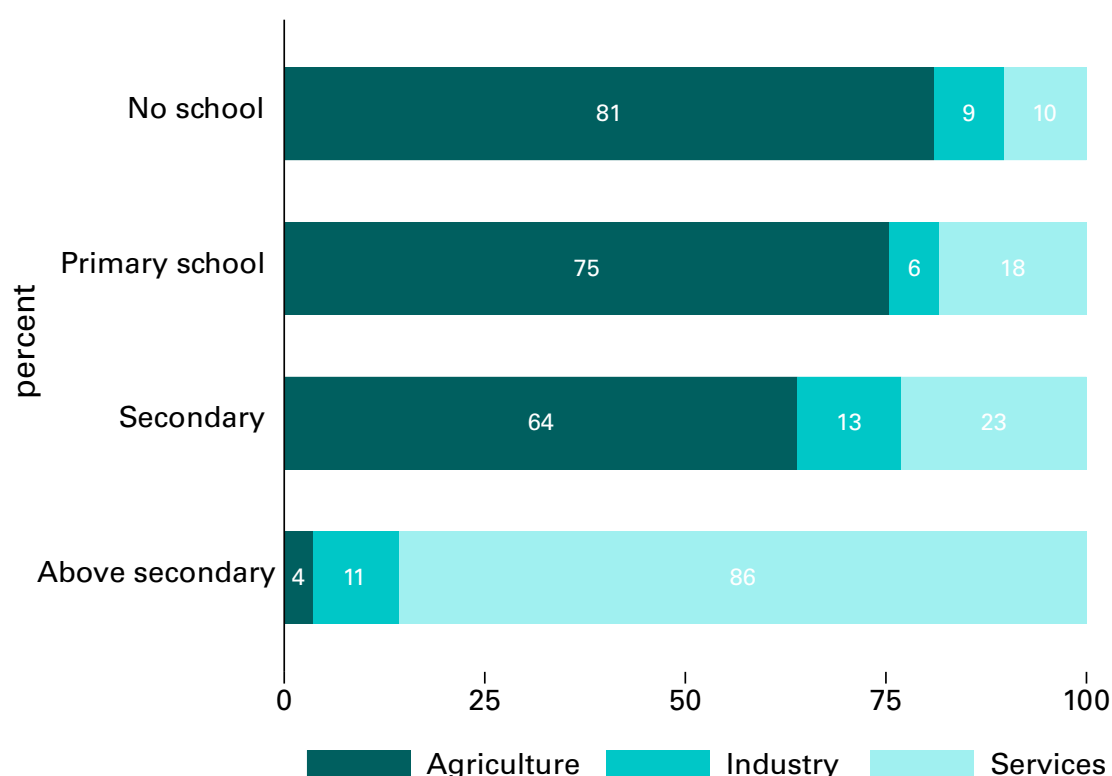


Note: The percentage of youth aged 15–17 in the group above secondary accounts for just 0.24% of the sample of youth not attending school, and therefore, conclusions based in this group should be taken with caution. Source: Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

A similar pattern is observed by sector of employment. Youth with higher education levels are more likely to engage in services and industry. The percentage of youth engaged in agriculture falls with the education level, i.e. 81% of the youth with no schooling engages in agriculture, while this is the case for 64% of those with secondary education. This result is consistent with employment status, as most unpaid family workers are in the agriculture sector.²⁴

²⁴ Family workers in the sample of youth not attending school work mostly in agriculture (87%), followed by services (6.8%) and industry (6.1%).

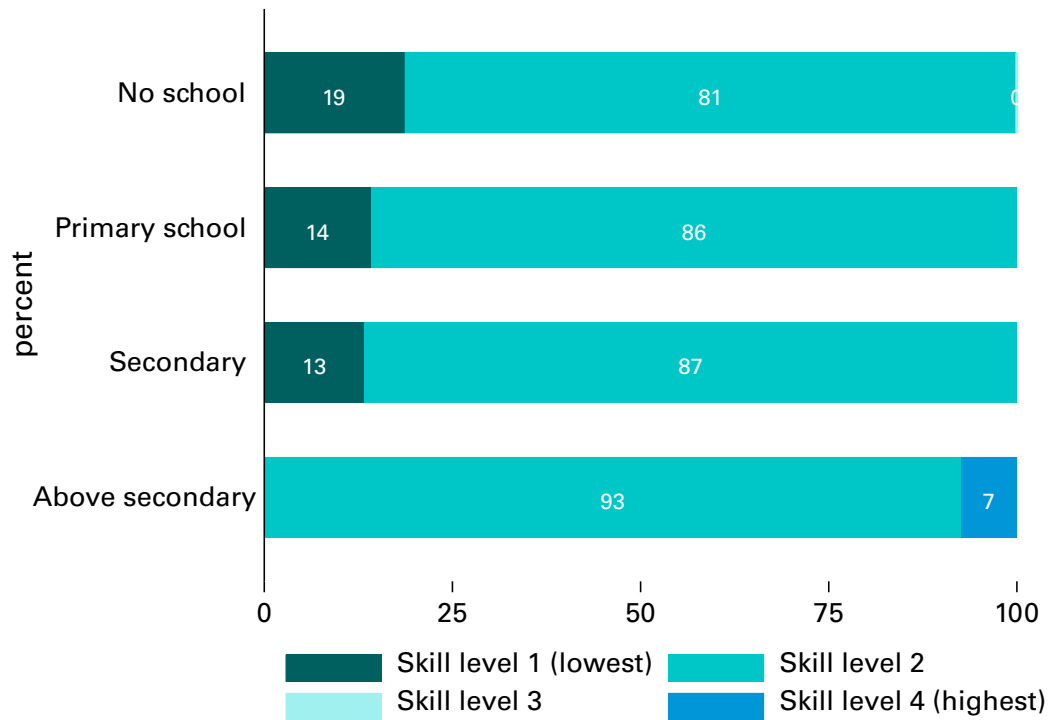
Figure 24. Youth currently working but not in education by highest education level and sector of employment



Source: Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

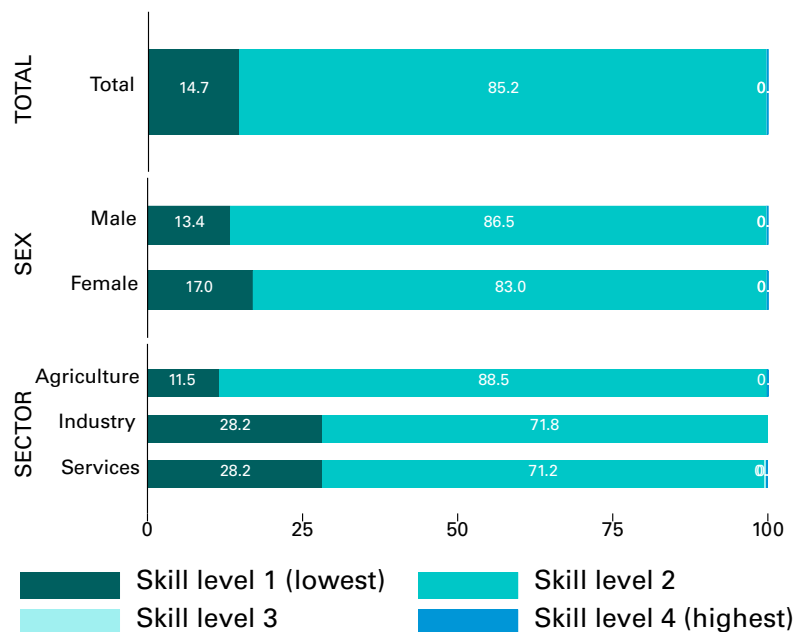
Regardless of whether or not the youth 15–17 are attending school, they seem to perform occupations that require low skill levels (as per the ISCO-08). In particular, 85% are in occupations with Skill level 2 and 15% in occupations with Skill level 1 (see Figure 26). Nevertheless, Figure 25 shows that for the subsample of youth not attending school, the percentage of youth performing occupations categorised as Skill level 1 is consistently reduced for youth with primary and secondary school education. The incidence of low-skill occupations, however, remains a characteristic of the youth in the age range considered. Notably, 93% of youth that attended grades above secondary perform low-skill occupations, implying that they are overqualified for the jobs they are performing. This is evidence of the existence of skill mismatches in the labour market for the youth. Even though the previous graphs show that education level and job outcomes (status in employment and sector) are positive correlated, skill mismatches (job-education) reinforce the measure of underemployment. Hence, it is clear that a major challenge for the youth who are currently working is the access to better jobs (e.g. more working hours, better status in employment and good skill-education matches in the labour market).

Figure 25. Educational level and skill levels for youth



Source: Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

Figure 26. Job skill levels for the youth by sex and sector



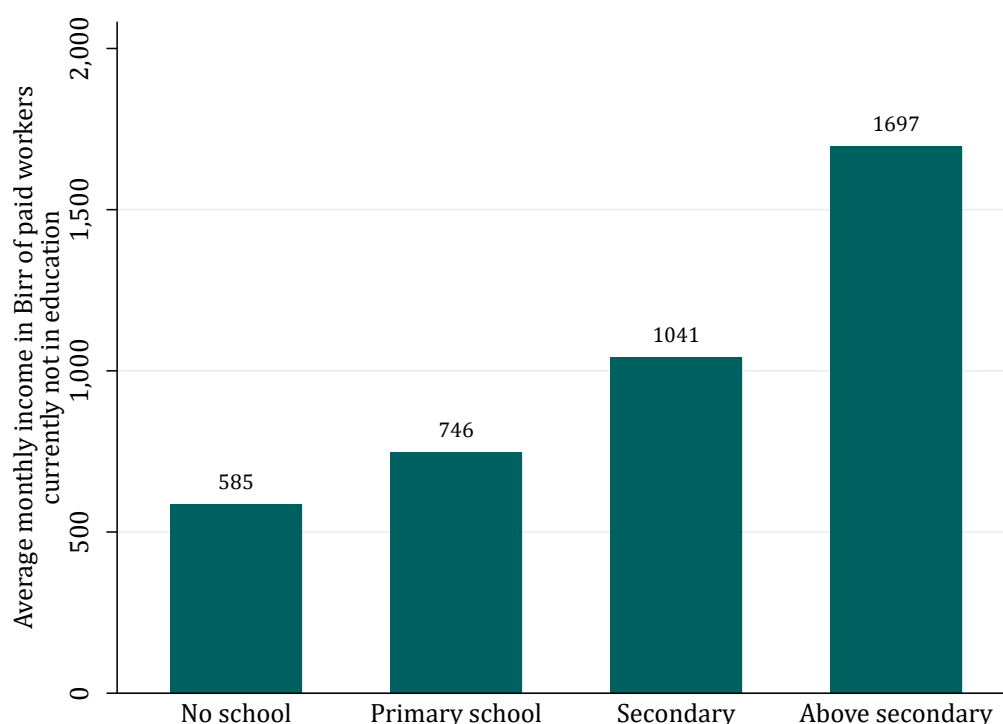
Source: Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

Finally, Figure 26 shows that the vast majority of Ethiopian youth aged 15–17 is engaged in low skill jobs: around 14.7% work in jobs belonging to Skill level 1 (as per the ISCO-08) and 85.2% to Skill level 2. Females are more engaged in Skill level 1 jobs than males (17% vs. 13.4%). By sector, services and industry show the highest percentage of youth engaged in higher Skill level jobs (28.2%).

3.3.5 Youth earnings

There is a positive correlation between monthly earnings and education for youth. As we can see in Figure 27 below, average monthly earnings increase for every additional level of education. The increase in the average monthly earnings of paid workers between 15–24 years old is fairly modest between no school and primary school. We observe the largest increase in average monthly earnings between secondary school and above secondary school. Overall, paid workers aged 15–24 years with education above secondary school earn over 200% more than their counterparts without education.

Figure 27. Average monthly earnings in Birr of paid workers by education level



While education seems to be an important determinant of monthly earnings as indicated in the above figure, there are likely many other factors that matter as well. In Table 10 below we estimate the determinants of earnings for paid workers between 15–24 years old. The variable of interest in our regression is the logarithm of monthly earnings. The results show that age is positively associated with the logarithm of earnings, although at a diminishing rate. Being female is not significantly associated with lower earnings. We do not observe a statistically significant relationship either between the age when the individual started to work or the dependency ratio and the logarithm of earnings.

The regression results further confirm the pattern observed in the figure above and show a positive relationship between more education and monthly earnings. The results do not provide any statistically significant evidence for an interaction effect between sex and education on

our outcome variable. All else being equal, youth workers in rural areas earn more than their counterparts in urban areas. Note that due to differences in other characteristics, earnings are nonetheless typically higher in urban areas. Being employed in the industrial or services sector is associated with higher earnings as compared to working in the agricultural sector. Compared to the region Tigray, workers in the youth age range have higher earnings from work in the regions Afar, Somali, Gambella and Addis Ababa, while earnings are lower in SNNP. There is no statistically significant relationship between the other regions and log of income.

The regression results below are useful to describe the relationship between monthly earnings and various factors. However, the results should be interpreted as correlations only and not as causal effects. There are likely other factors for which the CLS does not provide data that also matter for earnings as well as other issues of endogeneity.

Table 10 Determinants of earnings - OLS (Ordinary Least Square) estimation

	Logarithm of earnings	
	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.
Age	0.332**	0.130
Age ²	-0.006*	0.003
Female	-0.130	0.136
Dependency Ratio	-0.033	0.043
Age when started to work	0.006	0.006
<i>Education (Excluded: No school)</i>		
Primary	0.201*	0.111
Secondary	0.389***	0.125
Above secondary	0.801***	0.133
<i>Education-Sex (Excluded: No school-Female)</i>		
Primary-Female	-0.187	0.149
Secondary-Female	-0.114	0.162
Above secondary-Female	-0.155	0.170
<i>Area of residence (Excluded: Urban)</i>		
Rural	0.221***	0.077
<i>Sector (Excluded: Agriculture)</i>		
Industry	0.456***	0.103
Services	0.176*	0.096
<i>Region (Excluded: Tigray)</i>		
Afar	0.502***	0.126
Amhara	-0.124	0.083
Oromiya	0.066	0.086
Somali	0.316***	0.101
Benshangul	-0.159	0.143
SNNP	-0.157*	0.090
Gambella	0.229**	0.111
Harari	0.139	0.106
Addis Ababa	0.214***	0.071
Dire Dawa	0.113	0.086
Constant	1.938	1.305
N	1420	

Note: * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, and *** $p < 0.01$

In this section, we have seen that while young people in Ethiopia are able to earn more in better jobs if they have better education, they are still mostly employed in low skilled jobs and that over a quarter of youth in the LFS are classified as underutilised labour. Taken together this suggests that job prospects for youth are problematic, with the need to act already recognised by the National Employment Policy and Strategy of Ethiopia (2009). These prospects are likely linked to the decisions made for children's labour force participation. Where the gains from education remain low, it should not come as a surprise that children are sent to work to start earning at a younger age.



4. QUALITATIVE STUDY

The CLS 2015 provides detailed information on children engaged in child labour. Due to its focus on children living in parental households, however, its sampling strategy likely excludes many hard-to-reach children not living in such situations. The specific objective of this qualitative study was, therefore, to learn about the causes and consequences of hard-to-reach children's engagement in child labour in order to help reduce this knowledge gap. We did so by including the experiences of hard-to-reach children living in the street or outside their parental households and the perspectives of relevant stakeholders. We hope to inform decision-makers about this particular subset of children and thereby promote public policy development and implementation that can improve the living and working conditions of children in Ethiopia and decrease the number of children involved in child labour.

4.1. Methodology

The following sections present the research questions guiding the qualitative study and the sampling methods we used.

4.1.1 Research questions

The qualitative study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What push and pull factors are responsible for bringing children into child labour?
 - (a) Who ultimately makes the decision for a child to engage in child labour?
 - (b) How do children access the labour market?
2. What risks and hazards do children face in relation to their work?
3. What factors increase children's vulnerability to these risks and hazards?
4. What strategies do children use to cope with these risks and hazards?

5. What solutions do key stakeholders identify to improve the living and working conditions of children in Ethiopia and to decrease the number of children involved in child labour? What challenges do key stakeholders identify that may impede such efforts?

4.1.2 Study and sampling methodology

Methodological approach

In order to gain some insight into children's views and lived experiences, four local researchers who had been hired and trained by C4ED conducted in-depth interviews with 25 children engaged in labour. Through 39 participant observations with 44 children in the street and/or their working locations, researchers also collected contextual information about the children's activities, social and working dynamics and environment, daily routines and shelter conditions. This tool also served as an entry point for researchers to identify and access prospective participants while in their working and living settings. C4ED staff developed an observation grid that researchers used to document their observations in a standardised way. The research team also conducted key informant interviews with 31 relevant stakeholders at the federal, regional and local levels (listed in Table 11 in the Annex). All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed into written format.

We used MAXQDA software to code the data and to create typologies. This enabled us to interpret particular texts (case analysis) and to elaborate on categories and subcategories (coding system) to analyse the data. We cross-analysed all transcripts and other texts by interpreting text segments related to the same code. Using sequential steps of triangulation, we considered the individual interview fragments in relation to the full transcript in order to avoid isolation from the discussion context. We contrasted sequences from each interview with other interviews and data sources to identify trends and special cases. Stratifying the analysis according to gender, age and sector allowed us to identify contextual specificities and to develop nuanced findings. We completed the triangulation process within the qualitative data by cross-checking findings from the various types of tools we had employed in order to validate specific findings.

Sampling and recruitment

The goal of the qualitative study was to reach children engaged in child labour who were missing from the national CLS in order to learn about their experiences and perspectives. We therefore focused our sampling approach on children who were likely to either not be included or to be underrepresented in the CLS because they are less likely to live in formal dwellings or to be reported as part of the household. This group includes the following (not mutually exclusive) categories:

- o children living alone or with peers,
- o children in street situation (lacking fixed, regular and adequate night-time),
- o children living with other family members,
- o children living with or hosted by employers.

We chose to conduct the data collection in urban areas, where it is a more common phenomena for children to live in the street and in shelters. We selected four cities: Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Adama and Mekele.

We used a variety of approaches to come into contact with prospective child respondents, overcoming the inherent difficulties of making contact with and gaining the trust of vulnerable children. The local research team began by approaching local NGOs that, in turn, facilitated access to prospective child respondents who met our selection criteria (see above). Children who agreed to participate were included in the study. While exploring the urban areas and/or conducting observations, our researchers approached additional children for inclusion in the

study. Local guides, such as NGO social workers or former street children, also assisted our local researchers to come into contact with working children (with whom they had previously built rapport) during walks around the areas where they are commonly found. In most cases, this interlocutor monitored the interviews from a distance to ensure the child's comfort and wellbeing.

Child participants: Who were they?

The 25 children interviewed for this study (Table 12 in Annex 4) included 14 boys and 11 girls aged 7 to 17 years old (average age of 13). The sample purposefully included children engaged in various labour sectors, in some cases overlapping across sectors (six in waste collection, four in domestic work, four in factories, three in street vending, three in porting, two in daily labour, one in shoe shining, one in weaving, one in a garage, one in a fish market and one in sex work).

