

# Chapter 1 Background of the study

## Introduction

Child labour is one of the most important social issues in today's world. Its importance partly stems from its links with the rights of children. For despite the almost unanimous ratification (except two countries) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) together with the international, regional, and local efforts to protect children from work hazards, the phenomenon continues, and the number of children entering the labour market continues to increase.

Currently, out of the 2.2 billion children living in the world, 180 million are being engaged in the worst forms of child labor<sup>1</sup>. In the Arab world, a region lacking behind in several human development indicators, there exist a high rate of child labor in several countries such as Morocco, Yemen, and Egypt<sup>2</sup>. On the national level, and despite the lack of accurate statistics, the existing estimates plainly show how widespread the phenomenon is especially among children aged 6-14 years. Estimates ranged between 12% and 21%, depending on methodology and definitions adopted<sup>3</sup>. In Minia, child labour ranges represent 31% of children especially in age 12 -14 years old<sup>4</sup>

This fact constitutes a blatant violation to various rights stipulated by the CRC, such as basic education, recreation and play, protection from economic exploitation, or working in any sector that might endanger the child, holds back their education, or harm them physically, mentally, physiologically, or morally<sup>5</sup>.

According to the ILO Convention 182<sup>6</sup> that focuses on eliminating the worst forms of child labour, signatory governments – including Egypt - must undertake immediate measures to remove children from this type of work. Thus, three categories of work have been recognised:

- a) child work that is inherently hazardous and require immediate removal of children for their protection;
- b) hazardous work where children may continue to work provided hazards can be mitigated and children have access to education/ learning opportunities; and
- c) benign work that is considered reasonable for children but with assurance that children have access to education/ learning opportunities

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<sup>1</sup> State of the World's children, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> إيمان فرج، "الأبعاد الاجتماعية والاقتصادية والثقافية للشباب والمراهقة"، المنتدى الإقليمي العربي للسكان، بيروت، 19 – 21 تشرين الثاني/نوفمبر 2004.

<sup>3</sup> BLACD & WNAPQW (year?)

<sup>4</sup> Farming survey, Ministry of Agriculture, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF, "Child Labour: What could be Done?" paper presented in the Youth Employment Summit, July 2002

<sup>6</sup> ILOLEX Database of International Labour Standards  
<http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp1.htm>, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005.

Within the context of protecting the interest of children who belong to the second and third above mentioned categories this study targets children working in small and medium workshops and factories in Menia. It aims at investigating the nature and circumstances of their work and identifying interventions that are mutually beneficial to the children, their families, and employers. Specifically, the feelings, ideas, aspirations, and interest of children are considered first priority in the rationale of the study.

## **Study objectives**

1. Identify different conditions of child labour (gender differentiated) in terms children's safety, emotional and physical wellbeing, and educational opportunities.
2. Depicting the ways in which business owners understand the difference between a child and an adult employee in terms of rights and duties.
3. Categorizing factors that have lead children to be at work place.
4. Designing intervention projects to improve the conditions of children working in mild jobs and getting the children working in dangerous jobs out of them are major aims of the study
5. Identifying a win-win situation which improves children's working conditions and learning opportunities and be beneficial to business owners simultaneously.

## **Study methodology**

This study does not attempt at providing a pretext for child labour. However, it is an endeavor to reach some conclusions and recommendations for what we can call a transitional period until we reach the day when this phenomenon does not exist in our society and when all international standards and conventions related to children and especially those who are working get implemented.

Therefore, this study is trying to tackle child labour through confronting the dangerous types of labour that are - by law prohibited - for children to be engaged in under any circumstances; and from which children should be immediately removed through finding them other alternatives such as providing them with other types of other work that are mild and relatively harmless.

Before all that, this study is trying to understand the situation of child labour in three localities, namely Menia, Samalout and Abu Qorqas in order to identify the features and perimeters of the issue and design intervention projects accordingly. Hence, the study will focus on the nature of jobs children are engaged in and gauge whether it is considered mild or dangerous. It will also measure the extent of which Egyptian legislations including Ministerial orders are concordant to the international standards concerning the issue of child labour and focusing on ILO lists of dangerous and mild jobs for children as the point of reference.

Designing intervention projects to improve the conditions of children working in mild jobs and getting the children working in dangerous jobs out of them are major aims of the study; therefore, the study is based on a controlled sample of 121 children working in 35 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Menia, Samalout and Abu Qorqas. In order to get different points of view about the issue we have included 50 parents and 35 business owners in our sample. We have also tried our best to get gender balanced sample, getting 88 boys and 33 girls, all of them fall in the age 10 – 18 years. We have found that children 13 – 15 years old represent the largest working group 45.5% of the sample and 10 – 12 comes next representing 22.3% (see table 1).

