



Child Labour Report 2022
Executive Summary

**Building back better
after COVID-19 –
together with children as protagonists**

| Terre des Hommes
| International Federation

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with

**Jago Foundation
MANTHOC**

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**An unabridged version
can be found > [here](#)**

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Executive Summary



The COVID-19 pandemic has severely changed the lives of millions of people around the globe. During the pandemic, there has been an increase in the number of children involved in the worst forms of child labour. Public health restrictions, and the closure of public markets and other economic sectors has also left many child workers and their caregivers with less income or unemployed.

In this report, Terre des Hommes was interested to hear more about the views of children on what can be done to improve their situation during and after the pandemic by collective action of all relevant stakeholders. Two case studies were purposefully selected:

- To understand more deeply the impact of COVID-19 on children’s wellbeing and
- To develop and share recommendations on how to Build Back Better for a sustainable and more equitable recovery from the pandemic together with children and communities affected by child labour.



Case Study 1



Peru

Case study 2



India

Who	Working children who are mostly engaged in informal work, such as small-scale vendors, and the majority attend school (when it is not closed due to the pandemic).	Children from India affected by mica mining, a hazardous and exploitative form of child labour, that adversely affects children's education, moral and physical development.
Important Notes	The working children identify as NNATs (Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores, i.e. Children and Adolescent Workers)	Mica mining, or Dhibra collection, is the collection of mica scrap or waste mica available in the dumpsites of the mica belts.
Implementing Partners	The Movimiento de Adolescentes y Niños Trabajadores Hijos de Obreros Cristianos, (MANTHOC)	Terre des Hommes Netherlands and Jago Foundation

Methodology







What and when? The project was carried out in two phases: 1) the participatory research (December 2021) and 2) policy dialogues (February 2022) with children and adults.

Who? 23 children in Peru and 24 children in India; Adults: 14 total in Peru and 33 total in India – caregivers, educators, NGO and other child support workers, government and other duty bearers.

How? Research: Participatory and creative group methods with children, focus group discussions and key informant interviews with adults; Policy dialogues: participatory and creative group methods with children and adults together.

Ethical protocols and considerations, ensuring children’s safety and protection and participant’s voluntary and informed participation, guided the process.

KEY FINDINGS: The Impact of COVID-19 on various dimensions of children’s wellbeing

Before COVID-19		During the pandemic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More regular employment for family members • Children regularly earned an income and took pride in their work (Peru) 	 <p>Livelihood, food security and migration</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to rules and fears there is less employment and income generation • Many migrant workers returned home and faced quarantine (India) • Families struggling with poverty and food shortages • Children face risks of engaging in exploitative and hazardous work, including engagement in mica mining in India
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most children regularly going to school • Children were able to progress in their learning • Challenges for girls to access secondary school (India) 	 <p>Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long school closures • Digital divide – lack of access to smart phones or internet for online lessons • Reduced quality education and lost learning • Increased school dropout • Continued challenges for girls secondary education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children engaged in informal work and studied at the same time (Peru) • Children were removed from mica mining. A few children doing casual work, but most were studying and not working (India) 	 <p>Protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children, especially older siblings work more to earn an income and some find new jobs • Due to poverty, some children engage in mica mining in India • In Peru, adults reported increased violence in homes and child neglect, due to family stress • In India, there are increased concerns about child marriage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children had more freedom to play and meet with friends and extended family. • Children were more involved in rights and protection activities through child groups 	 <p>Mental health and relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missed their friends • Appreciated having more time and improved communication within family • Many children and adults feel more sad, isolated and worried • Caregivers and children face increased stress • Family members and community members support one another
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ate more regular nutritious meals • Before school closure children had a free mid day meal in school (India) 	 <p>Health and nutrition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat less regularly and/or they eat less nutritious food • Less access to health services and fear they may get COVID-19 at health centre • Challenges accessing water and electricity

Children’s and Stakeholders VISION to “Build Back Better”

- Improved livelihoods, savings and stable family economy
- Access to quality education for all and recovery of lost learning
- Access to vocational training for skill training for young people and caregivers
- Protection from exploitation and an end to the worst forms of child labour
- Good living conditions
- Access to health services and nutritious food
- Safe, caring, inclusive and active communities
- Children’s participation and organizing
- Good governance

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS for Actions to Build Back Better

Children



- Have regular children’s group meetings and actions to protect our rights

- Parents**
- Prioritise children’s education, protect children and respect their rights

- Teachers/ Schools**
- Provide quality joyful teaching to all without discrimination, including digital education
 - Teach child rights and be flexible to working children’s needs

- Communities**
- Promote children’s rights, participation, better basic services and help hold the government accountable

- Government**
- Allocate proper resources to ALL communities for quality basic services (education, health, protection etc)
 - Prioritise economic recovery, create decent work for parents and provide scholarships for children’s education
 - Properly implement existing laws and policies to protect children’s rights, including protection from exploitation and the worst forms of child labour.
 - Share information and involve citizens (adults and children) in decision-making

- Civil Society**
- Mobilise to discuss and find solutions to community problems, to protect children’s rights and support vulnerable families

“I am dreaming that all the children working as child labourers are admitted to schools and they continue their education. Schools for all the children should open now or as soon as possible.”
(Village chief, India)

“We hope for people to see the two approaches as well, talking about valuing work ... We are against exploited work and that is clear, but it should also be clear that we are working children.”
(16 year old female, small-scale vendor, Peru)

“I imagine a world with many actors. Where the main actor is the child and we all work putting at the center of our intervention what the child wants, the rights of children, not my rights. A world where if we want their rights to be guaranteed we have to get rid of any adult-centric vision of “I want, I think, from my adult perspective”, and for this I must involve children in this design of the world of what I want.”
(Representative of the Office of the Ombudsperson in Peru)