Most of the children interviewed (19 of 25) were originally from rural villages and two were from small towns. Twenty of them had moved to the city without their parents. More than half of the children (17 of 25) had two living parents, five children had only one living parent and one child had two deceased parents. In the absence of his parents, one child was raised by his grandmother. The situation of the remaining child was unclear. Five children came from families of divorced parents and reported estrangement or bad relationships with one or both parents. The remaining 20 children did not report any conflict within the family. Three of the children were currently living with their parents (without adequate shelter) and 14 others kept contact with their families, mostly supporting them economically or storing their savings at the family home.

Nine of the interviewed children lived or mentioned having lived in the street without adequate shelter. Five children lived or had lived with their employers or in a place provided by their employers. Four children rented a room with other children. Another four were able to rent their own place. Two lived with relatives (one relative also assuming the role of employer). At the time of the interview, four children were living in NGO shelters.

Six of the children interviewed were enrolled in school at the time of the interview but only one of them attended full time, as she was no longer working. Four children interviewed—three of them aged 10 and one aged 7— had never attended school. From the remaining 21 children who had previously attended school, only seven had completed primary education, and four (out of those seven) had completed secondary education.

The findings of our study are drawn from data collected from interviews with children and key informants, complemented by field observations of children in their working environment and/or life on the streets. Throughout this report, we anonymise children's identity: 'f' or 'm' for female or male gender; the child's age; the child's current occupation; and location. We refer to key informants using their occupation and location.

4.1.3 Ethics, challenges, limitations, and lessons learned

Ethical procedures

From the design phase, throughout the qualitative fieldwork, analysis and reporting phases, ethical concerns played an important role in this project. It is clear that hard-to-reach children are vulnerable to exploitation, which is part of the reason they are of particular interest to this study. However, it also means that special care must be taken in addressing the potential detrimental effects of participating in a study such as this, ensuring that we do no harm.

A full ethical review was carried out by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists (ESSSWA). The application to ESSSWA was prepared with the Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute (HESPI) based

in Addis Ababa and the protocol was approved on 9 June 2019. This included a review of the research protocol, research tools, consent forms, participant information sheets and a document proposing how to address core ethical issues of the proposed project. The core ethical issues discussed included the protection of children; informed and ongoing assent and consent; anonymity, privacy and confidentiality; issues of compensation; power imbalances between children and researchers; and the dissemination of results. The plans for qualitative research were also discussed during the first workshop with local UNICEF staff and ministries as well as NGOs in contact with street children.

For the preparation of tools, various literature of how to conduct research with children was consulted (Faux, Walsh, & Deatrick, 1988; Tekola, Griffin, & Camfield, 2009; Curtin, 2001; Punch, 2002). Furthermore, we looked at the pre-existing quantitative SIMPOC questionnaire as a basis to build more open-ended qualitative questions. The question guides were separated into a long version (for children aged 12 and older) and a short version (for children between 5–11 years of age) in order to suit different concentration spans. Additionally, interactive tools, like drawing a timeline about life events together with the researcher, were used to engage children in a playful manner. Lastly, we made sure that when working hand-in-hand with NGOs with children in their care, the question guides were also approved by their experienced staff.

Before conducting the interviews, the local researchers participated in an intensive training, covering ethical considerations when conducting research with children, games and ‘ice-breakers’ for building trust, troubleshooting exercises and referral mechanisms (i.e. how to refer a child to an NGO or social worker if child abuse, for instance, has been made known to the researchers). During the field work, the identification of respondents and making contact with them was carried out in conjunction with NGOs and social workers. In each case, the consent of an appropriate adult²⁵ as well as the assent of the child was sought prior to carrying out an interview. Withdrawal after initially giving assent was possible at any given point in time, even in the middle of an interview, though no child made use of this possibility.

As with any research, the names of respondents have been changed, precluding the identification of individuals who took part in the study. In terms of privacy of the interview setting, a balance had to be struck between finding a private location and not interviewing children where nobody can see them, potentially exposing the researcher and the child to further risks. We opted not to give financial incentives to the children, as advised by ESSSWA. When speaking with children who partook in NGO programmes, a small donation was given to the NGO, while for other children refreshments were bought.

Challenges, limitations, and lessons learned

Challenges encountered when interviewing children arose especially when they were not involved with an NGO. Finding a quiet and comfortable environment to speak in was challenging. In order to be in line with child protection guidelines, when there was no guardian to be identified, interviews could only be conducted in public spaces (so that other people could see that the child was not being abused), and in this case noises and interruptions were more common. In some instances, researchers found it hard to identify an adult in a position to give consent in addition to the child’s assent when agreeing to participate in the interview.

Other challenges included the difficulty of finding a suitable time for children to participate in the interview; children’s limited concentration spans (possibly exacerbated by hunger, drug use or stress); finding the right language terminology for children to properly understand the questions; and managing children’s emotional reactions when talking about their life circumstances. These challenges were addressed by adjusting the question guide to a short version for younger children (below age 12), selecting a majority of researchers with experience

25 Where possible, this was a parent or guardian, but where this was not feasible a social worker was asked to provide consent in loco parentis.

in working with children, necessary language skills and sensitivity, as well as training on how to build trust and take breaks.

The support of NGOs was fundamental to identifying, contacting and interviewing children and was shown to be very helpful in addressing many ethical concerns and challenges. In study sites like Adama, Ziway and Mekele, however, only a small number of NGOs were found working with the targeted children. This led to limited information and resources to which children could be referred at the moment of the interview if a particular situation needing additional support was encountered.

These challenges could have been better overcome, though perhaps only partially, if time and budget had allowed to plan for a longer period of fieldwork in each location so that researchers could build rapport with the children and better familiarise with their environment and the existing NGOs and resources available for referral.

Lessons learned on how to further improve the research setting and interview situations with the children include the importance of being familiar with the location, building rapport with the children and a strong cooperation with NGOs and social workers in the area, as well as the thorough training and guidance of researchers with regard to ethical concerns and practical ‘trouble-shooting exercises’.

4.1.4. Causes of child labour

Children engage in child labour due to both push factors and pull factors.

Push Factors

- Poverty was found to be the main underlying factor pushing children into labour. Poverty’s effects are exacerbated by:
 - Family situations such as orphanhood, a parent’s inability to work, or a high number of siblings
 - Obstacles to education including high costs, long distances or social unrest
- Abusive or dysfunctional situations at home, pushing children to run away
- Overall culture of seeing children as family assets.

Pull Factors

- Attractive stories of city life from peers
- Misguiding promises by employers/middlemen

Push factors

Our findings suggest that **poverty** is the underlying push factor accounting for the phenomenon of child labour, from which other push and pull factors are derived. When alternative sources of income are insufficient or non-existent, engaging in labour becomes imperative for the child’s survival or as a crucial economic support for the family.

I work for breakfast. I search for things to do.
(Teshome, m12, porting in Addis Ababa)

My father has not enough income to cover household consumption. I need to support them.
(Negasso, m15, factory in Adama)

Although parental divorce or orphanhood may appear to push children into child labour, the CSA 2015 survey found that not living with two parents was not correlated with the likelihood of engaging in child labour. Substantiating this finding, only seven of the 25 children interviewed mentioned **divorce or orphanhood (death of one or both parents)** as the reason that triggered their engagement in labour.

When my father died, life was changed in our family because he was the only person who provided for our needs and who worked in agriculture. I came here a few months later.

(Belete, m14, fish market in Adama)

My family had died and I was suffering with a person who knows my family. This man has no blood relation with me and he took me to take care of me, but I grew up working in his house as house maid.

(Fozia, f17, factory in Adama)

My grandmother was responsible for raising me. She was very old and had no capacity to help me out (...) I am working and living in the street because there is no one to help me out and fulfil the things I need for survival.

(Hadush, m10, street vending in Mekele)

Other family situations, such as the **parent's inability to work** due to illness or disability, or a **large number of siblings**, were mentioned by some children as situations that worsened the effects of poverty and pushed them to work full time.

My mother was very sick with haemorrhoids for long time. I missed school for a long time to support family. I worked on exchanging money to cents.

(Nebila, f9, street vending in Adama)

I have no clothes and other materials used to go to school. My family can't support me and other children. Our family size is too large, about 11 in number. (...) My father has not enough income to cover household consumption. I need to support them.

(Negasso, m15, factory in Adama)

Negasso's experience suggests that **the need to cover costs associated with education**, such as transport, uniform or school materials, can push children from families with insufficient resources to begin working, at least part time, as described in the quantitative findings above. Ultimately, when **barriers to education** such as high costs, long distances or social unrest in the area prevent the child from attending school altogether, children may feel forced to drop out of school and begin to work full time.

I went to school this year but, because of political quarrel in my village, I stopped school and I came to Hawassa to work to earn money.

(Ayele, m10, waste collection in Hawassa)

Three children interviewed reported feeling unmotivated to continue with school due to a **perceived lack of support or interest from their families**, who instead wanted them to work during school time and/or who could not afford associated costs such as school materials.

Since they [parents] do not give much attention to education, I usually used to miss school because my parents made me look after cattle.

(Eyob, m17, porting in Hawassa)

I never repeated a class but lost interest because my parents were not fully interested in paying the expenses needed for the school materials (...). The reason for coming to Mekelle is that our parents were very reluctant and unhappy to spend on school materials. I was always arguing to buy a pen or exercise book. (...) My friend told our parents that we want to work and earn money and there was not much resistance from our families.

(Gebremehdin, m10, shoe shining in Mekele)

The 2015 CLS findings indicating widespread belief among Ethiopian families in the value of education could suggest that these children's experiences of lacking family support for their education is not representative of or generalisable to the society more widely. It is also possible that these children mistook their family's financial constraints for lack of interest. Yet the 2015 CLS shows that families justify their children's (aged 7–14) lack of attendance at school by their young age and the survey finds that many children in Ethiopia indeed start school at an older age. The following statement illustrates how joining school late could influence the likelihood of a child subsequently dropping out:

I joined school very late at the age of 14. I am the first child in my family and was herding livestock. My parents were happy for my engagement in looking after cattle. No one could do the herding at that time. I started to herd cattle at the age of six. My parents lately understood I should attend school, but it was very late and I wasn't interested to continue school because all the children in the classroom were very little ones. I then lost interest even if I have the interest to attend school.

(Hayelom, m17, daily labour and street vending in Mekele)

Most of the **child domestic workers** with whom we spoke reported that their prospective employers lured them to the city with the promise (to the child's parents or to the child herself) of enrolling them in school. With the exception of one girl (Mihirit) who reported that the family for whom she was working at the time of the interview enrolled her in school after she had experienced a negative situation with her previous employers, the remaining prospective employers did not carry through with their promise of enrolling the child in school. Key informants confirmed that parents in rural areas often send their daughters to work as domestic workers with the expectation that this will enable them to access education, but in most cases this does not bear out. Sifin (f12), domestic worker in Addis Ababa, explains:

My father sent me here [to the city] when a war broke out in the area. He sent me so that I would be able to go to school. (...) He met the woman on the road, and she promised to send me to school and he gave me to her (...) But they didn't get me into school and that was how I stopped going to school.

Mihirit, the domestic worker mentioned above, whose last employers did allow her to attend classes at a local NGO and covered her basic needs (unlike the family she had worked for before) explaining the reason why she works, says: "I do the housework because it is my responsibility to do it. (...) I work to survive. I work because I want to go to school." (Mihiret, f15, domestic work in Addis Ababa)

Another case of a child combining work with school involves a child weaver who left his rural village to live and work for his uncle in Addis Ababa. Eyob (m14) was sent by his father, who allegedly told him, "Go and use your labour (...) Develop your capacity and come back." He does his homework in the early morning before starting his weaving duties at home, and

attends classes afterwards, as regularly as work allows. Eyob explains that he works simply because he “cannot live without working”.

Eyob and most of the other rural children interviewed already worked while living with their families, mostly in farming or taking care of cattle. Although the qualitative component of our study did not focus specifically on tasks for which children had been responsible prior to their life outside of their household, their previous work experiences are relevant to our study for two reasons. First, it speaks to the culture, particularly in rural areas, that sees children’s work as part of their expected role in supporting the family, independent of whether they do so within or beyond their capacity (or the limits established by the law). This line between acceptable and expected work for children versus work that puts children at risk or prevents them from playing or attending school came up repeatedly in interviews with key informants. Second, if rural children are already expected and used to working on the farm, sometimes under harsh conditions and, as we have seen, sometimes missing school, the promise of the more attractive working opportunities that the city offers becomes a stronger pull factor, which we discuss in the next section.

If we take the work I did with my family, it is more difficult. I have to work in rainy and sunny times. But today I don’t face these challenges.
(Negasso, m15, factory in Adama)

Additionally, as the findings in section 3.3 show, people in rural areas are often underemployed and youth typically work in low-skilled jobs. This likely leads to greater disenchantment and the hopes raised from migrating to the city become stronger still. It should be noted that unemployment is in fact higher in the city, though we cannot say anything about the level of awareness about this problem in rural communities.

Finally, other factors pushing children to work are those which first drive them to run away from the household, like **family disputes or abusive situations in the home**. Previous studies (Fikre, 2016; Kebede, 2015; Abebe, 2008) have identified family conflicts and abuse as a primary reason underpinning children’s decisions to run away to the cities and work full-time for their own survival.

In our study, however, none of the children specifically mentioned disputes or abuse at home as a reason for leaving home. Indeed, several interviewed children were not able to identify a specific factor, such as those described in this section, that pushed them to move out of their homes and search for work in the city. In some cases, children left their rural homes against the will of their parents, who wanted them to continue school. According to their own accounts, what motivated these children to leave their homes was the idea of city life and the better opportunities available there. We discuss such pull factors in more depth in the following section.

Pull factors

The factor ‘pulling’ children from rural homes into city life that children mentioned most frequently is the **attractive destination the city can represent** for rural children. Child and key informant reports suggest that the influence of peers returning from the cities with new clothes and stories of ‘easy’ money is irresistible for many.

Children from rural areas living with their parents sometimes leave their home in search of city life. They are told some attractive story about the city and they ask public transport assistants to help them to come here and they end up living on the street. Hence, there are no relatives who can take care of them and they opt to work to survive and to get food.
(Former street child, Hawassa)

Confirming this statement by a former street child, most of the children we interviewed that moved from rural areas to the city did so in this manner (attracted by peers and enticing stories of city life).

I saw friends in my neighbourhood who came back from Hawassa and I saw them and thought that they had a good life in Hawassa and so I was attracted to the city. I came to Hawassa by foot.

(Eyob, m17, porting in Hawassa)

I came to work here since children from my village were working at Mekele and were buying lots of things for themselves, their family and were saving money as well. No one decided I should work but I and my friend came here.

(Gebremehdin, m10, shoe-shining in Mekele)

The incident was that a young boy who travelled to Mekele got back to my village and had new clothes and also a mobile phone. And me and my friends discussed and asked this guy how he did that. He then advised us that if we travelled to Mekele, there is an employment opportunity. It didn't take us long to decide this.

(Hayelom, m17, daily labour and street vending in Mekele)

However, these children soon ended up living in the street or in shared rooms in poor conditions. Indeed, once children arrive in the city, they quickly discover the challenges of finding employment and often find themselves forced to take on exploitative jobs in order to survive.

I just come here following other children coming to the city thinking that there is access to money. It is the devil playing us.

(Fitsum, m8, begging and porting in Hawassa)

People were mentioning that Mekelle is a big town where you could get a lot of things to work and eat. But life was worse here since I was sleeping outside.

(Hadush, m10, street vending in Mekele)

Despite the numerous challenges and hazards they often experience in the cities, previous studies suggest that rural-urban migration continues to represent the preferred future plan and best form of investment for rural youth (Atnafu, Oucho, & Zeitlyn, 2014; Bezu & Holden, 2014; Gebeyehu, 2014). The study of Atnafu et al. study showed that the advantages of city life, such as higher income, economic independence from families, relatively greater agency and higher quality of services available, were sufficient for youth to perceive their standards of living as superior in the city than in rural areas (Atnafu, Oucho, & Zeitlyn, 2014).

As previously mentioned, findings from our quantitative analysis (Section 3) showing a higher prevalence of both child labour and youth labour underutilisation in rural areas compared to urban areas also help contextualise rural children's aspirational decisions to migrate, suggesting that the expectation of having better work opportunities in the city has some foundation in reality. Indeed, more than half of the children we interviewed, including some of those currently living in the street, reported being able to save some money to invest in plans to improve their future, for example, by opening a business or returning to school.

In line with this, **aspirations for self-improvement** were, second to covering basic needs, the most prevalent among children's responses regarding reasons they engage in work.

I am working day and night and try to save money to start a new life. I have plans of getting a driving license to be an employee for the taxi driver.

(Tolosia, m16, waste collection in Adama)

I will try to complement my income working as a daily labourer while being employed in domestic activities. I will start a small shop and widen my businesses. I also have a plan to start school in grade 1.

(Meron, f13, daily labour and waste collection in Adama)

I have a dream to own my garage in the long run (...) I am trying to purchase some equipment like electric testers, screws and a wrench, which I can buy with the financial capacity I have right now. I will fulfil the rest when I get more experience and save more money in the future.

(Gebremariam, m17, garage in Mekele)

My ambition is just to work hard and have my own business. (...) I'm thinking of having a kiosk.

(Netsanet, f17, factory in Mekele)

I wish to have more money to own my own donkey cart, then to collect more money.

(Bereket, m11, waste collection in Hawassa)

Although almost all interviewed children were first pushed to work as a result of poverty and challenging family situations, some exceptions within our sample show that a different reality can also exist. For example, one 17-year-old started working in a factory after her grades were not high enough to pursue a university degree. Another left his town for Mekele after completing primary school in order to fulfil his dream of working with cars as a mechanic, which now he combines with vocational school.

My reason to engage in garage work rather than other activities was that my hometown is on a roadside and I grew up watching maintaining cars and I got interested. This interest grew so much when I was in seventh grade and I decided [to work as a mechanic] after completing Grade 8.

(Gebremariam, m17, garage in Mekele)

Decision to work: own choice or imposed?

The majority of the children in this study insisted that the decision to start working was a choice they made themselves. Even those who worked in order to support their families financially said it was their decision to do so. In addition, the majority of the children in the study reported being the primary or sole beneficiaries of their earnings (except for those domestic workers who did not receive any kind of remuneration), as even those who also support others spend most of their earnings to cover their own needs.

With that in mind, and at the risk of negating the children's agency, it is important to note that the decision to work is often influenced by considerable push factors, as we saw in the previous section. These push factors often leave limited room for genuine free choice. Moreover, children's decision to work is also often driven by inaccurate or misleading information about the nature of their future working conditions.

I was then pushed to get into such business since I was very eager to get money and change faster but the reality, however, is much worse. (...) The initiative to work was taken by myself but the type of work I am in was decided by others such as brokers, and those I get in the workplaces.

(Nebiat, f16, sex work in Mekele)

Despite working by choice, some children expressed feelings of helplessness or entrapment when reflecting on their engagement in labour or their working conditions.

I carry lots of very heavy things which were above my ability to lift, but I can't help but continue working because I can't drop it since the situation is not in my hand.