**Table 1. Age groups of sample according to gender**

Age group	Female		Male		Total	% of the total sample
	No.	% of the total sample	No.	% of the total sample		
10 -1 2	5	18.5	22	81.5	27	22.3
13 - 15	16	29	39	71	55	45.5
16	5	26	14	74	19	15.7
17	4	25	12	75	16	13.2
18	3	75	1	25	4	.3.3
Total	33		88	81.5	121	100

## Analysis

Three data sets were computer processed, a person file data set for each child, parents data set and the employer data set. It should be noted that for all open questions answers were listed and coded. The overall approach of analysis aimed not only at illustrating the problem of the working children but also at pinpointing viable solutions suggested mainly from the different stakeholders.

Described hereunder the data collection tools of the study:

- 1) 3 surveys, each targeting one target group: 121 children, 35 business owners, and 59 parents; and working groups with children where they have expressed their opinions as well as their present and future dreams;
- 2) In order to ensure the validity of the surveys and to get some qualitative data, four focus group discussions were held with 8 girls, 8 boys, and 8 business owners.
- 3) The research team was trained to observe conditions and interaction dynamics inside the workplace and households in order to identify existing and potential health risks.

## **Conceptions used in the study**

- The child: we have considered children all people under the age of 18 according to the CRC.
- Mild jobs: those jobs agreed upon by international standards and where children's health, safety, and educational attainment are not jeopardized.
- Dangerous jobs: those jobs that children are prohibited to undertake such as:
  - Farming as it entails dealing with machines and being exposed to chemicals such as fertilizers and insecticides.
  - All forms of working in quarries.
  - Working in glass and pottery factories.
  - Working in matches and fire games factories.
  - Fishing in deep seas.
  - Domestic servants and trafficking.

## **The legal framework of child labour in Egypt**

As a general principle, the convention 138 has set 18 years old as the minimum age of entering the job market in all economic sectors whether paid or unpaid with flexibility when dealing with mild jobs. However, the convention strictly prohibited children to work in all types of work that negatively affect children's safety, health and ethics.

The 1989 convention of the Rights of this Child has drafted a more precise framework banning any economic activity that exploits or represents any danger on the child in terms of hindering his education, physical, emotional, ethical and/ or social development.

### **Egyptian labour law and the extent of its accordance with the international standards of child labour**

The new labour law no.12 article 98 of 2003, despite its benefits, is still lingering behind the international standards. It allows business owners to hire children starting from 14 years of age as well as train him/her starting from age 12, the fact that gives way to business owners to hire children at that age whether in dangerous or mild jobs under the pretext of training them. Among the other problems that this new law has created is the exclusion of working children in the farming sector from its scope hence denying them – and all other workers in this sector including women – any form of social, insurance of health securities.

On the other hand, the article 55 of the social insurance law no. 79 for 1975 denied working children any compensation except for cases of death or 100% disability, and compensation will not exceed 10 E.P a month. However, it is worth noting that the new law has taken some serious steps for the advantage

of working children but it still needs mechanisms for execution. These steps are summarized as follows:

- banning the work of children more than 6 hours a day including at least one hour break for eating and resting,
- obligating business owners to hang child labour laws in a clear area in the working place,
- putting in writing a register where children working/resting hours are clarified inside the working place,
- and compelling business owners to notify authorities about the names and nature of jobs that children are engaged in as well as the names of their supervisors.

## Chapter 2 Reasons for child labour

### 1. Poor living conditions

Poverty is considered one major reason for the issue of child labour and working children's income represents a crucial pillar in their households' budget. An ILO study supports this idea demonstrating that children usually contribute between 20% - 25% of the total family income. This study also indicates that the biggest share of the families' income is spent on food, stressing the vitality of children's income<sup>7</sup> to their households. Our study also shows that 50% of children consider helping their family as their main reason to work (see table 2). It also shows that 95% of working children give part of their salaries to household's budget (Table 3). However, table 4 demonstrates that while 26.4% give almost their entire salary to their families, only 0.8% of children keep it fully to themselves. This could be explained that children who fall in the middle might be independent financially in terms of paying for their own expenses and giving away what is left to their family.

**Table 2. Reasons from children's point of view**

Reason for working	Female		Male		Total	% of the total sample
	No.	%	No.	%		
Learn a vocation	7	8.5	75	91.5	82	67.8
Helping the family	23	37	39	63	62	51.2
Earn money	17	38	28	62	45	37.2
Amusement	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	5.8
Support me in my specialization at school	---	---	1	100	1	0.8

**Table 3. number & percentage of children who pay/ do not pay a share in their households' budgets**

Pay a share in households' budget	children	
	No.	%
yes	<b>95</b>	<b>78.5</b>
No	<b>26</b>	<b>21.5</b>
Total	<b>121</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>7</sup> ILO, Child labour: towards the elimination of disgrace, Geneva, 1998.

