



Concept note for a thematic session on

Mental health and child labour

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

Thursday 12 February 2026 – 11.15 to 13.00

1. Background

Child labour remains a worrying global phenomenon, affecting millions of children, particularly in contexts of poverty, crises, and the informal economy. Beyond its physical and educational consequences, child labour has deep and lasting impacts on the mental health and psychosocial well-being of the children concerned.

Early exposure to arduous, hazardous, or abusive working conditions increases the risks of chronic stress, anxiety, depression, psychological trauma, and hinders children's emotional, cognitive, and social development. Yet the mental health dimension remains insufficiently integrated into policies and programmes aimed at combating child labour.

This thematic session aims to create a space for reflection, exchange, and capacity-building around the links between mental health, child protection, and child labour, in order to promote more holistic and child-centred responses.

2. Objectives

- Strengthen understanding of the impacts of child labour on mental health and promote integrated approaches to prevention and psychosocial care.
- Raise awareness of the psychological and emotional effects of child labour.
- Identify key risk and protective factors for the mental health of affected children.
- Highlight effective approaches and practices for psychosocial support.



- Formulate recommendations to integrate mental health into strategies to combat child labour.

3. Expected results

- Improved participants' knowledge of the links between child labour and mental health.
- Better integration of the psychosocial dimension into interventions.
- Effective approaches and practices for psychosocial support.
- Concrete recommendations for programmes, projects, and public policies.