(Hayelom, m17, daily labour and street vending in Mekele)

The life I am currently in is the worst of all. I at least had peace of mind when I was working the other jobs and didn't even know more than a single man. But I saw hundreds of them within four months. I can't imagine the life I am in as a job. But I was explaining it as I am in a job I don't even wish on an enemy.

(Nebiat, f16, sex work in Mekele)

Nonetheless, confirming findings cited above about the perceived advantages of city life in contrast with the hazards children are exposed to, Pankhurst et al. (2015) found that even when working children had limited choice or agency regarding their labour, they often accept what they perceive to be inevitable risks in exchange for the benefits they believe the work provides them.

A smaller portion of children in our study reported that the decision for them to work was taken by their parents. This is particularly the case among those who moved to live with their employers (such as child domestic workers and the weaver in our study). Children who continued to live with one or both of their homeless parents and worked alongside them in the city also fell into this category.

One of the younger street children we interviewed also reported older children forcing him to work and subsequently taking his earnings. Key informants consistently highlighted the problem of older children or adults exploiting children, expressing concerns about middlemen or brokers deciding what the children should do or where they should work and/or middlemen providing items for children to sell on their behalf. We discuss the role of middlemen and brokers in more depth in the next section.

4.1.5. How do children find work?

Channels for Finding Work

- **Independently**
 - o Most children said they found work on their own, contacting an employer or establishing a small business. They deny adults are behind their work.
 - o Key informants are suspicious of the children's supposed independence in finding work.
- **Brokers / Middlemen**
 - o Only four of 25 children reported having found work through brokers (who are most common for weaving, domestic work and sex work).
- **Informal network**
 - o Neighbours, family, friends and acquaintances.

Most children interviewed in this study (17 of 25) reported finding work on their own, either contacting an employer directly or establishing a small business. When asked, these children denied having an adult intermediary and instead asserted their independence.

In contrast, one former street child explained that he used to buy and re-sell magazines from distributors and that he was 'hired' by people who gave him sandwiches to sell and remunerated him with money, food and shelter. Another former street child reported adults forcing him to sell cigarettes and to engage in pickpocketing, ultimately receiving only a small fraction of the profit.

These latter accounts are illustrations of the perceptions among key informants working in public institutions who reported suspecting or having observed dynamics in which adults provide children with products to sell and later collect money from them.

This discrepancy between children's testimonies about their independence, and key informants who perceived the existence of middlemen to be a much larger issue could be attributed to various factors. It is possible that our sample is biased towards children who were more willing to speak with our interviewers²⁶, while those in situations of more severe exploitation refrained from talking to researchers. It is also possible that the children with whom we spoke did not want to disclose that there was an adult behind their work. Nevertheless, a number of key informants also acknowledged that some children find work by agreeing directly with their employers or clients, without a middleman. This is especially the case among porters, shoe shiners, daily labourers or factory workers. A previous study conducted with shoe shiners in Addis Ababa found that half of them were introduced to this job by friends or found the job by themselves (Shimelis, 2006). Some key informants also spoke of an informal process whereby children find work through their networks. In the domains of weaving, domestic work and sex work, however, key informant and children's reports aligned. Both respondent types described how children often enter these kinds of labour through a middle person: a family member, an acquaintance, a neighbour or a stranger.

I went to the office of this middleman and [he] sent me to a hotel. He had the contact of lots of people who look for employees. The hotel owner came to the broker's office and took me to the hotel.

(Nebiat, f16, sex work in Mekele)

Q: Okay. Who is Engdashet? Is he a relative?

A: He lived in a house next to our own.

Q: A neighbour. Why did he say he is bringing you here?

A: He said that the woman is a nice person and that I should live with her. And I said okay and started living with her. Then we didn't get along right from the time I came. And then, when she insulted and beat me, I ran away.

(Abebu, f10, domestic work in Addis Ababa)

In fact, an employee at BoLSA in Mekele stated that "the most common type of job these middlemen are working on is with girls, especially for domestic work and for waitresses for hotels". This employee reported that, in such situations, middlemen could receive up to a thousand Birr as commission for bringing in a girl, a sum also mentioned by several key informants. Key informants highlighted that these brokers have their own benefit in mind, "they don't care about the safety and security of the children" (NGO founder, Mekele) and they often deceive them about the type of work they will do, thereby putting them at risk.

4.1.6. Consequences of child labour

Children interviewed in this study reported a wide variety of working conditions, each involving distinct risks and hazards. In this section, we first outline the most commonly reported risks and hazards faced by children engaging in child labour. We then discuss the vulnerability factors identified along the lines of the children's gender, age, origin and disability. To close the chapter, we review the coping strategies children use to deal with these challenges and how they strive to improve their present and future realities.

26 Local researchers approached numerous children who refused to be interviewed.

a) Reported risks and hazards

- Low and unstable income
- Dealing with heavy loads and dangerous materials
- Environmental risks
- Long working hours
- Verbal, physical and sexual abuse
- Drug use and drug addiction

Potential long-term consequences

- Psychological and physical effects
- Lost opportunity to receive a formal education

Low and unstable income

Children interviewed for this study reported greatly varying levels of income. Those hired formally by employers on a monthly basis reported higher and more stable income than those working in informal sectors, especially if self-employed.

No, [employment] is not regular; I may sit down the whole a week without any activities. For example, I may stay for five days without work. Other weeks, I work every day of the week.

(Tolosia, m16, waste collection in Adama)

Despite the differences in income between formally and informally employed children, most reported unstable and insufficient income to cover their basic needs. Consequently, they were forced to complement their incomes with begging, asking for money or food from others or receiving support from social workers, religious leaders or others who offer them money, food or clothes.

Living on the street, getting hungry is my usual experience. Me and my friend usually ask for food from restaurants or ask for money from people on the street to buy food. When I could not get a job, I usually get hungry.

(Eyob, m17, porting in Hawassa)

As Eyob mentioned, most children working and/or living in the street reported acquiring their daily food from hotels and restaurants that offer them 'bule' (leftovers) for free or in exchange for small services such as taking out the trash or washing dishes.

I ate a hotel leftover which most of the time I eat with my friends. Mostly, the hotel waiters give to me and my friends. The only thing me and my friends do when we want to ask for food is taking a plastic bag. I had that food yesterday with many children, around six.

(Hadush, m10, street vending in Mekele)

However, children as well as key informants explained that children incur the risk of falling ill if the leftovers they eat are spoiled. The children face similar risks when searching for food in the garbage.

All five girls working as domestic workers reported not receiving a salary. Instead, their employers provided a place for them to sleep and were supposed to cover their basic needs, though in some cases this was not sufficient and some reported frequently going hungry.

Heavy loads and dangerous materials

Risks and hazards reported by children engaged in domestic work, porting, daily labour or working in factories or at the market included carrying loads beyond their capacity and dealing with dangerous materials that caused injuries.

I used to carry heavy objects, which caused pain in my back and shoulder.
(Eyob, m17, carrier in Hawassa)

I usually use a small knife to fillet fish; we use the boat and other tools with the boat while we fish from the lake. (...) Once, I cut my finger while filleting the fish and got injured.

(Belete, m14, fish market in Adama)

My hand was wounded by fire when I was cooking food in our house.
(Chaltu, f10, factory and domestic work in Adama)

Environmental risks

Children working in waste collection centres and those in factories reported having been injured by materials around them or having fallen sick from chemicals, bad smells or high temperatures.

The bad smell in the area once made me sick and sleep for two days.
(Ayele, m10, waste collection in Hawassa)

I was sick and stopped working for a week many times while I worked in this flower farm. The reason is that there are chemicals and the shade in which I worked is very hot.
(Fozia, f17, factory in Adama)

Children working in the street, such as porters, street vendors and shoe shiners, are subject to additional hazardous conditions. In addition to suffering from heat, cold and other harsh weather conditions, children and key informants also mentioned the risk of children being hurt by passing vehicles, especially when working in busy streets.

Long working hours

Most children in this study reported working long hours. An extreme example of children enduring long working hours was a weaver working for 19 hours some days with only very short breaks. Especially in the case of those hired by employers, their time off appeared to be very limited (mostly to Sundays), as these children spent most of the day at work.

Verbal, physical and sexual abuse

Children working in direct contact with their costumers or employers, such as those in street vending, shoe shining, sex work or domestic work, reported violence and abuse from clients, employers and other adults.

There were some people who drank too much who didn't give the money but beat me.
(Hadush, m10, street vending in Mekele)

I might touch their socks with wax, cream or water while working. They would insult me or go to the extent of slapping my face. I would do nothing but say "sorry" and continue working.

(Gebremehdin, m10, shoe-shining in Mekele)

While I'm working, the woman would spill water on me using a jug and she would slap me on the face.

(Sifin, f12, domestic work in Addis Ababa)

The owner of the hotel was very cruel that he had sexual intercourse with every girl who comes to his hotel. (...) He did this with me as well. He did this without the consent of the subject [her consent]. Some girls had a repeated sexual assault.

(Nebiat, f16, sex work in Mekele)

Confounding the risk of sexual abuse and engagement in sex work is the added threat of contracting sexually transmitted infections.

Most men who want to have sex are asking to have sex without a condom. I suspect these men might be infected with HIV and want to infect girls.

(Nebiat, f16, sex work in Mekele)

Children, key informants and observations suggest that children are subject to attacks and abuse by other children and adults while working, while on their way to and from work or while sleeping in the streets. Children also spoke about conflicts with workers and public employees. During observations, our researchers observed station workers chasing out children with metal sticks when they were searching for work as porters at the bus station. Street children also reported being chased out of their places of sleep by police and security guards.

Policemen chase me and my friends in the daytime while we sleep and wake up all children from sleep and make us leave that place. (...) I try to sleep on verandas, but security guards chase me and make me go to the street when the rain stops.

(Hadush, m10, street vending in Mekele)

Young children and girls in the street appeared to be particularly at risk of violence. For example, Meron, a 13-year-old girl living in the street in Adama, reported being sexually assaulted and abused on several occasions.

Male street children tried to rape us, they damaged our materials like clothes and used the place we sleep. One day a street child tore my clothes and pants, tried to sleep with me while I slept. I was too sad and cried. (...)

One day my friend's baby was sick and I was crying on the road. One adult who is big came and asked me, "Why do you cry?" I told him the story. And he asked me "Did you eat food?" And he told me to "Come and take food to your friend." I said ok and went with him, but he asks me to have sex with him. I had sex with him and got 200 Birr which I used to treat that baby.

(Meron, f13, daily labour and waste collection in Adama)

Drug use

According to children and key informants, drug abuse is connected to children's work in various ways. In particularly precarious working conditions, children cannot afford proper shelter and may use drugs (such as glue or khat) as way of dealing with hunger, cold and distress. A few children and former street children interviewed also described the influence of other children and of street life in starting drug use. One child explained that he became addicted to drugs after he began selling drugs to make a living.

In this setting, studies suggest that employers in hotels and pubs often encourage or force sex workers to drink alcohol (van Blerk, 2008; van Blerk, 2011). Key informants in our study confirmed this statement, suggesting it is common for employers to incite sex workers into alcohol and drug use. Nebiat (f16), who does sex work, reported choosing to use alcohol to numb her senses before engaging in intercourse with a client. She explained that she drank only enough alcohol to make the experience somewhat bearable while remaining in control, which she contrasted with some of her colleagues, who allegedly frequently take stronger drugs. According to key informants, this alcohol or drug abuse further ties children to their work as they use most of their earnings to cover their drug habit.

Long-term consequences

The hazards associated with child labour mentioned above can cause a series of long-term **psychological and physical effects (including disabilities)** that further impact children's development and future. Both children and key informants mentioned long-term health problems caused by excessive workload or other adverse working conditions, compounded by children not seeking or not being able to access professional treatment when needed.

I was working as a daily labourer and I had developed kidney problems because I carry things. And then when I stopped that work, I now feel somewhat better.
(Mihiret, f15, domestic work in Addis Ababa)

There are children who suffer from anxiety resulting from lack of sleep due to too much workload. There are those with psychological problems because of this.
(Project coordinator, NGO, Addis Ababa)

Hazardous working environments or conditions also threaten children's mental health (Al-Gamal, Hamdan-Mansour, Matrouk, & Nawaiseh, 2013). For example, continuous degrading remarks from employers can undermine children's self-image and self-esteem (Erulkar & Ab Mekbib, 2007). Some children in our study expressed feelings of helplessness and entrapment, perceiving their circumstances as "not in [their] hands" (Hayelom, m17, daily labour and street vending in Mekele) or not seeing a way out of their current adverse conditions. Even though most of the children from our sample reported having plans for their future for which many were already saving, there were others whose answers reflected hopelessness. For example, when asked about her goals for the future, Nebiat (f16, sex work in Mekele) answered: "It is only God that knows. I can't tell you anything about that because I currently lost hope. I wasn't thinking I would find myself in such a bad life situation, but it happened."

This hopelessness and despair experienced by children engaged in child labour was frequently mentioned by key informants who emphasised the risk of child labourers and street children to suffer from low self-esteem, depression or other mental health issues.

I didn't lose my weight only but lost my mind, too. That means children may compare their deteriorated life to that of other children whose age is similar, and they think their life is very bad and that this may come from God and they are hated in nature.

(Former street child, Adama)

Children may even be affected psychologically when they see children playing in the compound of their work, their neighbour's and on any other playing field. The reason is that they are working when it should be their playing time.

(Employee, Bureau of Women, Children and Youth, Adama)

The lost opportunity to receive a formal education, which reduces future job prospects and may impact social and intellectual development, compounds the potential physical and psychological effects of hazardous working environments (Oreopoulos & Salvanes, 2011).

The majority of the children in our study (19 out of 25) were not currently attending school at the moment of the interview. Most (14) of these children dropped out of school due either to family difficulties affording school-related costs or their need to start working full time to support themselves and/or their families. Only three children in our study never dropped out of school and were still enrolled at the time of the interview, but two of them reported missing school as they were occupied with work.

Four children in our study had never been enrolled in school by their families and 12 of those who were (that is, roughly half of our sample) reported missing school to go to work either on their family's farm, on other people's farms or at the market. This number is high compared to the findings from the CLS showing that 4.9% of the children surveyed missed school in the last week because they had to work or do household chores.

Factors Influencing Vulnerabilities

- Age: Younger age associated with higher risks and hazards.
 - Less skills to get jobs.
 - Less informed/experienced + weaker → Higher risk of being exploited by employers or older children.
- Migration status: rural (migrant) children more vulnerable (less informed, limited network + cultural and language barriers)
- Type of workplace and work relationships.
- Gender: boys and girls generally exposed to different types of vulnerabilities.
- Disability: forced to beg or used for begging.

b) Vulnerability factors

The experiences of child labourers and the vulnerabilities they face are strongly associated with their age, origin (i.e., whether they come from an urban or rural area), gender, type of work and disability status. Each of these factors influences in some way the type of tasks with which they engage, the benefits they obtain from their labour, the nature of their relationship with their employers or clients, their capacity to manage the hazards of life on the streets and the level of resilience they can garner to cope with the conditions in which they find themselves. It is therefore important to highlight that, in this analysis, we look at children's vulnerability to risks affecting their wellbeing as a whole and not only vulnerability related to the tasks they perform as labourers. As the survey that constitutes the basis of the quantitative analysis examined risk factors related solely to working conditions, this change in focus in the qualitative component can lead to discrepancies between the qualitative findings in this

section and findings from the quantitative study. Discrepancies with the quantitative results could also be explained by the specific circumstances of unaccompanied children living in urban areas sampled by the qualitative study.

While we find evidence of general trends with regard to the effects of these factors on the child's experiences (for instance, girls being more likely than boys to work as domestic workers, younger children more likely to be exploited by an employer), the influence of these factors is complex and not unidirectional. We explain each of these factors, in turn, below.

Age

The risk to be in child labour increases with age up to the age of 13 according to the results from the quantitative study. However, the probability to be exposed to hazardous work continues to rise with age suggesting that the type of jobs accessed does not change discontinuously at the legal minimum age to work. Nonetheless, among the hard-to-reach children in this study, older age appeared to be associated with better living conditions. In our sample, most children aged 14 or older had a higher and more stable income, and therefore less difficulty to afford their basic needs, for example, accommodation, sometimes alone but mostly with peers, and to accumulate more savings. Meanwhile, younger children reported (and our researchers observed this among younger children) struggling more to earn a sufficient income from informal activities. This was particularly the case for tasks requiring physical strength, as mentioned earlier. At bus stations and markets, for example, people prefer to choose older children to carry their loads. Consequently, younger children resort to begging more frequently than older children. Abebe (2008) found that, in turn, younger children are more successful at begging because they are perceived as more vulnerable, and that, as they grow older, begging is increasingly frowned upon.

In our study, younger children were also at higher risk of being robbed, exploited or physically and sexually abused by older children and adults.

I had a few very aggressive customers and they slap me at times.
(Gebremehdin, m10, shoe-shiner in Mekele)

It is dangerous. For instance, there are a group of teenagers who bullied me and my friends and even took what we have. It is almost a daily encounter that I face.
(Hadush, m10, street vending in Mekele)

A social worker for an NGO in Hawassa specifically pointed to this kind of abuse:

Most children between the age group of 8–14 are usually involved in exploitative forms of labour. Because of their age, these groups of children are forced to work for senior street gang groups, in addition to working for themselves. In addition, they are usually abused physically by these senior street children if they refuse to work for them.

According to key informants, some employers prefer younger children who are less aware than their older counterparts of their rights, of the meaning of exploitation or even of danger. Younger children are less likely than older children or adults to negotiate working conditions. A gatekeeper at the Waste Collection Centre interviewed in Hawassa said: "Mostly donkey cart owners prefer working with small kids since they do not recognise the risk of working with waste and they can pay them little payment for their daily work."

With reference to girls employed in domestic work, a former street child who now works with an NGO in Addis Ababa, added:

The adults can talk to neighbours and things like that, but the child will be afraid to do that. She will be easier to influence. So, most of the time, people do not want adults. People usually say, "Please send me a little child." That's how it is. That is why the children are preferred. They don't know anything.

Migration status

Most of the children interviewed in this study came to the city from rural areas or small towns. Only three children were raised in the city and two of them (young girls aged 9 and 10) were accompanied by their families. Therefore, we cannot make a comparison between their experiences in terms of origin and migration status. However, previous studies (Erulkar, Mekbib, Simie, & Gulema, 2006; Bezu & Holden, 2014) point out that migrant children (with less social, educational and financial capital) in urban areas are more likely than children born and raised in urban areas to work in informal jobs of lower status and income (e.g., domestic work, daily labour or street-based activities, such as shoe shining) and have a smaller support network and less sense of safety. Several key informants in our study agreed that children coming from rural areas are more vulnerable than urban children to exploitation, abuse and harmful living and working conditions because of their more limited access to information and support networks.

According to key informants, children from rural areas might not know where they can report abuse or find assistance, they have less information about their rights and where to find work and are not sufficiently street savvy to navigate the city in general.

The vulnerability increases for children who are from rural villages. This is because children from the city can resist and better react and quickly get information about what they are going to do than those from rural villages.
(Employee 1, BoLSA, Mekele)

The earlier mentioned misguided expectations and promises about city life also do not always materialise.