**Table 4. Share of children's salary in households' budget**

Share of salary in household's budget	Children	
	No.	%
All	<b>27</b>	<b>22.3</b>
3/4	<b>32</b>	<b>26.4</b>
Half	<b>24</b>	<b>19.8</b>
1/4	<b>6</b>	<b>5.0</b>
Trivial	<b>6</b>	<b>5.0</b>
Nothing	<b>1</b>	<b>.8</b>
Total	<b>96</b>	<b>79.3</b>

Hussam, one of the children, says that his father depends on the revenue of a rented small piece of land that does not cover the family's needs. Therefore, his father works as a waged farmer in other lands but, according to Hussam, he works one day and does not find a job for another ten. Thus, Hussam finds it is his duty to support his family especially that they do not have any other source of income.

At the same time, 47% of parents have indicated that assisting in household's expenses was the most important reason for children to go to work (See table 5). The average income of families does not exceed 250 E.P monthly and the majority of them (50%) are working in the informal sector in jobs that are characterized by discontinuity thus, they are denied all forms of legal or insurance protection as well as social and health insurance. All these factors make these families very much vulnerable to shocks and life stresses. The picture looks gloomier when we discover that even parents who work in the public sector are mostly undertaking temporary jobs. In addition to that, parents who work in the private sector are not contractually covered with any legal protection, thus also lacking all kinds of insurance.

**Table 5. Reasons from parents' point of view**

Reason for working	No.	%
Assist in household's expenses	28	47.5

Learn a vocation	24	40.7
High school expenses	14	23.7
Not good at education	5	8.5
Does not like school	5	8.5
To buy what s/he wants	4	6.8

What makes the situation even more complicated is that most mothers are not working outside their homes, and the few ones who are, are mainly engaged in the informal sector undertaking jobs such as farming, cleaning, or assisting in a school or nursery (see table 6). Hence, not only unemployment rate is found to be very high among these parents, reaching 50%, but also even the ones who are working are doing so in a market that is characterized by marginalization, vulnerability and instability.

**Table 6. Parents' jobs**

Nature of work	Female		Male		Total	% of the total sample
	No.	%	No.	%		
Farming	4	27	11	73	15	12.7
Wage worker	7	32	15	68	22	18.6
Government employee	---	---	14	100	14	11.9
More than one job (worker & farmer...)	---	---	4	100	4	3.4
Retired	---	---	3	100	3	2.5
SME owner	---	---	1	100	1	0.8
Unemployed	48	81	11	19	59	.50
Total	59		59		118	100

## 2. Poor education

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states the right of every person to education that should be compulsory and for free in its primary levels. However, schools education standards have greatly deteriorated in Egypt in the past couple of decades. This is due to several reasons including: increase of numbers of children per class, which lesser the children's ability to learn and the absence of extra curricula activities such as excursions and play, the fact that denies the child from his right to play and impoverished the



educational atmosphere. Moreover, the absence of nutritional meals that were provided during the seventies and eighties to primary school children has added to children's hunger, malnutrition and overall emaciation. These factors have played a key role in pushing the children out of school at early ages.

And if we look at our sample, we find clear indicators for overall poor education whether among the children or their parents and negative correlation between parents' education and the incident of child labour. Illiteracy is a widespread phenomenon amongst parents as it reached 60.7% of the entire sample with only 25% of mothers who are literate and those of parents who can read and write do not exceed 19.8% (see table 7).

Table 7, shows that there definitely exists a positive correlation between parents' low levels of education and the incident of their children going to work as 83.5% of mothers and 64.5% of fathers have not been enrolled in schools. Potentially, mothers' illiteracy might have a stronger correlation with her children going to work as mothers' illiteracy reaches 71.9% while fathers' illiteracy lags much behind reaching only 43.8%. It should also be noted that while there is 4% of university graduate fathers, there has been none in the case of mothers. This demonstrates that child work is not attributed only to parents' level of education but other factors also play a role such as economic and gender-based factors.

On the other hand, 23% of parents have indicated that children dropped out of schools mainly due to their high expenses and 17% stated that their children do not like school and are not good anyways at education. Furthermore, some parents have clearly stated that learning a vocation is more useful to child than learning reading and writing. We find this opinion also widespread among the children themselves as a good number of children declared that there is no use of school and that working is much more beneficial. Tareq, one of the children, said that he likes school but that his father encourages him to learn a vocation aside. Several girls have stated that their parents are convinced that "girls should not be educated".

**Table 7. Educational levels of fathers and mothers**

Nature of work	Mothers		Fathers		Total	% of the total sample
	No.	% total mothers sample	No.	% total fathers sample		
Illiterate	87	71.9	60	49.6	147	60.7
Reads & writes	14	11.6	34	28.1	48	19.8
Primary	2	1.7	7	5.8	9	3.7
Preparatory	5	4.1	11	9.1	16	6.6

Vocational	9	7.4	4	3.3	13	5.4
University graduate	3	2.5	4	3.3	7	2.9
Passed away	1	0.8	1	0.8	2	0.8
Total	121	100	121	100	242	100

We also find that in addition to the large number of dropped out children, 22.3% of them are illiterate and 31% of them either dropped out of school or never went. This does not contradict with the situation of literacy in Menia Governorate where 49.4% of its inhabitants know how to read and write<sup>8</sup>.

