Concept note for the high-level thematic session

Upscaling impact on child labour in agriculture

From commitment to impact:
scaling up solutions to end child labour in agriculture

at the 6th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour,
Marrakech, Morocco

Wednesday 11 February 2026 – 11.15 to 13.00

I.   Background

According to the 2024 ILO-UNICEF Global Estimates on Child Labour, agriculture remains the sector with the highest number of children in child labour. While its share has declined from 70% in 2020 to 61% in 2024, child labour continues to be concentrated in agriculture, mostly in family-based, small-scale and labour-intensive production systems. The Global Estimates further underscore that child labour affects in particular younger children, is exacerbated by compounded crisis and cannot simply be explained by adult employment and work patterns. Children work in different types of activities, shaped by factors like poverty, lack of access to education, and cultural norms.

The Durban Call to Action, adopted at the 5th Global Conference, highlights increased investment and attention to child labour in agriculture as a top priority. While the world fell short of achieving Target 8.7 by 2025, there is an even greater responsibility to intensify efforts and fulfil the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and end of all forms of child labour. This will not be possible without accelerating efforts in agriculture, including crop farming, fisheries, and aquaculture, livestock, and forestry. The 6th Global Conference is an opportunity to renew Durban's commitment and discuss how to translate it into action, leveraging successful approaches.

II.   Issues to be addressed

Experience shows that ending child labour in agriculture requires an understanding of its multiple and interconnected drivers, and the implementation of comprehensive and integrated approaches, engaging diverse stakeholders- including agricultural stakeholders- and leveraging innovation.

The high-level session will start with a key-note presentation on trends and evidence from the 2024 Global estimates from an agriculture sector perspective. It will bring together local, national, regional and global actors to share their experience and initiatives around:

1. Integrated policies and investment approaches addressing child labour in agriculture
2. Integrated, area-based initiatives delivering real change in rural communities

The session will explore the following themes:

- What do the global estimates tell us about trends, risk factors and underlying root causes of child labour in agriculture – and where do critical data gaps remain?
- How can different stakeholders act through multiple entry points to reduce child labour in agriculture using a systemic approach?
- How can agricultural actors work together more effectively to tackle root causes of child labour in agriculture, promote decent work, and build sustainable livelihoods that protect children's right and advance rural development?
- How can international financing institutions and agricultural investment programmes accelerate the elimination of child labour by addressing its root causes and fostering inclusive rural development?
- How can innovative approaches, including digital tools, help fill data gaps and upscaling impact?

The session's outcome will encompass an increased awareness on the latest agriculture-disaggregated data on child labour, good practices and innovative solutions to address the drivers of child labour in the sector and a renewed commitment to prioritize actions in agriculture, while calling for a monitoring of their implementation.