Most children who engage in labour are those who came from other nearby districts. These children mostly do not have enough information about life and work in the city. They were informed that they will get a job easily or told by those people who brought them that they will make them attend schools. However, these children usually do not attend school, rather [they] are engaged in labour.
(Employee 2, Department of Women and Children Affairs, Hawassa)

When children cannot find sufficient and stable income in the city or when children hosted by their employers run away from abusive conditions, they might find themselves in the street or in a very precarious situation. Furthermore, while urban children may have an already established network of people who support them or provide information, children from rural areas are often alone or with very few contacts. Most rural children in this study reported trusting only one or two friends, usually other children with whom they live or work. Similarly, the surrounding community is not familiar with these children, which (according to key informants) places the children at high risk of abuse from brokers and employers, as it is less likely that others will notice or speak up about any wrongdoings. "They don't touch the children from Addis Ababa," said the founder of an NGO in the capital. "I mean, at least people in the area will speak up, if I see something, I will speak up," he continued.

Children migrating to the city from rural areas face additional challenges in adapting to city life, according to key informants, due to differences in social dynamics between their home areas and the city, as well as language barriers, as "they cannot easily communicate with

other street children and the community members in the Amharic language” (Social worker, NGO, Hawassa)

On the other hand, a former street child from Adama noted that it is less common for rural than for urban children to become addicted to drugs. Urban children at times find it harder to reintegrate into society after their habits, behaviour and attitudes have been deeply shaped by longer periods of street life.

Children who have migrated to the city are more vulnerable to exploitation in child labour among hard-to-reach children. Similarly, children in rural-urban migrant households are more likely to be in child labour than those who come from urban areas (*see Table A - 2*).

Type of workplace and work relationships

The previous section on risks and hazards outlined how workplace type influences the kind of dangers to which child labourers are exposed. While children working in waste collection centres and factories suffer more from environmental hazards, those working in street-based activities in direct contact with clients report that clients occasionally slap or insult them and at times leave without paying them. These experiences reflect findings from previous studies with children working in street-based activities who similarly reported abuse of this nature (Shimelis, 2006; Bezu & Holden, 2014).

In turn, our data confirms previous studies (Black, 2002; Blagbrough, 2013; Erulkar & Ab Mekbib, 2007; Zeleke, 2015) indicating that children working indoors, especially those hosted by their employers, such as domestic workers, weavers or sex workers, are also at high risk of verbal, physical and sexual abuse from their employers because of their lack of accountability, the invisibility within their working environment and, in some cases, the ambiguity conferred by their status and/or of the relationship with their employers (Blagbrough, 2013; Black, 2002). Especially in the case of domestic workers, families often identify these children as ‘adopted’, suggesting a type of ‘caring kinship’ (Blagbrough, 2013, p. 28) that conceals the power imbalances underlying the relationship. These power imbalances include children’s dependency on their employers for accommodation and basic needs, or even a perceived sense of indebtedness. For example, Mihiret (f15, domestic work in Addis Ababa) declared a sense of duty and responsibility towards the family employing her—who she also identified as ‘[her] family’ and her main support system— because, despite her work being unpaid, she is allowed to go to school and they did not verbally and physically abuse her (as previous employers had done). However, this close and ambiguous relationship with their employers hinders children’s ability to report, to leave or to even recognise when a situation has become abusive.

Gender

Our findings lend evidence to research showing an association between gender and varying types of labour sectors (Abebe, 2008; Pankhurst, et al., 2015). For example, boys frequently work as shoe shiners, porters, construction workers or fishermen assistants, while girls dominate the domestic work and sex work sectors. Accordingly, boys and girls are commonly subject to distinct job-related hazards and risks.

Half of the boys and none of the girls in our study had migrated from their rural villages to the city influenced by stories from peers and without an already arranged job or accommodation. Other studies have found a similar overrepresentation of boys among Ethiopian rural youth migrating to the cities in search for work (Nathan & Fratkin, 2018; Bezu & Holden, 2014). Researchers suggest that this could be a reflection of parents’ reluctance to allow girls to leave home for the city on their own (Nathan & Fratkin, 2018). As noted earlier with regard to vulnerabilities linked to children’s origin, those who spontaneously move to the city with few to no contacts may not be able to find or afford proper shelter and end up living in the street

and/or in very precarious living situations. This could in part account for the higher numbers of boys than girls living in the street (Abebe, 2008; Aptekar & Heinonen, 2003; Kebede, 2015).

Risks are even higher for girls living in the street, as they are more vulnerable than boys to sexual harassment, abuse and assault (UNICEF, 2000). In this study, key informants often referred to this problem. In addition, Meron (f13), the only girl in this study who was living unaccompanied in the street, reported several incidents of older boys harassing and sexually assaulting her and one occasion when she engaged in survival sex²⁷ with a man. None of the boys in this study reported having experienced sexual harassment or assault in the past, although key informants and previous research suggest this is not uncommon (Tadele, 2009).

Primarily, however, girls in child labour tend more than boys to be engaged in indoor occupations such as domestic work or sex work. These contexts place girls at particularly high risk because of their invisibility from the public eye, the severity of the tasks they are required to complete and the unequal power relationships with employers and clients. This often leads to physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation in terms of tasks, working hours and payment.

Key informants also pointed out that employers prefer older children for some jobs more usually performed by males, such as those involving physical strength (e.g., carrying heavy loads). Conversely, for jobs usually performed by females, key informants report that age makes no such difference.

But, most of the time, the boys that are hired to be gatekeepers are above 18. They bring in younger ones for weaving and other work but ...the girls...like I said, they have no problem, they bring them at a young age... (...) Above 10 years old...they bring them so that they babysit their children, no other work. But in the case of boys, it's very rare and even if they bring them, they will send them to school. And many just want to work carrying [daily labour] and those above 18 years, they give them full jobs, some make them wash clothes also and do gardening but they are usually older. They don't want the young ones. They will say: "Is he going to protect me or am I going to protect him?" (Founder, NGO, Addis Ababa)

In this sense, both gender and age overlap to increase girls' vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.

Disability

Aside from child labourers being at risk of incurring a disability as a result of work accidents, abuse or long-term excessive workloads, key informants stated that adults often force children with disabilities to beg.

[Parents] use the disabled children for begging. They have no thought about sending them to school. They don't believe that they can attend schools. They don't even like to send their able children to school and so, because they don't think the disabled children should go to school, they use them for begging. (Employee, Department of Women and Children Affairs, Addis Ababa)

Key informants also suspected that adults sometimes use children with disabilities to pass as sons or daughters of the person begging so as to elicit compassion from potential donors.

Only one child in this study, Chaltu (f10, factory and domestic work in Adama) reported having a disability – vaginal fistula as a result of rape. Her mother explained that, for this reason, she must bring her daughter to work with her as the child cannot be left alone.²⁸

27 Survival sex is understood as "selling of sex to meet subsistence needs" (Green et al., 1999)

28 Unfortunately, the researcher who interviewed this woman and her child reported not being able to find an NGO to which he could refer the case to during the short time he spent in the area.

My daughter faces disease called fistula and she can't control her urine and others. As a result, she became mentally ill and can't move and be alone during the day. Therefore, she moves with me everywhere I work. (...) she works with me at any working place and many of my employers pay wage to her.

- Mutual support: material and emotional
- Adult support networks: symbiosis with businesses
- Job mobility: changing, diversifying and combining activities
- Begging
- Entrepreneurial mentality: forward thinking (saving and planning)
- Play and self-care: being careful, refusing tasks that are too hard or dangerous
- Drug use to cope with hunger, cold and distress
- Disability: forced to beg or used for begging

c) Coping strategies

According to Folkman & Lazarus (1984, p. 141)., coping strategies involve “constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person”. Problem-focused coping strategies are intended to alter the source of stress, that is, to solve the underlying problem; emotion-focused coping strategies aim to manage the psychological distress caused by or following the situation being experienced, which is more common when the person feels that the source of distress cannot be altered (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989). In the face of considerable hazards to their health and wellbeing, children in this study exhibited a number of strategies that helped them cope with the often unbearable situations in which they find themselves, either to solve the problem or improve the negative situation (problem-focused), and/or to deal with or reduce the emotional distress experienced (emotion-focused). As studies have shown, some coping strategies can function in both ways (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989). Below, we outline the strategies exhibited by the sample of children involved in child labour in this study. These coping strategies include providing mutual support to each other, relying on supportive adults, begging, creating symbiotic relationship with businesses, performing self-care practices, playing, changing jobs and diversifying their sources of income and the use of drugs to cope with cold, hunger and distress.

Mutual support

Children interviewed who were living and/or working in the streets particularly stressed the existence of a strong bond among themselves and the common practice of mutual support—a coping strategy commonly mentioned in previous literature on street children (Fikre, 2016; Kilbride, 2010; Abebe, 2008). They spoke about sharing money and resources such as food, clothing and information. Furthermore, accounts from interviews and field observations suggest that children practice solidarity when one of their peers is in a disadvantaged situation, for example, after being robbed or when sick or unable to work even though they must usually compete for such goods.

I got 45 Birr. I used 15 and I gave 30 to my friend who gave birth and can't work. She is about 14 years old and lives in the street.

(Meron, f13, daily labour and waste collector in Adama)

We care for each other. If someone is hungry, we share the food one gets and the money too.

(Fitsum, m8, begging and porting in Hawassa)

I share with the girls in the hotel, especially when I manage to get business and some of them didn't.

(Nebiat, f16, sex work in Mekele)

As an example, researchers observed shoe shiners at times competing for costumers and at other times, when a child was unable to get a customer over a long period of time, intentionally leaving the next opportunity to that child. This peer support, however, varied according to location and individual experiences.

Let me share with you some stories of street life. Children in Addis Ababa were open and live with sharing. If we got food or something, we shared with each other and help on other things, for example, when one is sick, we collect money what we have and send him to a health institution. But here in Adama many children don't have good behaviour; they steal your money and don't have any sharing life system.

(Tolosia, m16, waste collection in Adama)

According to our participants and researchers' observations, children working in the street commonly do so in groups or pairs, especially at night. Similarly, they also stay close for protection while sleeping in the street or form groups in order to afford to rent a room together.

We sleep at night in groups because the night is mostly terrible to sleep alone since dogs and hyenas come at night.

(Fitsum, m8, beggar and porter in Hawassa)

This closeness does not only serve to protect their safety and help them maximise access to limited material resources, it also functions as an emotional support system. Children often mentioned the positive relationship with their peers as one of the most positive elements of their experience.

I like the area where I sleep since my friends are there and I don't feel depressed. (...) It is friends who are living with me who are the primary caretakers in time of need.

(Hayelom, m17, daily labour and street vending in Mekele)

It is very relieving talking to my friend. I know her from childhood, and we are from the same village.

(Netsanet, f17, factory in Mekele)

Adult support network and symbiotic relationships

Only five of the children in the study mentioned receiving support from their parents or relatives and, thus, as we have seen, most said that they mainly relied on their peers. However, some children also reported receiving occasional support in the form of money, food, clothing or advice from NGO workers, religious people or neighbours. This was especially the case among children who work and/or live in the streets, as they are more visible and have greater interactions with the community around them.

Two children described a close relationship with their employers and said they would turn to them if they needed help. This was the case of one girl doing domestic work and one boy working with a donkey cart owner collecting waste. Additionally, the girl doing sex work mentioned a good relationship with a police officer working in the area, who she would trust to ask for help if needed.

Few children, however, reported counting on no sustained support from either peers or adults, and relying exclusively on themselves.

I don't have any person to ask support. You know why I tried to save money? I used that money when I need help. My money is my relatives, friends and my supporter.
(Tolosia, m16, waste collection in Adama)

Q: Is there a name... someone that comes to mind, someone you would go to ask for help if you had a problem...?

A: Who is there? There is no one.
(Teshome, m12, carrier in Addis Ababa)

Symbiotic relationships with businesses

Researchers conducting field observations observed shoe shiners building a kind of symbiotic relationship with cafés: doing errands for waitresses and customers, occupying chairs but offering them up to customers when they arrive (as a way to introduce themselves), or informing waitresses when a customer had been waiting for too long. This phenomenon also speaks to the entrepreneurial mentality of these working children, of which we will see more examples below.

Job changes, diversification and combining activities

Experiences reported by children suggest that working conditions are largely dependent not only on the sector of work, but also on the employers themselves, as some are fairer and kinder towards the children than others. Because of this, although not always possible, interviewed children reported problem-based coping strategies such as changing employers when the conditions were not good enough or when they felt exploited. Indeed, job mobility was quite common among the children in this study.

When I first arrived in Mekele, I was hired in a hotel as a messenger. I was paid 600 Birr a month. I was only able to work for a single month. (...) It then was getting difficult to continue to work in the hotel because of the workload and I was at times slapped by the supervisor for no reason. I tried to approach friends who were working in shoe shining and recommended to me that it is good to shoe shine in terms of the income and the freedom it gives. I then decided by myself to buy the necessary materials with about 450 Birr.

(Gebremehdin, m10, shoe shining in Mekele)

As Gebremehdin illustrated, another strategy to improve children's working conditions was to save money in order to open a business of their own. This is a goal shared by many of the children interviewed as we learned above regarding their aspirations for self-improvement.

Undoubtedly, participating in self-employment is the best of all the jobs because of the freedom it gives and the responsibility expected. Undeniably, the benefit it brings makes self-employment the best of all jobs.

(Netsanet, f17, factory in Mekele)

Working in trade has the freedom and a better benefit than working in a construction site or even assisting a blacksmith.

(Hayelom, m17, daily labour and street vending in Mekele)

According to Adugna (2006), who researched migrant children working in street-based activities in Addis Ababa, having and acting upon plans for their future would be linked to retaining a hopeful and optimistic attitude, which in turn protects them from engaging in self-destructive behaviour such as drug abuse.

Diversifying and combining their activities was also a strategy mentioned by children in order to stay afloat financially, especially for those engaged in daily labour, as the instability of it demanded them to find an additional source of income.

I combine daily labour work with trading activities because I can't stick to one task because one activity is not continuously available every day.

(Hayelom, m17, daily labour and street vending in Mekele)

Younger and less experienced children reported offering small services like pouring water over customers' hands to clean them after eating, or assisting adults working at the market with different tasks, such as cleaning and filleting fish for costumers. These small tasks can also represent an entry point to the market for young children, from which to move on to higher paid responsibilities.

Begging

As already mentioned throughout the report, some children engage in begging to be able to cover their basic needs. Within our sample, all children living in the streets and most of those sharing a small place with other children said that they often obtain leftover food by asking restaurants and hotels. They call this 'eating bule'. Meanwhile, all of the children who reported engaging in begging for money from strangers were living without shelter in the street. Children in other living situations, such as living with their employers, relatives or a place alone, did not report resorting to any type of begging. An exception was a 7-year-old girl working in waste collection, who lived with her mother in a small room and explained that she sometimes begged for food and money with her mother.

Play and self-care

Self-employed children generally reported having more leisure time and fewer working hours than those working under the rules and constant supervision of an employer. They also appeared to enjoy greater freedom to get distracted during work by playing with other children, for example, while in the street selling products, collecting waste or during free time between customers. This dynamic was also observed by researchers on the ground, who noted children in the street at times focused on their work tasks and at times playing with each other, running and laughing.

When asked about the risks and hazards associated with their work, some children asserted being aware of the risks and cautious when dealing with dangerous tasks or materials. Some said they avoided the greatest hazards altogether. For example, Gebremariam (m17, garage in Mekele) explained that he could choose to work only with lighter tools and not to perform the most dangerous tasks in the new garage where he works after leaving an abusive employer.

Teshome (m12), self-employed as a porter in Addis Ababa, said he would decline a client if the load was too heavy, or simply choose not to go to work when he did not feel like it.

Overall, the possibility of avoiding risky tasks, having time for leisure, or playing during work was evidently dependent on the type of employment and employer. In contrast to the cases above, other children reported having no free time and no freedom to decide which tasks to perform.

I have no time to do anything for fun. I wake up to go to work and back home to sleep. And even I have no time to talk with my friends at work.
(Fozia, f17, factory in Adama)

Drug use

Using drugs to cope with hunger, cold and distress is another strategy used by children. This mainly concerns those living in a homeless situation, despite the negative impact this habit has on their short-term and long-term health and well-being, as we have previously mentioned when examining drug use as a risk factor. Drug use is a clear example of emotion-based coping, where children who experience a stressor they cannot change, for example, cold during the night when sleeping outside, resort to using drugs in order to numb their senses and thus minimise the distress caused by the situation.

[L]ooking for gas oil from a small taxi where it is sold in a plastic bottle and we collect the plastic bottle where some petrol is left inside. We sniff this to resist the cold at night time.
(Fitsum, m8, begging and porter in Hawassa)

4.2 Stakeholders' proposed solutions

In this section, we outline stakeholders' (key informants') perspectives on actions necessary to decrease the number of children involved in child labour and to improve the living and working conditions of children in Ethiopia as well as on the challenges that may impede such efforts. These recommendations reflect the ideas and perspectives of stakeholders interviewed and do not constitute our conclusions and policy recommendations based on analysis of all the data available for this study. Such recommendations are, instead, detailed in Section 6.

To successfully address child labour in Ethiopia, political and public leaders must focus attention on child labour in a manner that goes beyond proclamations and promises. "I am hoping there could be programmes with an allocated budget to just strictly follow exploitative child labour and specific NGO programmes to help children in exploitative child labour", declared Employee 2, BoLSA, Mekele.

Further, finding solutions to an issue as complex and multifaceted as child labour requires a **multidimensional approach** and effective coordination across numerous sectors involving a wide variety of stakeholders. Interview respondents across the board emphasised the need to address the issue of child labour from varying perspectives and through a variety of synergistically combined approaches. "Children's issues are not something that you view from one angle only", explained an employee from the Bureau of Women, Children and Youth in Addis Ababa. Key informants from regional levels suggested that stakeholders from central government, regional bureaus, health, education, police and other law enforcement bodies as well as NGOs should combine their efforts.

Any NGOs planning on this issue [of child labour] should be integrated with the community and government structure to perform activities. It is not the responsibility of one office only. We need to do it in a group.
(Employee, BoLSA, Adama)

More effective coordination among all departments and actors could be achieved, according to stakeholders, by sticking to adequate **communication mechanisms** and establishing a **strong coordinating** body to lead the efforts.

Key informants emphasised the integral **role of government** as it holds primary responsibility for addressing the issue of child labour in the country but has, so far, failed to fulfil, they argued. Common refrains among government representatives included comments such as, “there is nothing [being] done so far” and “there are no such programmes that specifically focus on child labour” (Employee 2, BoLSA, Mekele). Indeed, government representatives indicated that, while some efforts are under way to improve and enforce laws pertaining to child labour, “there is much work [still] needed” (Employee, Bureau of Women, Children and Youth, Adama), especially with regard to ensuring public awareness of the laws and regulations regarding child labour (NGO founder, Mekele) and strong integration and collaboration among and across stakeholders (Employee, Bureau of Women, Children and Youth, Adama).

Study respondents proposed a number of steps government could take to more effectively engage with and address child labour in Ethiopia. Specifically, they highlighted the need to **prevent** the occurrence of child labour in the first place through **strengthening the family**; to **raise public awareness** and **reduce discrimination** against children involved in child labour; to **develop, implement and enforce policies** and laws; and to address the complexities of **reintegrating** children in street situations into their families in a comprehensive and thoughtful way. We discuss each of these suggestions, in turn, below.