Fouad, one of the children stated that he would love to learn reading and writing but that he could not subscribe in literacy classes as they contradict his working hours whereas Ramadan, who works in a workshop attributed his illiteracy to his mother's unawareness of education's importance, his large family, and poor living conditions. Sidiq, who is 16 years old, and have been working in the same workshop since he was 8, says that he left school due to his frequent failures and that now the workshop owner considers him an important pillar of the workshop. Hassanein is another child who loves his work especially when he compares it to studying, a field he has entirely failed to succeed in. Mansour, 12 years old, has a powerful opinion about education and says that learning a vocation is 100% more advantageous than school learning whereas Zaki, 11 years old, stated that he wanted to have mercy on his father and evade him from paying school expenses.

### 3. Other factors

Child labour could be also attributed to parents and children's stress on the importance of and powerful desire to learn a vocation as 67.8% of parents attribute the situation of the children to the necessity of learning a vocation and 40% of the children did the same (see tables 2 & 5). Hussein, 13 years old, works only in summer vacation in the same vocation of his grandparents, uncles, and fathers and insists that both learning a vocation and school learning are of the same importance. Mamdouh, 14 years old, despite the fact that he is still enrolled in school he finds that his sole source of security in life, which will stop him from begging is his vocation.

It has been clear that learning a vocation is the source of getting rid of the fear of future. This fear is no more erased by education, neither in the minds of children nor in the minds of their parents. Learning a vocation is directly related to assisting the children and their families through life stresses and shocks and keeping them away from hunger. This fear is inherited from parents to children especially that the earlier have no assets or source of income to leave for their children.

<sup>8</sup> Human Development Report, National Planning Institute, Cairo, 2003.

## Chapter 3 Problems faced by working children

### 1. Working conditions according to children

According to Table 8, most children (88%) stated that they fear nothing at work place, a small sample (17%) stated that they are scared to get a bruise while working, and the rest were scared of being annoyed, hit by either their elder colleagues or their direct supervisors. These facts might have been shaped by the fact that the survey was filled at work place even though in the absence of supervisors. Focus group discussions have given different results as all of the children stated that they were subject to insults and a smack at one point or the other.

**Table 8 Scaring factors according to children**

Scaring factors	Children	
	No.	%
Someone annoys me	5	4.1
Someone hits me	2	1.7
I get a bruise	17	14.0
Someone forces me to do something I do not want to do	2	1.7
Nothing	88	72.7
Someone annoys me+ I get a bruise	1	.8
Someone hits me+ I get a bruise	1	.8
Someone hits me+ Someone annoys me	1	.8
Someone hits me+ I get a bruise+ Someone annoys me	2	1.7
Total	119	98.3

As table9 shows, almost half the children complained of working in very loud noises (49.5%), another 41.3% complained from humidity and hot temperature. Also, 22.3% of them complained from heavy weights. This reality was further elucidated by the girls during the focus group meetings where they stated that they carry weights ranging from 25-50 kgs. Nevertheless, when asked about their own perception of ways to improve their work conditions, children provided an array of ideas shown in table 10. Almost half of them (45.5%) suggested an increase in the number and quality of tools and

machines. This might be interpreted as an indicator of an interested child in his/her own job in addition to a desire to develop him/her career wise. Improving the physical space of their work place was also a concern for 34.7% of the children. For them improving the physical space meant mostly having an air condition protecting them from the hot weather, a machine providing them with cold water, and a toilet in the case of the car mechanic workshops.

**Table 9 Working conditions according to children**

Working conditions	children %
Dust, smoke, gaz	18.1
Very loud noises	49.5
Humidity or high temperature	41.3
Dangerous tools or machinery	9
Insufficient light	0.8
Chemicals	4.9
Carry heavy weights	22.3
Nothing of the above	8.2
Don't know	3.3

**Table 10 Ideas deriving from children to improve their work conditions**

Ideas	Children	
	No.	%
Improve physical place	<b>42</b>	<b>34.7</b>
Increase/ develop tools & machines	<b>55</b>	<b>45.5</b>
Provide clothes for work	<b>21</b>	<b>17.4</b>
Betterment of roles distribution according to age	<b>1</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Treatment improving	<b>12</b>	<b>9.9</b>
Increasing salaries	<b>21</b>	<b>17.4</b>
Insurance	<b>1</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Rescheduling working hours	<b>7</b>	<b>9.1</b>

**Table 10 Ideas deriving from children to improve their work conditions**

Ideas	Children	
	No.	%
Training	14	11.6
No idea	19	15.7

There is no doubt that there are many problems related to micro and intermediate projects in Egypt; such as problems related to procedural situations of issuing licenses, establishing these projects, and all what is related to complicated bureaucratic procedures. In addition to problems appertains the burden of financing those projects whether that finance is self support finance or form other resources such as banks, social funding box...etc. Besides to what is related to the complicated procedures in getting loans and all the burdens that depend on the interests' service of these loans. Plus the problems which are related to capital which is spent in these establishments, and marketing problems whether in local marketing or whenever there is a trial for penetrating the external markets.