4.2.1 Preventing child labour through supporting families

As we saw in previous sections, key informants observed that children are much more likely to engage in child labour when the family lacks sufficient income to feed, clothe and educate the child. Accordingly, they frequently identified the need to **support family livelihoods** as a means of reducing children’s likelihood of engaging in child labour. Easing the financial burden on families can involve reducing or eliminating school-associated costs that families typically incur. Supporting or training families to develop small businesses can also “empower families economically” and increase the likelihood that children are “able to remain within the home and parents can protect their children ... [in] a sustainable manner” (Employee 2, Department of Women and Children Affairs, Hawassa). In the absence of parents, noted Employee 1 (Bureau of Women, Children and Youth, Hawassa), support can be provided to an “older brother or close relatives in order to help the child attend school while living with his close relations” with the intent of enabling the child to “reside in a house and get protection”.

Regarding the phenomenon of children migrating to cities on their own in search for work, key informants suggested that this could be in part linked to the relationships within the families and a lack of proper communication. Government representatives recommended teaching families **stronger communication skills** and guiding them to use more supportive parenting to interrupt the flow of children leaving their family homes on their own in search of employment in cities.

Families have to get knowledge on how to take care of their children and even communities have to be responsible for problems of children.

(Employee, Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Adama)

To protect children from exploitation, people have to be educated about how to take care of their children, supporting families to send children to school and controlling the way brokers and other mediators use to transport children.

(Employee 2, Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Adama)

The sentiment underlying these suggestions was that regularly following up on children, asking them about their day and checking in on them helps parents to prevent their child from migrating to the city.

One study respondent identified the **role of the mother** as particularly significant in this regard, believing that “a child will be okay when the mother is okay” (Founder, NGO, Addis Ababa). Accordingly, she proposed emphasising support for mothers so that they, in turn, can support their children and encourage them to remain at home.

The first teacher is mother, starting from breastfeeding her child. So, in my opinion, a child will only be well if the mother is well. If the mother is there, if you make her life peaceful for her, her children will be fine. I mean, the problem is not being poor... but having a peaceful but poor life... I mean if she can at least work and support herself peacefully, then the children will grow up seeing peaceful things around them... Therefore, a mother should always come first.

(Founder, NGO, Addis Ababa)

In a similar line, increasing fathers’ awareness about children’s rights and the negative effects of child labour may result in them taking decisions that favour their children’s wellbeing and future.

4.2.2 Raising awareness and changing attitudes towards children in child labour

One of the challenges in developing strategies to address child labour in Ethiopia is the lack of awareness, understanding and compassion among members of society with regard to children engaged in child labour, particularly those living in street situations. Frequently, adults suspect that children who are visibly engaged in child labour (i.e., on the streets) are involved in theft or violence and thus do not look upon them favourably, as these respondents illustrate:

Most people don’t trust a child who is on the streets.

(Employee 2, BoLSA, Mekele)

There is a bad attitude towards street children by the general public.

(Employee 2, BoLSA, Mekele)

In our society, if you say that you live on the streets, people will be afraid of you because they think of you as a thief that might come the next day to rob them.

(Former street child, Addis Ababa)

Anyone observing [their] behaviour would simply judge them by looking at their acts like when a child on a street is smoking. But the reality is that this child is full of frustration and no one is protecting them from dangers.

(Former street child, Mekele)

Pervasive mistrust of children looking for work on the street makes it very difficult for children to find employment opportunities.

There is a stereotype which ends up excluding this group of children from participation in any activity like the right to work and survival. It is really hard for a street child to find employment.

(Former street child, Mekele)

Indeed, the perception of children on the streets as criminals deters others from recognising the reasons that pushed the children into such circumstances in the first place and encourages an avoidance of getting to know the children to further understand their situation. Yet it is precisely the children engaged in such forms of child labour that most need compassion and support, according to an NGO founder in Addis Ababa.

The major issue that makes me get into a fight here is that I hear the adults insult the little ones. They say they are thieves. But, wait, they didn't become thieves because they wanted to.

(Founder, NGO, Addis Ababa)

Changing society's perceptions about child labour is thus a high priority mentioned by several respondents.

As a complimentary measure, the provision of safe spaces for children in street situations to access basic sanitation facilities could impact their ability to maintain adequate hygiene practices and therefore improve their appearance, as children's current lack of access to such installations negatively affects how the community perceives them.

Additionally, the rampant misconceptions regarding the reasons for child labour, the experiences in which children find themselves and the long-term effects of their engagement in child labour, facilitates its widespread occurrence and continuation. This, according to an employee at the Department of Women and Children Affairs in Addis Ababa, is at the root of the issue of child labour. "Everybody has an underage maid", she commented, implying that citizens are reluctant to report neighbours or acquaintances for employing child labour as they themselves are likely engaged in similar practices.

Given this context, a priority among policy makers and others in a position of authority should be to **raise awareness** regarding the negative aspects and consequences of child labour. Given the context described above, however, this is particularly challenging, as long-standing societal practices and expectations defy any such critiques and have a vested interest in continuing the engagement of children in labour activities beyond their capacity.

Key informants felt that policies and programmes cannot be effective without first reaching a point at which society is generally compassionate and empathic towards children engaged in child labour, particularly those in street situations. Thus, the primary task required to lay the foundation for developing policies or programmes is to first set in motion a considerable change in societal attitudes towards children in such situations.

Everyone in the community should develop the feeling that it is their responsibility, too. You shouldn't watch and keep silent. One has to speak up. We have to speak up to the person doing the exploitation so that he stops... Whenever you see wrong things...you speak up and make it stop.

(Founder, NGO, Addis Ababa)

This foundational sense of compassion must be complemented by an **understanding of children's rights and child protection laws**. According to a community police officer in Addis Ababa, very few people are aware of laws regarding unpaid salaries and, concomitantly, do

not know that they can report unpaid labour to the police. Furthermore, employers may not be aware of children's rights to not be physically abused or punished.

There is a problem with the employers when it comes to explaining the things related to the children's rights properly... yelling at them, hitting them and doing other things.
(Community police, Addis Ababa)

As we have shown, this study found widespread consensus about the need to change society's attitudes and child labour. However, study respondents noted that this awareness raising must be backed up through stricter **law enforcement** that punishes individuals who violate the laws already in place.

4.2.3 Law enforcement

Indeed, respondents suggested that more strictly enforcing laws not only prevents the individual accused of breaking the law from further engaging in such behaviour, but also has a strong and important deterrent quality that can have ripple effects within the society.

When we asked what is going on, the police said they couldn't find the [accused] woman. But I had seen the woman here just three days ago. There are such things. And then, they rescheduled for another time. There are such gaps. If this woman is not punished, then others will do the same thing.
(Employee, Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Addis Ababa)

Stricter law enforcement is also required to monitor and prosecute brokers or middlemen, who indirectly also hold responsibility for the children's circumstances.

Our study shows that, although some policies are in place to protect children from exploitation, these policies are not well enforced. Employee 1 (BoLSA, Mekele) explained that "much of the work related to child labour is theoretical and paperwork" and the government does not provide a sufficient budget to ensure implementation and enforcement, such as punishing employers violating (child) labour laws.

4.2.4 Access to education

Another key area in which the government can take action to confront child labour head-on is through promoting and enabling **access to education**. Although education is free in Ethiopia, as we have seen in previous sections, education-related costs, economic or otherwise, can be a barrier. Despite the widely recognised value of education in Ethiopian society, these challenges to accessibility further compound the reasons why children engage in child labour. Accordingly, the founder of an NGO in Addis Ababa suggested that enabling access to education is a key component of an overall response to address child labour.

Facilitating access to education involves assisting families to cover expenses related to school materials, uniforms and/or transportation.

Study respondents disputed the appropriateness and effectiveness of providing **shelters or institutions** as a way to address child labour. Based on his own experience, one former street child suggested additional shelters should be constructed to house children in street situations and to offer them alternatives to engaging in child labour. He felt that institutions could be helpful in preparing children to return to their family or other work by homing in on the activities and employment opportunities of interest to each individual child.

Another key respondent noted that institutionalising children as a means of reducing their engagement in child labour is not an appropriate solution and is, instead, accompanied by another set of problems.

'[I]nstitutional care' also has its own effects. (...) Singling out the poor from the community, putting them in a rehabilitation centre and going that way assuming that you will solve the issue in such manner ... it's not beneficial ... People raised in institutions usually 'deviate' instead of carrying on the values of the society and their chances of being isolated from the rest of the society are also high. It doesn't give him the chance to learn and practice the cultural activities as well... it could be going to church or a mosque... things that others are doing also. It's better to be brought up within a community.

(Employee, BoLSA, Addis Ababa)

4.2.5 Reintegration (ideals and challenges)

Reintegrating the children who have moved to the city in search of work with their families may be an obvious solution to reducing child labour and minimising its long-term effects. However, according to a number of key informants, reunifying children with their families after a period during which they were alone in the city can be very challenging.

"It is of no use to send a child back home if the factors that pushed them to work and to be away from home remain", explained Employee 1 (Bureau of Women, Children and Youth, Hawassa). Another employee of the Bureau of Women, Children and Youth in Hawassa emphasised this point:

Reintegration itself or sending the child back to his parents alone is not enough unless the very reasons that push these children to leave their home [are] addressed effectively. Because, unless these situations are effectively addressed, whatever we do to send children back to their home, they will return after [a] few times.

(Employee 2, Bureau of Women, Children and Youth, Hawassa)

Indeed, reintegrating children with families requires that the push factors urging them into child labour have been addressed, such that the child does not simply leave anew and continue a perpetual pattern of reintegration and departure. One measure necessary to change the home dynamics involves, again, stabilising the family financially.

An important thing in the reintegration programme, then, is empowering families economically. Families or guardians should get training and other necessary supports to sustain their children and themselves.

(NGO founder, Mekele)

Commenting on previous experience endeavouring to reintegrate children with their families, an employee at BoLSA in Mekele confirmed the necessity of such an approach:

There was a trial to take children from the streets and send them to the places they came from. But, after a while, the streets were filled with children [again]. The missing link here is that there is a need to thoroughly listen to the problems of these children and to take appropriate measures like introducing a livelihood intervention for their families or guardians to solve the problem once and for all.

(Employee 1, BoLSA, Mekele)

In a context wherein discrimination against children engaging in child labour and/or living in the streets is generally accepted, some families may feel ashamed for others to know their child lived on the street because of society's attitude towards these children.

The family doesn't want people to know that their child has gone to live on the streets. They might say that the child has gone to another region or maybe has just gone missing...

(Former street child, Addis Ababa)

This issue becomes even more complex when a child has changed as a result of their way of life in the city, leading to challenges for the child to reintegrate into a family where things are as they were before. Referring to efforts to reintegrate children with their families, this former street child noted:

It is possible, but it will be difficult. (...) He might be used to wandering around and dancing and smoking, but he might not be allowed to do that anymore. Because of this, even if you return him to a home, there is a great chance that he will go back to living on the streets. It is also difficult to connect them with their families.

(Former street child, Addis Ababa)

These challenges with reintegration should not deter efforts to reunite children with their families, however. Instead, it is a call to employ a multi-dimensional approach with support from a variety of stakeholders in any such endeavours. Indeed, there were those key informants who were more optimistic about the prospects of reunifying children with their families.

It can be done. And we have shown that it is possible... Those girls, young ones... who came to work in Addis Ababa and were being exploited... We have gotten them back with their families, given them training and counselling and we have done work to help them support themselves. So, they are given a certain amount of money so that people will not say "You came empty handed?" when they return home. We have made sure that they save money and return home. We have helped them make peace with their families. There are those that we have given shelter to. So, depending on the severity of their problem, we have been able to reach them. And now, after 20 years, the government, BOLSA has accepted this as its responsibility and has now collected the street children and is giving them training, education opportunities and job opportunities.

(Project coordinator, NGO, Addis Ababa)

This same project coordinator explained that there is also follow-up to ensure the reintegration is sustainable when children are reintegrated with their families and that the child doesn't simply return to the streets.

4.2.6 Approach tailored to child's age

Finally, NGO representatives proposed that responses to child labour need to be determined in accordance with children's ages, as different age groups require distinct support. Younger children first and foremost require protection and support from an adult guardian or family and the role of government or NGOs in this situation is to support the guardians tending to the children (Employee 3, BoLSA, Mekele). For children aged 14 years or older, vocational training or management training might facilitate improved working conditions or entrepreneurial endeavours and ensure that they "engage in economic activities that could equate with their capacities" (NGO founder, Mekele). Those over 18 could benefit from "training and start-up businesses to start their own life in society" (Employee 3, BoLSA, Mekele).

Therefore, training youth and providing opportunities for them to learn skills could minimise the extent to which children are exploited. The skills imparted to youth should include entrepreneurial skills, business skills and learning about their basic rights. Combined, such training could facilitate their movement into environments with better working conditions.

While this may be happening to some extent, study respondents across the board agreed that what was being done was, as of yet, insufficient to truly address child labour. In addition to offering training, they suggested that government provide small **loans** for youth to start small businesses.



5. NATIONAL RESPONSE TO CHILD LABOUR AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Key Points of the National Response to Child Labour

- Ethiopia has ratified the ILO National Minimum Age Convention 1973 (No. 138) and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999 (No. 182).
- Two key components of Ethiopia's response to child labour are the National Children's Policy and the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. The former focuses on children's rights welfare as well as advocating for access to education. The latter is key to a coordinated effort to address child labour but expires in 2020. Expiring action plans should be reassessed and new plans developed.
- Other policies and programmes may impact child labour through its causes and consequences, including the Education and Training Policy and the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Ethiopia. MoLSA has a key role to play in coordinating the efforts of the various relevant organisations to eliminate child labour.
- In any coordinated plan to eliminate child labour, other policies and programmes should be noted. For example, the Productive Safety Net Programme may reduce child labour by reducing exposure to shocks faced by the households of at-risk children, while other programmes aim to improve access to schooling.

Given the complexity of the child labour issue, a coordinated response of many different actors is needed in order to eliminate it. In Ethiopia, the main responsibility falls to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), given the immediate link to labour and work. MoLSA

is responsible for designing strategies to prevent and control child labour, implementing laws, compiling the list of hazardous jobs and conducting labour inspections. The regional Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs (BoLSAs) are also coordinated by MoLSA, who in turn are responsible for labour inspections, including the issue of child labour.

The Ministry of Women, Children and Youth (MoWCY) is another key actor whose duties include protecting children's rights through the implementation of policies, laws and action plans. MoWCY further coordinates the activities of different stakeholders at both national and regional levels.

Several other agencies also have important roles to play. The Ministry of Education is important in the fight against child labour due to their efforts to increase school enrolment and reduce dropouts. Raising awareness among students and parents of the problems of child labour may also be a useful tool which could be implemented by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs works to prevent and control child trafficking overseas. Furthermore, the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) plays an important role by collecting data on child labour at the national level which is therefore representative of the whole country. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission is responsible for the enforcement of the rights of children including the UNCRC, as explained below. Lastly, the police and the Ministry of Justice are key actors working to prevent illegal exploitation of children.

This first section of this chapter maps the conventions ratified by Ethiopia together with the national legal framework surrounding child labour. Thereafter, the relevant policies, national action plans and programmes in this context are described and the effectiveness and challenges with these are discussed. The section concludes with an analysis of the social and economic benefits of eliminating child labour.

5.1. Ratified conventions and national legislation

National legislation on child labour differs between countries due to the definitions of minimum working age as well as which activities are considered child labour. In some cases, child labour is restricted to children's economic activities, while elsewhere child labour may encompass both economic and non-economic activities. In turn, the design and results of child labour surveys can vary. Controversy exists about the inclusion of light work and domestic chores within the definition of child labour. The ILO has sought to establish international norms through a set of conventions. The ILO's Minimum Age Convention 1973 (No 138)—ratified by Ethiopia in 1999—currently provides the most comprehensive and flexible definition of the minimum age for admission to employment or work. This Convention obliges ratifying states to fix a minimum age and defines a range of minimum ages below which no child should work. These specified ages vary among countries according to the level of development of the country and according to the type of employment and work (SIMPOC, 2004). Beyond the definition of child labour, Article 3 of the ILO Convention No 182—ratified by Ethiopia in 2003—defines the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999), these forms are, by definition, unconditional, without distinction between industrial and non-industrialised countries. The ILO/SIMPOC approach uses the definition of child labour as determined by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) which defines child labour as a subset of work performed by children. Convention No. 138 allows for light work for children aged 13 or over but Ethiopia has not incorporated this into its legislation.

Additionally, Ethiopia also ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1991. Article 32 of the UNCRC addresses child labour by generally stating that:

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the

child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:
 - a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
 - b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
 - c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

As a complement to the UNCRC, Ethiopia ratified two optional protocols in 2014. Related to the issue of child labour, the UNCRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography requires ratifying states to ensure that offering, delivering or accepting a child for the purpose of engagement in forced labour is fully covered under the country's criminal or penal law (Article 3/1). Moreover, by ratifying the UNCRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict, Ethiopia commits to not enlist children as soldiers and to work to prevent children engaged in armed conflict (UN OSRSGCAC, 2020).

Child labour is further addressed in Ethiopia's national legislation in the Ethiopian Constitution, Family Code, Labour Law, Criminal Code, Civil Code, Anti-Trafficking Proclamation and Overseas Employment Proclamation. The Ethiopian Constitution devotes Article 36 to children and their rights. In line with this article and the international conventions that Ethiopia has ratified, a Revised Family Code was issued in 2000, which focuses on the protection, well-being and upbringing of children. Labour Proclamation No. 1156/2019 (which supersedes the predecessor proclamation, number 377/2003) prohibits the employment of persons below 15 years old (Article 89/2) and prohibits the employment of young workers²⁹ in activities that endanger their lives or health (Article 89/3). It further sets a maximum number of working hours for young workers at seven hours per day (Article 90) and prohibits the employment of young workers for night work, overtime work, work on weekly rest days and on public holidays (Article 91, Sub-Article 1-4). Additionally, the law assigns the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as the competent authority to give out the list of hazardous jobs that are not to be performed by young workers (Article 89, Sub-Article 4). Furthermore,

[...] the Criminal Code of Ethiopia contains provisions concerning the production and trafficking of drugs (Art. 525), enslavement (Art. 596), trafficking in minors for compulsory labour (Art. 597) and trafficking in minors for prostitution (Art. 636). (ILO, 2019).

The Civil Code of Ethiopia (1960) regulates domestic household employment contracts and protects household workers from entering into arrangements of abuse or exploitation by stating that terms in a contract that are less favourable to the employee than the provisions in the Civil Code shall not be valid unless authorised by law (Article 2522). Furthermore, relevant to this context, but not directly related to child labour, the Civil Code addresses registration of children at birth and the issuance of birth certificates (Article 3361). Birth certificates can protect children from child labour as they are provided with proof of legal identity and age, thus making age checks possible for employers and inspectors. This proof is necessary for laws setting a minimum age for employment to be effective (UNICEF, 2019).

The Anti-Trafficking Proclamation No. 909/2015 has evolved in light of Ethiopia's international commitments. The objective of the proclamation is to prevent human trafficking, with a special focus on child trafficking. Finally, Ethiopia's Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016 prohibits the recruitment of any person younger than 18 years for employment overseas (Article 42/3d).

29 Defined as those who have attained 14 years of age or are yet to reach age 18 (Article 89-1).

5.2 Policies, effectiveness and challenges

In addition to the ratified conventions and national legislation described above, Ethiopia further addresses the child labour issue in several policies, programmes and national action plans. Some of these are directly related to child labour, while others are indirectly linked through potential causes or consequences of child labour, for instance. This section identifies the policies, programmes and strategies relevant to the child labour context and analyses the effectiveness and challenges of these. It should be noted that the aim of this section is not to evaluate the impact of these policies and programmes but rather to identify how they play a role in the country's fight against child labour.

Policies addressing the child labour issue

National Children's Policy

The 2017 National Children's Policy aims to promote and protect children's rights and welfare, prevent and eliminate child trafficking and child labour as well as domestically support orphans and vulnerable children. The policy further advocates access to quality primary and secondary schooling, education in rural areas and for out-of-school youth. As we saw earlier in this report, the incidence of child labour is highest in rural areas, where access to schools is often limited. Furthermore, we saw several differences in the working situation of youth depending on their level of education. For instance, youth with higher education have higher monthly earnings, are more likely to work in the services sector rather than in agriculture and have occupations with higher skill levels. Consequently, providing education to out-of-school youth could serve to improve their working conditions.

National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of the Worst forms of Child Labour (2016–2020)

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) prepared two consecutive national action plans to address the worst forms of child labour in Ethiopia. The first national action plan was a three-year programme from 2012/13–2014/15, which has now been phased out and replaced by the second national action plan for the period 2015/16–2019/20. The *first national action plan* focused on six strategic initiatives: (1) create awareness and mass mobilisation, (2) strengthen structural arrangement and build implementation capacity, (3) strengthen law enforcement, (4) direct intervention and providing support, (5) increase access to education and technical and vocational education and training, and (6) provide economic and social support to poor households.

The **second action plan** focuses on prevention, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration through the following seven goals, of which some are similar to those in the first national action plan: (1) create awareness in society, (2) conduct studies to gather information for evidence-based programme designs, (3) reduce vulnerability, (4) strengthen law enforcement, (5) strengthen structural arrangement and build implementation capacity, (5) increase opportunities for education, (6) create decent work, and (7) reintegration and improve livelihoods.

Challenges still remain in the work towards preventing and eliminating the worst forms of child labour. Among the challenges are low awareness and lack of recognition by concerned bodies and communities at large. Furthermore, absence of proper coordination and cooperation among relevant stakeholders often leads to inefficiency and duplicated efforts.

National Employment Policy and Strategy

According to the 2009 National Employment Policy and Strategy of Ethiopia, law enforcement remains a major challenge to combat child labour in Ethiopia and one action point is therefore

to issue more effective legislation. The National Employment Policy and Strategy further addresses the role of education in combatting child labour and states that action should be taken to increase access to quality schooling and make schooling compulsory. To make schooling compulsory until the minimum age of employment is likely a necessary measure to reduce child labour, though there is currently no education act explicitly stating this. Additional suggested methods to protect children include providing income-generating opportunities to poor households and creating awareness to discourage the pull factors. As we saw in the results from the qualitative study above, some of the pull factors for children to migrate to cities are high expectations of city life and aspirations to improve their futures. However, children often find that working and living conditions are much worse than anticipated. Therefore, as already pointed out, creating awareness to help children make informed decisions is an important step towards improving their working conditions.

National Occupational Safety and Health Policy

One target group of the National Occupational Safety and Health Policy is working children and youth aged 14–18 years. One aim of this policy is to improve working conditions for young workers and to put an end to the incidence of child labour. More specifically, the goal is to protect young workers from hazardous jobs that have detrimental effects on their physical and emotional development. The 2015 CSA survey found that 31.1% of children aged 14–17 years were engaged in hazardous work, which is the highest percentage of all child age groups. This policy is therefore an important step towards reducing child labour among the oldest children. However, several challenges remain. According to Kumie et al. (2016), there is a lack of understanding and awareness among employers regarding existing policies and regulations. Kumie et al. (2016) further mention that occupational safety and health inspectors lack proper hazard-measuring equipment as well as the skills to use it, which makes it difficult to monitor workplaces in terms of exposure to hazardous substances.

National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2015–2020)

The National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons critically examines the legal and institutional frameworks as well as responses related to human trafficking. The action plan serves to map the existing gaps that currently impede the combat against human trafficking. The objective is to provide guidance based on international best practices for action against human trafficking and the institutional structures and inputs needed to effectively address this issue.

There are many initiatives to combat child trafficking in Ethiopia. However, according to a key informant, the interventions of implementing bodies are not well integrated and most of them do not have the required capacity to properly address their respective role in the action plan, which constitutes a challenge in the work aimed at eliminating trafficking.

National Social Protection Policy

The National Social Protection Policy of Ethiopia focuses on the promotion of productive safety nets, employment opportunities and improvement of livelihoods, social insurance, increased equitable access to basic social services and provision of legal protection and support for citizens exposed to abuse and violence. The child labour issue is addressed in the fourth focus area where one of the implementation strategies is to expand school feeding programmes to retain children in school and avoid child labour. To provide children with food while in school likely incentivises households to send and retain their children in school, as it saves them the cost of one meal per day when the child is in school. With more time spent on education, children have less time left to engage in work.

Policies addressing causes and consequences of child labour

Education and Training Policy

One of the objectives of Ethiopia's Education and Training Policy from 1994 is to provide basic education for all, with special attention paid to disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, this policy focuses on improving the quality of education. Although the Education and Training Policy addresses universal and quality education, it does not state that it should be compulsory, which constitutes a challenge in the work towards eliminating child labour. This is likely a key issue explaining the lack of enrolment of many children in school at age 7. If they did enrol, the percentage of children that are overaged for the grade they are enrolled in might be lower than we showed in Figure 14 above. Another potential challenge is that while schooling itself is free in Ethiopia, education induces other costs in the form of inputs, such as stationery and uniforms.

National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Ethiopia 2004–2006

As previously mentioned, orphanhood could be a factor that pushes children into child labour. In the CLS data, 0.4% of children were orphans while one out of 25 children interviewed in the qualitative study had lost both parents. Ethiopia's National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children was "developed to guide all stakeholders in addressing the issue of orphans and vulnerable children in a holistic, coordinated and integrated manner" (FDRE, 2004–2006). The action plan addresses the following five thematic areas: situation analysis/planning, advocacy and capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, legal and regulatory framework and lastly, consultation and coordination.

Programmes and projects related to child labour

The Productive Safety Net Programme 4, 2014–2020

The objective of the Fourth Productive Safety Net Programme is to increase access to safety net and disaster risk management systems, complementary livelihood services and nutrition support for food insecure households in rural Ethiopia (World Bank, 2020). Although this project is not directly related to child labour, it might still be an important step towards reducing child labour in the country. As we show in Figure 10 above, the percentage of children in child labour is higher among households that have experienced a natural shock. Therefore, increasing access to safety net and disaster risk management systems and thereby making households more resilient to natural shocks could also help reduce the use of child labour as a coping mechanism.

Engaged, Educated, Empowered, Ethiopian Youth Project (2014–2018)

The Engaged, Educated, Empowered, Ethiopian Youth Project targeted youth aged 14–17 both in and out of school in certain areas of Ethiopia with the goal to "*address exploitative child labour by promoting education and vocational training opportunities, enhancing livelihood opportunities, building leadership capabilities and strengthening access to social protection programmes for youth and their households*" (Rodrigues, 2019). According to an evaluation of the project, although not an impact evaluation with causal evidence, the project was considered to be effective in reducing child labour.

Ethiopia General Education Quality Improvement Project II (GEQIP-2) (2014–2019)

The General Education Quality Improvement Project is the second phase of an education quality improvement package. The goal of the project is to "*improve learning conditions in primary and secondary schools and strengthen institutions at different levels of educational administration*" (World Bank, 2020). In short, this was performed through curriculum development, textbook provision, teacher training and building of schools.

Ethiopia General Education Quality Improvement Programme for Equity (GEQIP-E) (2017–2022)

The General Education Quality Improvement Programme for Equity is the third phase of the education quality improvement package first mentioned above. The aim of the project is to *“assist the government of Ethiopia in improving internal efficiency, equitable access, and quality in general education”* (World Bank, 2020). Among other aspects, the project focuses on addressing the issue of over-enrolment in the first grade, promoting grade progression at an early stage of education, reducing dropouts, advocating equity in access to and quality in general education as well as improving student learning. This project likely contributes to reduced child labour through several different channels. For instance, preventing children from dropping out of school and ensuring quality education not only reduce their risk of ending up in child labour, but also contribute to better future working conditions.

Ethiopians Fighting Against Child Exploitation

The Ethiopians Fighting Against Child Exploitation project aimed to reduce child labour primarily in the country’s weaving sector in the three regions of Addis Ababa, Gamo Gofa and Wolaita. The activities implemented in order to achieve this goal were *“provision of direct education and livelihoods services, strengthening capacity of local and national institutions, policy advocacy, awareness raising, social protection and research”* (World Vision, 2016). The project contributed to a positive change in several indicators, including child labour rates, dropouts, school retainment, earnings and birth certificate issuance.

Global Action Programme on Child Labour Issues Project

Ethiopia was one of several countries covered by the Global Action Programme (GAP) on Child Labour Issues Project, whose objective was to increase the capacity among target countries to address child and forced labour issues (ILO, 2020). The first of three project components involved support to identify gaps in child and forced labour laws and regulations as well as a capacity development mechanism and training of labour inspectors and other relevant stakeholders. The second component was related to research and statistics on child and forced labour. The last component sought to increase the protection for child domestic workers and to raise awareness.

Global Research on Child Labour Measurement and Policy Development (MAP)

Another project covering several different countries, including Ethiopia, is the Global Research on Child Labour Measurement and Policy Development. This project *“aims at building critical knowledge and capacity for accelerating progress against child labour in targeted countries by supporting data collection and analysis on working children, child labour, and child labour in hazardous work”* (ILO, 2020). To improve the understanding of the child labour issue and to ensure that policymakers have up-to-date data to inform policies is important to create an effective policy response to child labour.

Policies not focussed on child labour

National Youth Policy

Ethiopia’s National Youth Policy was adopted in 2004 with the objective *“to bring about the active participation of youth in the building of a democratic system and good governance as well as in the economic, social and cultural activities in an organized manner and to enable them fairly benefit from the results”* (Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture, 2004). The policy addresses some of the key issues youth are facing, as described previously in this report, with aims such as increasing youth employment and expanding education services for those out of school. Even though the youth age group of 15–29 years is the target group for the policy, the issue of child labour is not addressed in any of the implementation strategies. To improve

the national policy response to child labour, the issue of child labour could be mainstreamed in all relevant policies (U.S. Department of Labour, 2020).

In summary, the Ethiopian policy response to child labour addresses several important aspects necessary to eliminate child labour. Nevertheless, child labour rates are still high in the country, and some policy challenges remain. One key issue is that education is not compulsory in Ethiopia. Another main challenge, which recurs for many of the discussed policies and action plans, is related to the implementation of the strategies. Better coordination, integration and capacity building among stakeholders will likely enhance the positive effects of the existing commitments. In addition, while many of the discussed policies and action plans are still valid, others are several years old and need to be replaced (U.S. Department of Labour, 2020).

5.3 Social and economic benefits of eliminating child labour

The multiple challenges posed by child labour require an integrated set of responses. We have discussed some of the causes of child labour. For example, child labour is used as a coping mechanism by families to overcome economic hardships or unexpected shocks and as a response to social norms. The interviews with hard-to-reach children also suggest that family disintegration or more generally a lack of family support may lead children to become engaged in child labour. Eliminating child labour without tackling the root causes that produce the problem, could put disproportionate burdens on the most vulnerable populations. Baland and Robinson (2000) model parents' decisions and show that child labour may be an equilibrium even for altruistic parents because they fail to take into account the future negative effects on earning capacities.

A naïve approach would suggest that if households decide to allocate time to child labour and not to schooling, it must be because the net economic value of such a decision is positive for them (ILO/IPEC, 2004). Such a view fails to account for the fact that child labour has long-lasting consequences (Sasmal and Guillen, 2017) and furthermore, the ability to internalise those consequences determine to a large extent the allocation of resources. Moreover, the returns to education are often neither observed nor received by the decision-makers. During the years when children go to school, families incur direct economic costs of schooling, materials, uniforms, etc, along with the opportunity cost, i.e. lost income from sending the child to work. In the long run, however, the returns to education are realised and income increases above the level expected in the case that children had not attended school. This means that the ability to internalise benefits largely depends on families' expectations regarding children's activities. Vulnerable households display a high discount rate, meaning that future outcomes have less importance to them when making decisions about the allocation of time between schooling and child labour in the present. Such households often live hand to mouth making long term planning difficult. Alleviating the economic pressures on the discount rate would allow households to better act upon and understand the future benefits of education and the true costs of child labour.

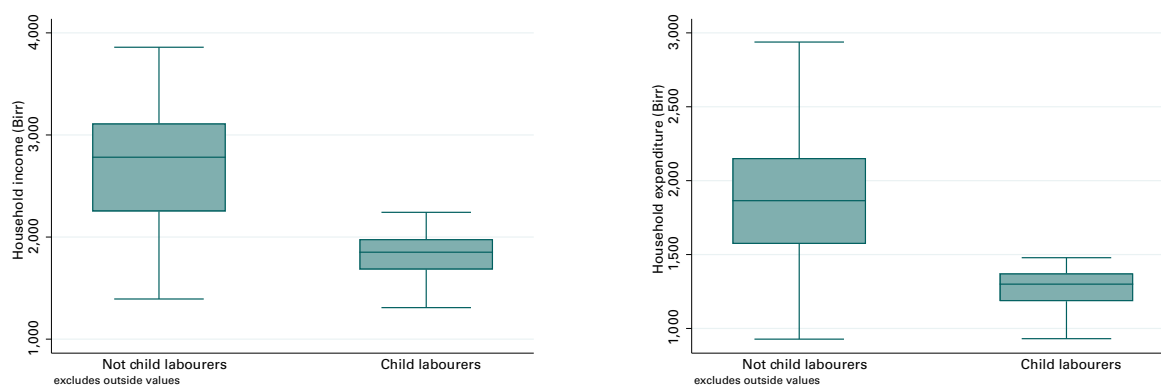
While economic growth is correlated with lower child labour (Edmonds, 2017), impacts are unlikely to be immediate. Where inequality is high, the poorest and most vulnerable to child labour may not benefit much from growth. Using data from OECD countries, the OECD (2018) reports that it could take at least five generations for a child of a poor family to reach the average income in their own country. Such a lack of mobility is linked to inter-generational persistence. In previous sections, we observed that the older the household head was when starting to work, the lower is the probability that a child is found in child labour, showing some persistency of child labour patterns across generations.

To investigate the long-term gains that families cannot perceive at the moment of deciding whether to send a child to school or to work, we could think of the trajectory of income and expenditure of the adults in the sample that at some point were child labourers. In the

absence of a panel data or repeated cross-sectional data, observing trajectories across time is challenging. We therefore use the age at which an adult started working. For this analysis, we focus on members 15 years old or older³⁰ and compute a child labour indicator based only on age—we define adults that at some point were child labourers if they report that they started working when they were 14 years old or younger.

We choose to look at income and expenditure at the household level since the sample of members contains unpaid household workers. For them, the value created due to work is more likely to be reflected in the household income and expenditure level. It is important to notice that the analysis does not provide an estimation of the impact of child labour on the level of income and expenditure but rather only a correlation, as there are many other factors that may affect both their current income and the age at which they started working. From a statistical point of view, this implies that there are several confounders that do not allow child labour to be isolated from other variables such as poverty. Figure 28 shows a box plot of the income and expenditure levels of the household. The borders of the boxes show the 25th and 75th percentiles of the distribution, the median line represents the 50th percentile, and outliers are excluded from the chart. We observe that both income and expenditure levels are higher for household members not involved in child labour in the past. The evidence is suggestive of the potential impact that child labour has on income-generation capability. This correlation may, however, be due to other factors linking poverty during childhood with job opportunities later in life, with these effects difficult to disentangle.

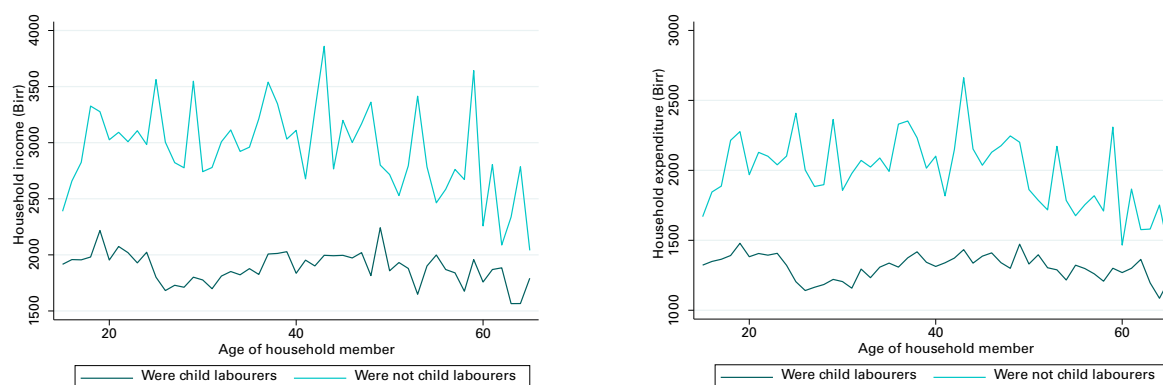
Figure 28. Income and expenditure for former child labourers (Age base indicator only)



Ideally, we would like to see the trajectories of income and expenditure of child labourers and not child labourers across the life cycle to be able to observe the performance of the groups in the labour market (e.g. income and expenditure levels and growth and development of skills). However, since this is not feasible with the available data, we observe patterns over the age variable in the group of members who at some point engaged in child labour compared to those that did not. Figure 29 shows the mean of income and expenditure levels by age of the household member. While the number who were not child labourers is smaller, leading to a higher degree of volatility in the upper line, it is clear that at all ages individuals who were not child labourers are now earning more. On average, the difference in income levels is 1,054.6 Birr (equivalent to roughly 32 USD) meaning those who were not child labourers earn on average 56% more, with a maximum average difference of 1,863.1 Birr (equivalent to 56 USD) that is reached when individuals are 43 years old. There are no major changes over the course of the lives of individuals who began work before age 14. Those who were not child labourers show a rise in income at the start of their lives as some are still in education at age 15 and move into paid work.

30 These results should only be taken as indicative evidence as the sample is not representative for individuals older than 17.