The numerousness of the problems of such projects is very clear. And it is hard to neglect these problems whenever addressing a study on labor work especially children labor, in these kinds of projects.

In addition, problems that are related to child labor within these projects which might be resulted from the weakness of the project's financial or administrative capacity, in addition to the unavailability of positive investing economical atmosphere, which could help in reducing the pressures which such category of projects suffer from.

Therefore we admit beforehand that dealing with the problem of child labor in these projects, far from the nature of the problems which such projects suffer from is not easy to do, and that dealing with these problems is not our core in this study. So we tried to overcome the shortage through presenting the vision of some projects' owners -who have some children working in their projects- in the issues related to child labor. Even if we admit that this is not enough but that was the only way ahead of us to go.

Within this context we try to present this part of the child labor problem from their point of view, and the business owners' views in the intertwinement with these problems as we assure them that our aim is to improve the situations of this category of laborers, and subsequently improving the situation of these micro and intermediate projects in spite of the fact of the cruelty of the reality of children's labor in those projects.

#### **Children's point of view:-**

Children labor is not limited on boys in Minia governorate, but it includes girls as well, as we mentioned before in this study. Generally girls used to do some

other kinds of works which boys do not do, especially domestic works, and serving at houses (maids); which expose them to insults, physical, and sexual aggression. Such aggressions expose them to great psychological problems. In addition, girls work longer number of hours because of the domestic responsibilities besides the work they do in the agriculture field if the father works in agriculture<sup>9</sup>.

On the other hand we find that children labor's situation in micro and intermediate projects – boys and girls – differ from the situation in the big projects.

Therefore our focus in this study is on the children who work in the micro and intermediate projects specifically.

Here we try to present some of the problems which children boys and girls are exposed to in this category of projects in the study area.

### **Circumstances behind children's work from the children's point of view:**

- The majority of the children point to the fact that their work lacks any contractual relation with the work owner whether through trainings cards, or working contracts. We even noticed that owners are not committed to any of the articles of the working law no.12 of year 2003.

There is no doubt that the contractual relation is easily exposing the children's rights to critical situation, whether in what is related to work injuries, or the disability which could result from such injuries, (whether partial, or total disability). Thence children lack any social insurance they can get later.

- Besides, children complain the weak wages especially that the average of the monthly wage for the working children – who are among the sample- is not more than 97 LE a month. While the working hours – among the sample's children as well- could reach 12 hours a day.

In spite of the long hours of work, they do not have breaks within working time. Some say that break's time is not more than 15 minutes, and those who mentioned so are very few among the sample, not more than 0.8%. While 20% of the children mentioned that all the breaks they have all day long is around half an hour a day. The greatest percentage of the children 53.7% said that it is around one hour a day. Some other children 1.6% said that the breaks are one hour and half a day. While another percentage - 14%- form the children of the sample mentioned that such breaks could be extended to two hours. (Refer to table no. 6)

Table no. 6 clarifies breaking time of the working children

In spite that most of the children mentioned that they get some breaks during their work, except 1.7%, yet working hours do not

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, previous reference, page 7 <sup>9</sup> Towards eradicating the slur

match with the legal reality related to children labor, as law no. 12 for year 2003 provides that working hours should not exceed 4 continuous working hours. And that a working day should include more than one break. Such situation gives a proof that the circumstances of working children of the sample do not match with the legal reality which law 12 for year 2003 is organizing.

Breaks	Repetition	%
15 minutes	1	.8
30 minutes	32	26.4
60 minutes	65	53.7
90 minutes	2	1.7
180 minutes	17	14
No response	4	3.3
Total	121	100

#### **Dangers of working environment from children's point of view: -**

Many studies proved that the early participation of the children in work has dangerous results on their health and thrift. At the same time one of the studies in India which took place on seventeen years points to the fact that working children become shorter, and less in weight, than school children<sup>10</sup> It was noticed as well that the children who work in unhealthy atmosphere, which lacks fresh air, with high temperatures, in addition to mal nutrition in the living environment are exposed to infecting diseases besides the diseases related to the working site and environment.<sup>11</sup>

But the most harmful dangers which children are exposed to when they work in dangerous professions, is being exposed to many kinds of works which could affect their health, their future physical and health capability, as they are exposed to chemical, physical, and psychological dangers....etc.