Figure 29. Household income and expenditure trajectories



Finally, we categorise the benefits of eliminating child labour into four main categories:

Benefits	Aspects/dimensions
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved productivity and earning capacity (Posso, 2017; Emerson and Souza, 2011) Improved human capital (Benhassine, et al., 2015)
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced illness and injury (Ahmed and Ray, 2014) Improved mental health (Arshad et al., 2015; Khan, et al., 2007)
Intergenerational correlations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation of poverty traps (Ilahi, et al., 2000)
Indirect benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family welfare (through improved future earning capacities) Social inclusion (through economic inclusion) Strengthened economy that absorbs the more educated generation (through human capital creation)

Overall, we provide insights into the benefits of eliminating child labour. Some benefits are directly experienced by the vulnerable population of child labourers, such as improved earning capacity and reduced exposure to illnesses and injuries. Other benefits accrue to future generations or others. If a child is enabled to stay out of child labour this may help future generations to remain in education, avoid child labour and thereby escape the child labour trap for this family. Investment in human capital is also important for income-generating capacities during youth and later in adult life. This increased productive capacity is also translated in value chains in creating jobs for all in society, hopefully helping to overcome the issue of skill-mismatches and labour underutilisation.



6. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, we inquired into the complexities of child labour, recognising the vulnerability of children that are often missing from household surveys. We help to close the knowledge gap surrounding child labour among hard-to-reach children. Our aim was to describe the potential causes and consequences of child labour, as well as aggravating factors such as orphanhood, street life and migration. To this end, we applied mixed methods to first make use of the available information for child labour in Ethiopia, such as the stand alone Child Labour Survey 2015 and Labour Force Survey 2013, and second, to reach children that are part of hard-to-reach groups due to their mobile and vulnerable situations, and who are often left out of quantitative analyses using large-scale surveys. As a result of this interaction of methodologies, we were able to fill knowledge gaps while reaffirming previous findings of child labour dynamics worldwide. Finally, we made use of spaces of dialogue with key stakeholders such as the CSA, MoWCY, MoLSA, PSI and PDC, to inform the construction of a map of the policies and efforts to eliminate child labour in Ethiopia. In this section, we discuss the limitations of this study and research gaps that could be addressed by future studies, and then summarise the key findings and provide policy recommendations.

6.1 Limitations and research gaps

Readers should be careful not to read the results shown in the quantitative section as causal effects. One of the main limitations of this study is that the data from the CLS and LFS are from single observational cross sections, limiting our ability to make causal inference. Note also that the data is from 2015, meaning that the state of child labour could have changed since the data was collected. No comprehensive data is available for the years since the CLS was carried out.

Further research is being conducted in Ethiopia as part of the Young Lives study which allows the researchers to track children over time and thereby better consider the effects of child

labour on the same child as they transition into adulthood and the labour force. Note also that the CLS data is only representative for families with children aged 5–17, meaning that not all individuals outside this age bracket may be represented. For this reason, our analysis of youth and the labour market should be read with this limitation in mind, in that it limits the age range of youth for analysis with the CLS data. A child labour component could be included in future labour surveys to help bridge this gap and better analyse the integration of youth into the labour market.

Information is not available within the CLS and LFS data for some potential causes of child labour and future data sets could incorporate these issues—for example, birth registration as a mechanism for verifying the age of a child. Additionally, community surveys to better understand how social norms affect the prevalence of child labour may be helpful.

Gaining deeper insights on how programmes affect child labour would also be useful in guiding policy makers. This will require the planning of impact evaluations of programmes from their inception. Such impact evaluations for programmes tackling child labour, ideally through experimental methods including randomisation, would ideally make it possible to attribute differences in outcomes faced by children to specific programmes and thereby to better understand how to reduce child labour and how to spend limited resources more efficiently.

For qualitative research in particular, it could be interesting to do more in-depth research with rural children who run away to cities on their own, to better understand their motivations to do so, whether their expectations are fulfilled and how they can be better protected from abuse and exploitation. This could be combined with qualitative research in rural areas to assess to what extent our findings form a possibly common phenomenon of rural children having unrealistic ideas and expectations about city life drawn from stories of peers.

6.2 Main findings

We find that the autonomy of children increases with age, since older children are more likely to make the decision about whether they work. However, in most cases and even for older children, the family decided for them to work in cases of child labour (72.7%). We investigate further along what the grounds are for the decision for a child to work or engage in child labour.

Employment vs schooling: We observe that employment and schooling increase with age up to age 11, and that after this, employment continues to increase while school enrolment falls. Consistent with this finding, in rural areas, the youth aged 15–17 tend to drop out from school more during the first four grades, whereas in urban areas, drop-outs tend to occur more after Grade 5. This provides important insights about the necessity to first reach the out-of-school children and second to retain the children that attend school. Indeed, during our interviews, it was clear that some children living in the streets did attend school at some point but dropped out for a number of reasons including lack of family support and lack of resources to cover school expenses. Interestingly, in the analysis we find that most parents believe that there is value in education. Among parents of working children, more than 70% think it best for their child to attend school (33% say only school, 41% say combining school and work is best) but not all these children actually attend school (only around 70% attend, even if the parents think it is best to do so). Moreover, few parents claim to make children work due to problems of access to or affordability of education.

The school life expectancy we observe in the data is very low in international comparisons, but nevertheless, consistent with other studies of Ethiopia. Additionally, we observe that school life expectancy is lower for children engaged in child labour, suggesting that child labour prevents children from completing more schooling. This observation is also reflected in that

child labourers are less likely to keep up at school, particularly when we measure age-grade distortion, which is more severe for this group of children.

The case of contextual variables: In the quantitative analysis, we find that education of household head matters for both child labour engagement and school enrolment. In particular, more education is linked to lower child labour incidence and higher rates of school enrolment. This result is robust to using the education of each of the parents individually, which means that education of household decision makers is a key factor to define children's activities. Interestingly, when studying orphanhood and child labour, we found that the lowest level of child labour happens when the father is deceased, but the mother is alive. This points to the notion that empowerment of women making decisions in the household contributes to reducing child labour rates.

In the regression accounting for variation in a wide range of variables, we observed that i) females are less likely to be working as was discussed previously; ii) education of household head matters for activity choice (with more education associated with a lower chance of a child only working and a higher chance of only attending school); iii) income is associated with higher enrolment in school; iv) child labour seems to be a coping mechanism when households experience shocks; and v) rural children are more likely to work and less likely to be in school.

The case of agricultural land: We find that child labour decreases steadily with the wealth index, meaning that wealthier households have a lower prevalence of child labour. Although for expenditure the pattern is less clear, the highest expenditure quintile shows lowest child labour prevalence. In contrast to the main findings on wealth, we find that ownership of more agricultural land is associated with more child labour. This has been called 'the wealth paradox' in the literature (Bhalotra & Heady, 2003), as land-wealthier households decide to allocate children's time to work activities, and even more so to activities that involve child labour. This suggests that the vulnerability of children to child labour that was found to be higher for children in rural areas across all ages, comes paradoxically due to land ownership. Further, in rural areas, it is more likely to observe youth working and studying (46.4%), and only working (20%), compared to only studying (16.5%). The scenario is different in urban areas, where the youth mostly devote their time to only studying (58%).

Youth 15–17 are mainly employed as contributing family workers (90%), mostly in agriculture (81%), and tend to be engaged in occupations that do not require a high skill level: 85% of them in Skill level 2, and 15% in Skill level 1.

The case of migration: Migrant children were found to be more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Most of the children interviewed in the qualitative study had migrated alone from rural areas to the city. The agency of these children in taking the decision to migrate in search of work opportunities should not be disregarded. Yet, in this report we also discuss how children's decisions are subject to their context and prevalent push factors such as poverty and lack of family support that leave little room for genuinely free choices. Nonetheless, the testimonies of the migrant children interviewed aligned with the findings of previous studies observing that rural-urban migration represents an investment for Ethiopian rural youth (Atnafu, Oucho, & Zeitlyn, 2014; Bezu & Holden, 2014; Gebeyehu, 2014) and that the advantages of city life that children perceive (e.g. higher income, independence and availability of better services) compared to their rural lives outweigh the challenges they may encounter in the city as per their perception.

According to the 2015 CSA survey, child labour is more prevalent in rural areas than urban areas. Indeed, most children in our qualitative study had already been engaged in work (primarily in agricultural activities) while living with their rural families, prior to migrating to the city. This suggests that rural children's move to the cities does not necessarily mark their entry into child labour. Instead, it represents a strategic attempt to improve their situation. This

is an important consideration in designing policy and programmes targeting rural migrant youth.

Indeed, while push and pull factors continue to drive rural children to migrate to the cities, measures specifically targeting rural migrant youth could help reduce their unique vulnerabilities in the city; that is, their often limited social, educational and financial capital, language barriers and lack of information regarding their rights, and where to find jobs, access services and report abuses. In addition, as children's decisions seem often to be driven by inaccurate and misleading information, it seems important to help them make informed decisions by increasing their awareness about the working and living conditions they are likely to encounter or common deceitful information and bad practices from middlemen.

When studying the activities performed by youth 15–24 years old, we find that labour underutilisation—a measure that includes unemployed, underemployed and potential labour force—is more prevalent for rural areas compared to urban. We believe this could explain why we see in the interviews conducted that children migrate as a result of the potential opportunities they can have in the urban centres. Notably, we find that underutilisation rates are higher for females than males, and this is probably one of the reasons behind females moving to urban centres to work as domestic workers.

Domestic work: We find that 0.5% of working children reported to be in the domestic work industry. Domestic workers are predominantly female and viewed as particularly vulnerable to hazardous work, and if anything, are likely to be underreported in a household survey. Children and their families are often misled by promises of kind treatment and school enrolment, which are not always fulfilled. Child domestic workers often work without a salary and depend on their employers for accommodation and basic needs, often accompanied by a perceived sense of indebtedness. These circumstances further hinder children's ability to identify and report abuses.

Household chores: We observe that gender gaps in hours spent on chores increase with age. The direction of the gap is given by boys doing more work than girls, and girls doing more household chores than boys. Moreover, at every age, the gap for work is larger than for chores, meaning boys spend more time in productive tasks. Consistent with this finding, we observe that females are more likely than males to neither be in school nor work (11% vs 3%).

Exposure to hazardous conditions: Exposure to hazards in the workplace rises with age, rather than falling as children gain access to the formal labour market. These workplace hazards and thereby child labour are correlated with suffering injury, meaning that children are indeed facing higher risks according to the definition of child labour.

Youth employment: Youth aged 15–17 tend to combine school and work (40.6%) rather than only working (26%) or only attending school (26%). The vulnerable population of NEETs (not in education, employment or training) is larger among females (11.3%) than males (3.3%) and in urban (7.2%) than rural (6.9%) areas. However, labour underutilisation is a more serious issue in rural areas. Education is also an issue among this older population, with 38% having no education while only 57% completed at least one grade of primary schooling.

6.3 Policy recommendations

This section provides policy recommendations based on the findings from the data analysis and interviews with stakeholders and vulnerable children. Child labour is multifaceted and the policy recommendations that tackle the problem should therefore follow an integrated approach. In the following, we mention four main aspects to comprise the recommendations to address both child labour and youth employment. In general, policies should satisfy at least three conditions: i) be child-centred; ii) consider information and incentives as crucial tools to enforce existent laws; and iii) tackle the main causes without disregarding the need

to address alleviation aspects. We note here that the Ethiopian government already has many potentially important policies and programmes in place, though the goals of a policy do not always translate into results without good implementation, which in turn requires adequate resources.

The role of social awareness and legislation

Alongside policy measures endeavouring to mitigate the effects of poverty and other factors pushing children into labour, **increased social awareness** about children's rights and the costly effects of child labour on children's health and wellbeing is required. This is highlighted across children's own reports of verbal, physical and sexual violence and abuse adults inflict upon them. Awareness of the consequences of child labour, also in the long run, may help to change social norms, which dictate that child work is widely accepted. The government should **enforce the already established laws** in order to prevent and punish such abuses. To enforce the existing laws, resources will need to be allocated, to labour inspectors for example, but this presents the issue of government budget allocation. Understanding where a budget is best spent goes beyond the scope of this study, given the constraints of the data. The introduction of 'light work' to legislation allowing 13- and 14-year olds to work in non-hazardous settings, as permitted under ILO convention No. 138, may reduce pressure on the government to enforce the ambitious target of allowing no work until the age of 15.

Given the long-term physical and psychological effects of child labour, establishing more services offering children counsel and adequate care in order to prevent and mitigate potential physical and psychological conditions will help children cope with the consequences of child labour.

Gender

We saw in our analysis that children in households with female decision makers are less likely to be engaged in child labour. Encouraging female empowerment within society and the ability of women to contribute to household decisions may help reduce child labour. Moreover, increasing fathers' awareness about children's rights and the negative impact of child labour could also help to decrease child labour incidence. Programmes targeting poor households can be encouraged to consider gender imbalances in society as part of the targeting strategy.

School retention

There are several important steps to improve school retention. We suggest a strong focus on the quality of education provided. Quality of education is a complex concept and includes several aspects such as quality and qualified teachers, supportive learning environments and good school facilities. High quality education increasing the returns to education could make households prioritise education over work for children. To further strengthen this effect, it is important to create awareness among households so they internalise the true costs of child labour as well as the true benefits of education. The focus on quality education should be combined with inclusive education for all, allowing equal access regardless of gender, ethnicity or family background.

Encouraging children to start school on time at age 7 will likely lead to lower dropout rates. Currently, many children begin school later than envisioned by the curriculum, with some children then becoming disenchanted with an education system designed for younger children and subsequently dropping out. Legislation to make school mandatory would be one step, while other programmes to get children into school could be devised. Ideally, school would be mandatory between the ages of 7 and 14, with the new legal working age set at 15. Alternative education programmes for those who do not start school at a young age may also help ensure that education is truly available and appropriate for all.

Additionally, it is important to give children and their parents a perspective that schooling is valuable and can lead to an improvement in living standards. The potential to move into relevant vocational training is another means to ensure school retention and should be provided to rural children to prevent them from dropping out at an early stage of their studies.

Findings from our study suggest that poverty is the leading factor accounting for children's engagement in child labour in Ethiopia. Accordingly, **government and NGO support to families** to meet their most basic needs and those of their children appear as the most pressing action required to reduce child labour. The government also bears responsibility for addressing **barriers to education** in order to reduce the number of children forced to drop out (or who do not enrol in school at an appropriate age) because their families struggle to cover the associated costs (school materials, uniforms, transport), or because the school is too far from the child's place of residence and/or the path is unsafe. Programmes including school feeding programmes or conditional cash transfers may incentivise households to send children to school while helping them overcome the financial barriers to education. Efforts to address the circumstances of child labourers pushed to work by situations of poverty and barriers to education must pay particular attention to the case of domestic workers and other children working away from the public eye, often without a salary and completely dependent on the kindness of their employers.

Job creation

We previously discussed the need to retain children in school. Equally relevant is the need to facilitate the transition of the youth from the school system to the labour market. To frame this recommendation, it is important to recognise that in the Ethiopian context, rural youth face higher rates of labour underutilisation, showing that there should be a differentiated treatment of rural and urban populations in the creation of jobs.

In urban areas, policies and programmes should focus on the creation of jobs that could absorb the more educated labour force. This aspect has a cyclical component. The more the demand of qualified labour, the greater the incentives for the youth to obtain qualifications (e.g. by staying at school and seeking training). On the other hand, the more limited the opportunities to match the education level with skills required in occupations, the lower the incentives the youth will have to seek education. In this sense, the minimisation of skills mismatches should be a priority which can be achieved by: i) having a relevant education system that responds to the needs of the market, and ii) having a market with the capabilities of absorbing the labour force. Reforms of the education system and in particular the Technical and Vocational Education Training qualifications aim to help in this regard.

While migration from rural to urban areas is a common feature of modern societies, and as found in our analysis, is beneficial to those households migrating (as we find that child labour is less prevalent for households migrating to urban areas), it is also true that there is youth with a propensity to remain in rural areas whose prospects are more challenging. They face difficulties to engage in productive activities that offer them acceptable earnings, good working conditions, and scope for an increased earning capacity, as well as skills are developed on the job.

Social protection

After facing economic shocks, households may choose to send children to work to compensate for lost assets or income. If households are assisted with alternative coping mechanisms through social protection programmes, they may not have to resort to exposing their children to child labour. Programmes such as the *Productive Safety Net Programme* are already in place, which provide work and income to deal with shocks. However, ensuring that all vulnerable households have access to such programmes and to a functioning credit market may help to ensure that children are not forced into child labour.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Definitions

To ensure clarity in the report, we include a set of definitions for the reader.

a) Work and child labour definitions

Following the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and ILO Conventions 138 and 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL), we use the following definitions of concepts:

- **Child:** The UNCRC and ILO Convention 182 (WFCL) designate individuals under 18 years of age as children.
- **Child work (or ‘children in employment’ under the previous 18th ICLS):** Children or adolescents participating in work – economic production according to the 2008 UN System of National Accounts (SNA) – that does not negatively affect their health and development or interfere with their education. This work might be paid or unpaid and must be performed for at least one hour during the reference period (usually the week prior to the interview).
- **Child labour:** For the purpose of statistical measurement (as defined by the 20th ICLS Resolution IV) (ILO, 2018) , we consider the following categories of activities:
 - a) worst forms of child labour (as defined by ILO convention 182)
 - b) work within the SNA production boundary performed by children below the minimum age
 - c) hazardous unpaid household services
- **Child domestic work:** “[C]hildren aged 5 to 17 years perform domestic tasks in the home of a third party or employer (with or without remuneration).” (ILO-IPEC, 2013). The definition is based on the Domestic Workers Convention No. 189 of 2011.³¹

If children aged 5 to 17 years are engaged in any of these categories during the specified time period, they are considered child labourers.

It should be noted that the definitions used by MOLSA and the ILO are not identical, with noticeable differences in the prevalence of child labour in the 2015 CLS report depending on which definition is used. Since the report was published for the 2015 CLS, changes to the ILO definition of child labour have been published following the 20th ICLS meetings in 2018.

b) Vulnerable children

- **Vulnerability:** We consider vulnerability as a situation in which there is a disproportionately high probability of negative outcomes, including morbidity, malnutrition and the loss of education due to circumstances such as risky and uncertain events and the lack of means to deal with them (World Bank, 2005).