The international organization of work mentions that children who encounter such dangers are in a harder position than if adults underwent the same dangers. Such dangers increase as the child is younger. For the body is in a growing and modeling or formation stage. The overweight which a child might lift during his work, being exposed to dusts, smoke, powders especially in the metal and carpentry workshops can affect the child and cause him sever chest diseases. Being exposed to dissolvent, glues, and painting colorings could affect child's health with serious diseases, such as cancer, chest diseases. The same happens as well with adults. Being exposed to the heat of the sun for many hours causes heat exhaustion. While working in noisy environment causes problems of hearing infirmity. Also squatting for long

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Towards eradicating the slur , previous reference, page7 <sup>10</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Previous reference page 10

hours is reflected in different health problems and in body formation. All this in addition to what a child might undergo through harms which might cause him disability, and become not able to manage some practical life necessities. Such infirmities and deformations happen a lot, and this is what happens in many of the practical sites in Minia governorate and other governorates as well in rural and urban areas in Egypt.

As we deal with the children's working environment, we found many afflictions among working children. Besides the different diseases related to professions which children suffer from – and we do not mention about within the sample. Hereinafter accidents of labor; we found that 29% of children were exposed to obvious occupational accidents, which of course is a big percent. Some of these accidents are in the hands, which formed the higher percentage of the accidents of labor. (Refer to table no.7) in addition to other accidents with different percentages in different areas of children's bodies.

**Table no. 11 shows the children who encountered traumas:**

Kind of accident	Repetition	Percentages form the total number of the sample.
Trauma in the hands and arms	1	0.8
Trauma in the hand	18	14.9
Trauma in the face	1	0.8
Trauma in the foot	6	5
Trauma in the head	1	0.8
Trauma in the hands and legs	7	5.8
Trauma in the legs and head	1	0.8
Total of who were exposed to accidents	35	29

Accidents are repeated to the working children more than once (Refer to table 8). This is because the working environments where children work at do not have the least safety factors. One of the examples; "Mahmoud" who works in his father's workshop; his father is his boss. They work on destroyed cars. So he has to obey him even if the work is not suitable for him as a child, and he has to love him no matter what happens. Mahmoud says that the workshop is so small, and there are no windows for ventilation. All the work is done in the street, but there is no sunshade in front of the workshop. There is no toilet as well. All equipments are primitive.

"Mamdouh" complains the absence of sunshades, and no latrines. Besides the danger equipments he uses in welding work. He uses normal glasses, not one for welding. This is so dangerous.

Number of trauma	Repetition	Percentage of the responding children of the sample
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Only once	12	9.9
Twice	5	4.1
Three times	6	5
Four times	2	1.7
Five times	2	1.7
Many times	8	6.6
Total number of the children who are exposed to accidents and trauma	35	29

"Gamila" points at the fact that most of workers of the company where she works at are girls except one single boy and few men to drive the cars which carries oil to selling windows. She complains that there is no separate toilet for girls, and that the latrine is common for all. She also complains that she works all day long, as they work from 7 am to 7 pm.

"Mosaad" works in one of the bakeries, which has safe equipments. He says that the place needs to be larger in order to move freely. Mosaad works in a very high temperature, so he says that there is need to have some fans to tone down the temperature.

"Hassan" works in a welding workshop. He says that it is very small and needs ventilation. Children need uniform to protect them. While his colleague "Mongy" who works in painting says that there is no air extractor to take away the paintings smell.

It is not only what we have just mentioned, but also the unavailability of the minimum limit of safety factors that can protect children form accidents of labor. Such as unavailability of suitable uniforms, as most of the girls wear garments or galabyias in their work, while most of boys were shirt and pants. A small percent wear work uniform- not more than 4.1% (Refer to table no.9)

<b>Table no. 12 clarifies the kind of clothes which children wear at work</b>		
The uniform which a child wears at work	Repetition	%
Galabya- garment	31	26.6
Shirt and pants	85	70.2
Uniform specified for the work	5	4.1
Total	121	100

### **Children's dreams.**

Children's dreams are many. Some of them held coloring pencils and drew future dreams, as they wish. While some others held the coloring pencils and didn't move it because that was their first times to hold a pencil in their whole entire life. That is the fact which "**Rashad**" told us about. He is 14 years old, he never went to school, and never seen its playground, because he didn't have a birth certificate when he was young. But he insisted to share with his colleagues in what they draw.

One of the children named "**Amro**" worked because he wanted to help his family because their bad circumstances. He also likes that profession, and wish to have his own workshop when he grows up. All his concerns for now are to gain money to help his family.

While "**Sherief**" likes to work and wishes to learn a craft.

"**Khalil**" works from 8 years ago, he didn't receive any education. He works in a simple workshop and is satisfied with it. He is not ambitious to change the place. All what he draw was with primitive tools laid in the street in front of the workshop. He dreams of a sunshade to protect him from the heat.

"**Nadia**" didn't join schools; she works because she likes to work. She likes her work because the owner treats her nicely. She dreams to join school to learn like other girls in her age, and to be able to read and write. She was not able to draw because that was her first time in her life to hold a pencil.

As for "**Mahmoud**", he dreams to have a uniform for the workshop.

The same is **Gamila's** dream as well, who drew a uniform for work, and put a mask on her face.

One of the children expressed his dream by words. He wished to have a larger place to work at, and to receive training to be more skillful in his carpentry craft.

### **Children's needs:**

As for the children's needs they are as simple as their dreams. Some of them asked for increase in the wages, and developing the working place- 45.5% (Refer to table no.10). While others asked for some modifications in the machines and equipments to avoid traumas, 34.7%. While 17.4% of the children asked for increasing the wages and affording uniforms for the work.

On the other hand, some children- 11.6%- see the importance of training children to be able to run their work.

Some of the children –10%- protested on the bad treatment of the owners, which could be not only rebuking, but beating. This is one of the important things, as it is not only children do not have appropriate working environment, but they are beaten and mistreated.

Some of the work owners see that beating is important for teaching a child. To know that to gain a craft is not so easy, so he would not leave it easily.

Concerning the long working day, 9.1% of the children see that it is important to have a timetable that includes breaks. While less than 1% of the children ask for social insurance. Of course the smallness of this percentage refers to their lack of awareness on any kinds of insurances. With the same rate children ask to distribute works in a harmonious way according to children's age and the used machines.

<b>Table no. 13 – children's needs</b>		
The need	Repetition	%
Modifications in the working places	42	34.5
Developing working tools	55	45.5
Affording working uniforms	21	17.4
Distributing works in a harmonious way with children's age and the used machines.	1	0.8
Improving treatment	12	9.9
Increasing wages	21	17.4
Insurances	1	0.8
Trainings	14	11.6
Reschedule the timetable	11	9.1
No needs	19	15.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>100</b>

## **2. Working conditions according to business owners:-**

A number of work owners justify the absence of contractual relations with children. They mention that most of these children are working on seasonal terms; which means that it is not on regular basis. Therefore it is hard to make a working contract with a child who works for one month, or few months a year.

At the same time most work owners are afraid of writing working contracts for children or even training cards because they think that such contracts might cause them legal problems, and financial burdens and problems. (While it is worthy to mention that such contracts are not operative and valid on all kinds of child labor. Only who is 16 years or more. And it is just a training card to be given for the children between 12 and 14 years old. The accidents of labor insurance don't cost the work owner more than 150 piaster monthly, which a child can contribute as well with the owner or the civil community organizations which play a role in this field).

Most of the work owners pointed to their lack of knowledge of such legal rules which they have to follow with children. Many of them see that there is no problem to guarantee legal rights of children. But they ask for mercy from the executive sectors which burdens them with financial royalty and taxes which they are forced to pay otherwise they are exposed to a lot of troubles, beginning with penalty to cancellation of the licenses.

- Talking about weak wages, some of the owners say that there

are some increases in the wages of the children who are punctuate in their work, or others who work on seasonal basis. Some others see that the increase is very limited because the weak income they get in general especially in the inactivity status of markets.

- As for the long working day of children, we tried to make the break more than one hour. Some of the work owners mentioned that they don't know that a working day for a child should include more than one breaks.
- Concerning work dangers, some of the work owners say that they do not know what are the possible methods they have to follow in order to be in one accord with appropriate or required working environment. While some others say:" to be in one accord with work environment we will close our factories and workshops, and we'll seek to find other jobs. And even then we will not be able to see or to work in appropriate working environment.
- As for regular check ups on children, some laugh, and say we don't even do any investigation for ourselves will we do it for these kids!