31 Although the said Convention has not been ratified by the government of Ethiopia, the definition of domestic worker is considered in the present report given that child labour in domestic work represents a vulnerable group with forms of work often hidden, and therefore of interest for policy recommendation.

c) Youth labour market definitions³²

- **Labour force participation:** A measure of the proportion of a country's working-age population that engages actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for work; it provides an indication of the size of the supply of labour available to engage in the production of goods and services relative to the working-age population. The labour force participation rate is calculated as a percentage of the working-age population. The labour force is the sum of the number of persons employed and the number of persons unemployed.
- **Employment:** A person is considered employed if he or she worked during the reference week—even if just for one hour a week—for pay, profit or family gain. Alternatively, the person was not at work, but had a job or business from which he or she was temporarily absent due to illness, holiday, industrial dispute or education and training.
- **Labour underutilisation:** Refers to mismatches between labour supply and demand, which translate into an unmet need for employment among the population. Measures of labour underutilisation include, but may not be restricted to:
 - **Unemployment:** A person is considered unemployed if he or she did not work during the week prior to the survey but is actively seeking work and is available for work.
 - **Time-related underemployment:** Persons in time-related underemployment comprise all persons in employment who satisfy the following three criteria during the reference period: a) are willing to work additional hours; b) are available to work additional hours (i.e. are ready, within a specified subsequent period, to work additional hours, given opportunities for additional work); and c) worked less than a threshold relating to working time (i.e. persons whose hours actually worked in all jobs during the reference period were below a threshold to be chosen according to national circumstances).
- **Potential labour force:** All persons of working age who were neither in employment, nor in unemployment but who were:
 - i) unavailable job seekers, that is, carried out activities to seek employment in a recent period but were not currently available to take up employment; or
 - ii) available potential job seekers, that is, did not carry out activities to seek employment in a recent period, but wanted employment and were currently available to take up employment.
- **Inactivity rate:** The percentage of the population that is neither working nor seeking work (that is, not in the labour force). The inactivity rate and labour force participation rate sum to 100.
- **NEET:** Young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). By its nature, this indicator represents a broader measure of potential youth labour market entrants than either youth unemployment or youth inactivity.

32 Definitions “a. Labour force participation”, “d. Inactivity rate” and “e. NEET” are direct citations from (ILO, 2016, S. 14-17). Definition “c. Labour underutilisation” and its sub definitions are direct citations from the 19th ICLS (ILO, 2013) Definition “b. Employment” still refers to the definition prior to the 19th ICLS, given that the Labour Force Surveys still consider this definition to be correct (EUROSTAT, 2015).

d) Occupation skill classifications

Table A - 1. Occupation skill classification ISCO-08

Broad skill level	ISCO-08
Skill levels 3 and 4 (high)	1. Managers 2. Professionals 3. Technicians and associate professionals
Skill level 2 (medium)	4. Clerical support workers 5. Service and sales workers 6. Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers 7. Craft and related trades workers 8. Plant and machine operators, and assemblers
Skill level 1 (low)	9. Elementary occupations
Armed forces	0. Armed forces occupations
Not elsewhere classified	X. Not elsewhere classified

Annex 2 – Quantitative Tables

Descriptive tables

Table A - 2. Child labour by migration status

Migration Category	Not Child Labour		Child Labour		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None: Rural	14931031	51.4	14134062	48.6	29065093	100.0
None: Urban	4509323	85.6	756168	14.4	5265490	100.0
Rural-Urban	536370	82.5	113916	17.5	650286	100.0
Urban-Urban	631679	85.6	106257	14.4	737936	100.0
Rural-Rural	568259	44.3	715412	55.7	1283671	100.0
Urban-Rural	207902	63.0	122360	37.0	330262	100.0
Total	21384563	57.3	15948175	42.7	37332739	100.0

Table A - 3. Child labour by whom the child lives with

With whom child lives	Not Child Labour		Child Labour		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
With natural mother and father	15738121	56.3	12219812	43.7	27957934	100.0
With natural mother only	3153260	61.0	2014244	39.0	5167504	100.0
With natural father only	542105	56.9	410905	43.1	953010	100.0
With relative (guardian)	1750574	63.8	992543	36.2	2743118	100.0
With employer / non-relative	86371	26.4	241362	73.6	327733	100.0
Living alone	34988	88.8	4433	11.2	39421	100.0
Other	79144	55.0	64876	45.0	144020	100.0
Total	21384563	57.3	15948175	42.7	37332739	100.0

Table A - 4. Activities of youth aged 15-17 including chores

Activities	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total						
Work only	304,830	8.9	44,115	1.5	348,945	5.4
School only	149,575	4.4	70,897	2.4	220,473	3.4
HH chores only	78,149	2.3	304,728	10.2	382,877	6
Work and school	376,915	11	42,417	1.4	419,332	6.5
HH chores and work	769,116	22.4	570,700	19.1	1,339,816	20.9
HH chores and school	446,002	13	1,014,719	34	1,460,721	22.8
HH chores & work & school	1,274,092	37.2	910,264	30.5	2,184,356	34.1
None	29,083	0.8	24,866	0.8	53,949	0.8
Total	3,427,762	100	2,982,707	100	6,410,469	100
Urban						
Work only	24,198	3.8	8,283	1	32,482	2.2
School only	78,124	12.4	45,003	5.3	123,127	8.3
HH chores only	27,026	4.3	48,830	5.7	75,856	5.1
Work and school	20,532	3.3	3,288	0.4	23,819	1.6
HH chores and work	55,298	8.8	109,965	12.9	165,263	11.2
HH chores and school	266,425	42.4	480,077	56.5	746,503	50.5
HH chores & work & school	146,098	23.2	145,516	17.1	291,614	19.7
None	10,963	1.7	9,100	1.1	20,063	1.4
Total	628,663	100	850,063	100	1,478,726	100
Rural						
Work only	280,631	10	35,832	1.7	316,464	6.4
School only	71,451	2.6	25,894	1.2	97,345	2
HH chores only	51,124	1.8	255,898	12	307,021	6.2
Work and school	356,383	12.7	39,129	1.8	395,513	8
HH chores and work	713,818	25.5	460,735	21.6	1,174,553	23.8
HH chores and school	179,576	6.4	534,642	25.1	714,218	14.5
HH chores & work & school	1,127,994	40.3	764,748	35.9	1,892,743	38.4
None	18,121	0.6	15,766	0.7	33,886	0.7
Total	2,799,099	100	2,132,644	100	4,931,743	100

Note: Population of children aged 15 to 17 years. Source: Authors' calculations using the CLS 2015.

Regression Table

Table A - 5. Probit regression on birth order

	Child Labour		School Attendance	
	dy/dx	t-stat	dy/dx	t-stat
Child's birth order				
2nd	-0.00114	(-0.20)	0.0118**	(1.99)
3rd	0.0306***	(3.59)	-0.00586	(-0.59)
4th	0.0303***	(2.62)	-0.0491***	(-4.23)
5th	0.0152	(0.89)	-0.101***	(-5.53)
6th	-0.0380	(-0.98)	-0.0464	(-1.29)
7th	0.0244	(0.25)	0.0151	(0.19)
8th	-0.0250	(-0.11)	-0.149	(-0.77)
Age	0.281***	(54.47)	0.260***	(56.83)
Age ²	-0.0124***	(-52.03)	-0.0105***	(-48.63)
N	47154		47154	

t statistics in parentheses

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Annex 3 – Quantitative Figures

Figure A - 1. Child labour by total land area owned quintile and rural-urban split

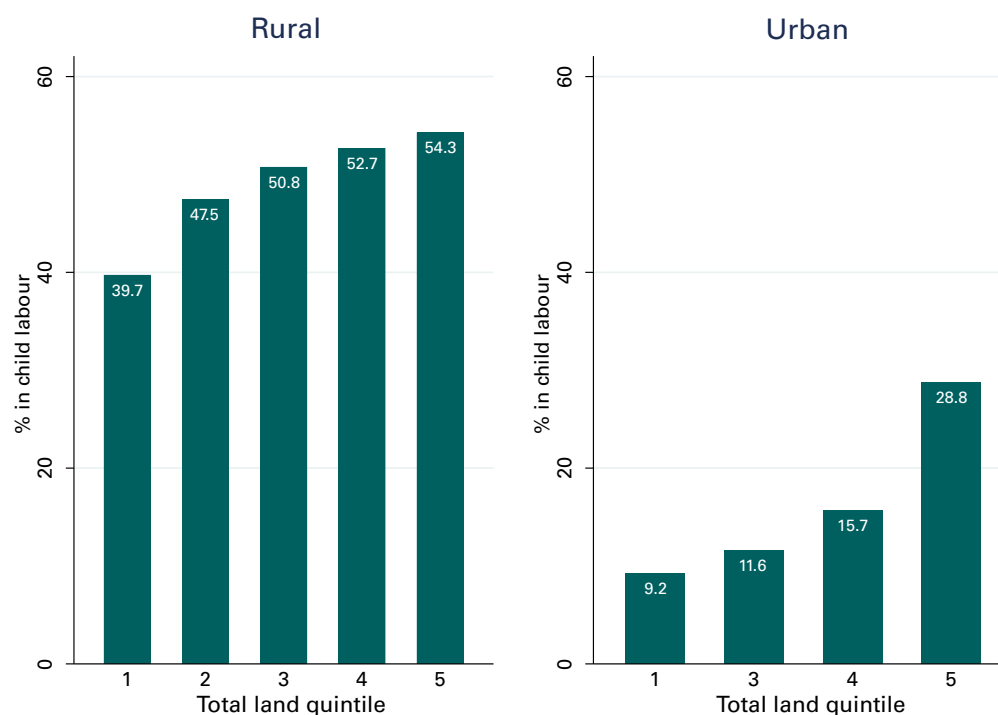
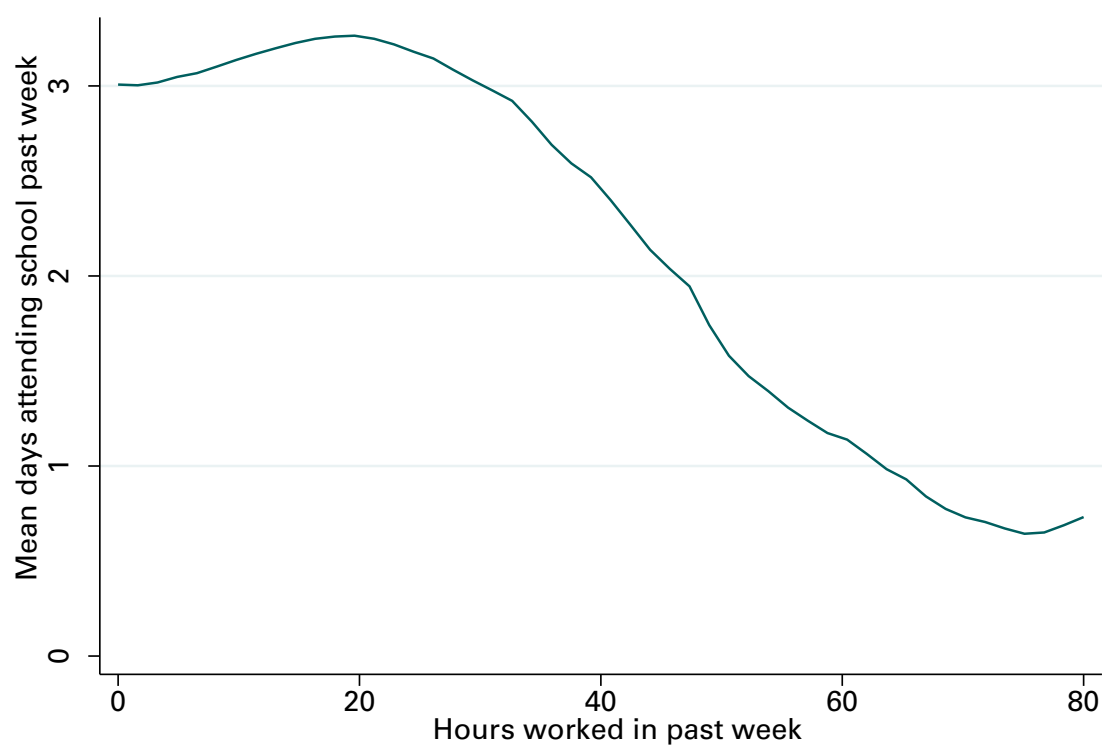
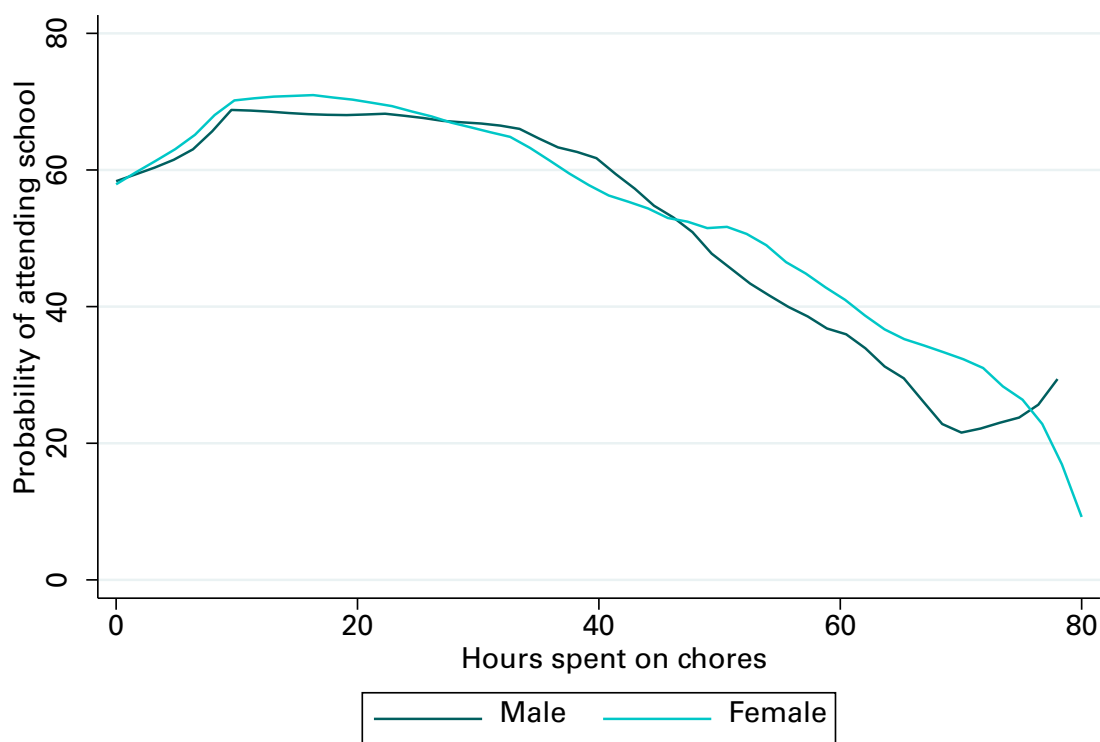


Figure A - 2. Days attending school by hours worked



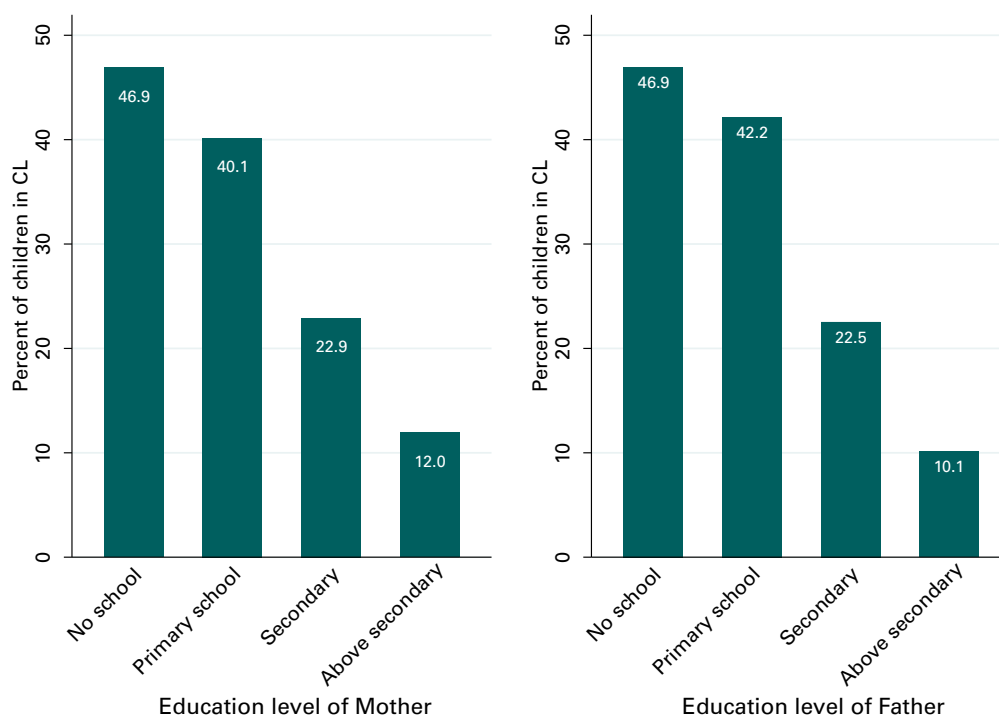
Note: non-parametric estimates

Figure A - 3. School enrolment by hours of chores



Note: Non-parametric estimates

Figure A - 4. Child labour and education level of parents



Annex 4 – Qualitative Tables

Table 11: List of stakeholders

Federal level	Regional level	District and local level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) • Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs • Ministry of Education • Central Statistics Agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs (BOLSA) • Bureau of Women, Children and Youth (BoWCY) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District labour officers • District social workers at Children Unit • District health officers • NGOs • Community police • Former street children

Table 12: List of children and main characteristics

	Gender	Age	Origin	Parents	Education (Level reached)	Currently enrolled in school	Sector	Living situation	Location
Abebu	f	10	Village	Both	0	no	Domestic work	Shelter	Addis
Ayele	m	15	Village	Unknown	2	no	Waste collection	Relative's	Hawassa
Belete	m	14	Village	Mother	2	no	Fish market	Shared place	Adama
Bereket	m	11	Village	Both	2	N/A	Waste collection	Shared place	Hawassa
Chaltu	f	10	City	Father	3	yes	Factory and domestic work	Street (with mother)	Adama
Daniel	m	9	Village	Mother	1	no	Waste collection	Street	Adama
Dawit	m	14	Village	Both	1	yes	Weaving	Employer's	Addis
Eyob	m	17	Village	Both	8	yes	Porting	Shelter	Hawassa
Fitsum	m	8	Village	Father	1	no	Porting	Street	Hawassa
Fozia	f	17	?	Orphan	10	no	Factory	Own place	Adama
Gebremariam	m	17	Town	Both	8	yes	Garage	Own place	Mekele
Gebremedhin	m	10	Village	Both	3	no	Shoe shining	Shared place	Mekele
Hadush	m	10	Village	Location unknown	0	no	Street vending	Street	Mekele
Hayelom	m	17	Village	Both	2	no	Daily labour and street vending	Shared place	Mekele
Meron	f	13	City	Both	4	no	Daily labour and waste collection	Street	Adama
Mihiret	f	15	Village	Both	2	yes	Domestic work	Employer's	Addis
Nebiat	f	16	Town	Both	7	no	Sex work	Employer's hotel	Mekele
Nebila	f	9	City	Mother	3	no	Street vending	Street with mother (now public housing)	Adama

	Gender	Age	Origin	Parents	Education (Level reached)	Currently enrolled in school	Sector	Living situation	Location
Negasso	m	15	Village	N/A	2	no	Factory	Own place	Adama
Netsanet	f	17	Village	Both	10	no	Factory	Own place	Mekele
Sifin	f	12	Village	Both	3	yes	Domestic work	Shelter	Addis
Temesgen	f	10	Village	Both	0	no	Domestic work	Shelter	Addis
Teshome	m	12	Village	Both	5	no	Porting	Street	Addis
Tiringo	f	7	Village	Both	0	no	Waste collection	With mother	Adama
Tolosia	m	16	Village	Both	2	no	Waste collection	Street	Adama



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