## Chapter 4 conclusions and recommendations

### Conclusions:

1. It is clear that child labor in Egypt do not enjoy practicing a lot of the legal rights, especially children's rights who are working in dangerous professions. For the social insurance law in Egypt no.79 for year 1975 has put a condition that whoever is included within this law should be working and getting wage, especially in agricultural sector, and could be handicapped in order to get social insurance or accident of labor insurance.
2. The paradox is obvious in the Egyptian legislative structure, in what is related to the international criteria. The law of the Egyptian child recognizes that the age of children is 14 years, while it is the same age which the new law of working is applying. The youth law defines that a child of 12 years to 17 years is a child – young youth. At the same time the child rights convention is defining another definition for the child which is whoever doesn't reach 18 years.
3. Within the same paradox we find that the law of the child no. 12 for year 1996 allows children to work in light works within the age of 12 and 14 years. While this is not provided in the new law of labor no.12 for year 2003.
4. At the same time the law 12 for year 2003 recognizes a working child in the age of 14, we find that social insurances do not protect the working children, putting a condition that children who are to be under the umbrella of the social insurance would not be less than 18 years old.
5. Within that paradox you hear the phrase of the "concerned minister" is mentioned in the new law of labor for working children, while the children's law defined in the item 14 the specialized minister to be "minister of education".
6. Leaving the task of employing children to what the minister says in the new working law no.12 for year 2003, allows a great field for cheating with the children's age, while this is what is needed to be defined.
7. On the other side it was noticed that the work owners are not committed to the conditions, and procedures of the law of labor no. 12 for year 2003 in the following terms: -
  - They were not committed to the legal age of working children, and which the law has defined to be 14 years.
  - Through the study, it was clear that there were working children less than 12 years.
  - Unpunctuality of the work owner to grant the working children who are less than 16 a proved card form working force office.
  - Work owners do not keep any related files for the children who worked with them, neither the kinds of work they used to do, nor the age of the children.

- Not affixing any papers showing the working law of children labor no. 12 for year 2003.
- They are not committed to the working hours which are conditioned in the law no. 12 for year 2003. Neither with the breaks. They even let children work in the holidays and vacation days.
- Absence of awareness of work owners on the applying of the legal procedures in the labor law no. 12 for year 2003, related to child labor.
- Absence of all supervision from the inspecting system to check if the legal conditions and criteria related to working environment are applied or not.
- It is noticeable as well that all professions in which children work at in the areas of the study are included in the dangerous professions.
- Unawareness of the work owners and also of the inspecting and supervising systems on the list of the dangerous professions, and the international criteria that distinguish between dangerous and light kinds of works is noticeable as well.
- Lack of commitment in the Egyptian legal legislations, including the ministerial statements in the minimum age of working child in the dangerous professions.

### **Recommendations: -**

- 1) The importance of the commitment to the Egyptian legislations, and to define a specific age in which the child's age is defined whether in light or dangerous work. Also the importance for the Egyptian legislation structure to include the whole children whether working with wage, or without; especially the cases related to insurance against accidents of labor or social insurance.
- 2) The importance of including the law of social insurances with the children's rights in insurance. Such work needs the intervention of the civil community organizations especially that the law is about to be modified in the coming round of the parliament in November 2005.
- 3) The importance of having a national committee that includes a number of different specialists, and executive sectors to be responsible for children's labor in Egypt; to consider the age, the list of dangerous professions, which children should not work at, and also defining the working periods which children are able to work in especially the seasonal periods.
- 4) It is important for the civil society organizations to invite experts, specialists, work owners, and the executive sectors to review the list of dangerous professions in the light of the technological progress. In order to publish and spread that list on a large scale through different means of media.
- 5) It is important for the civil society organizations to cooperate with the work owners in including the working children in the micro and intermediate projects – as a protective procedure- in the accident of labor

- insurance, to make the amount of the insurance as a contribution from the work owner, the children, and the civil community organizations.
- 6) Working on forcing the Egyptian government to approve the inspecting convention no. 81 for year 1947.
  - 7) Civil society organizations should raise the awareness of work owners on the importance of holding files of the the working children, mentioning the kind of work these children do and their age as well.
  - 8) Civil society organizations should train and raise the awareness of those who are responsible for the inspecting procedures on the breaches which could happen in relation to the unpunctuality with the criteria of the working environment in the micro and intermediate projects.
  - 9) Civil society organization should play a big role in raising the awareness of those who are responsible for the inspecting work on their supposed role to magnify the social benefit on whether the work owners or the working children in the micro and intermediate projects.
  - 10) Civil society organization should raise the awareness of work owners and the children's family on the legal procedures which should be followed to guarantee, from one hand, the child's rights and from the other hand to improve the working conditions specially that the whole thing is not a big burden either for the working child's family nor for the work owner if they participate. Or for both of them and the civil community organizations.
  - 11) It is important for the civil society organizations to raise the awareness of the work owners on their rights towards the executive sectors and all the commitments which are resulting from, in order not to open a door for corruption.
  - 12) It is important for the civil society organizations to facilitate voluntary medical campaigns in cooperation with the mentioned sectors of supervising and inspecting on the micro and intermediate projects. These campaigns should do regular examinations for the children. They have also to discuss the ability of giving a daily meal for the children in cooperation with work owners whether in the workshop, the factory, or working children's receptions centers which are managed by the civil society organizations.

### **Special cases:**

Milad from BLACD team visited a Factory for manufacturing clothes for export. It locates in the south part of Minia City. He had been inside the factory itself and saw around 70 young women working on sowing machines. He met the deputy of the manager, and he assured that they do not hire any one under 18 years as they export their production. He asked even they hire them in informal tasks like cleaning the place or some thing like this, deputy of the manager replied that they are inspected by insurance department (daily) and no way to hire any one under 18 years.