



CHILD EXPLOITATION



1



Photo from VR video "A day in the life of Amani" of Terre des Hommes Netherlands

What is child exploitation?

Child exploitation is a global problem.

There are many forms of child exploitation. Child exploitation includes **child domestic work**, **child soldiers**, the **recruitment and involvement of children in armed conflict**, **sexual exploitation** and **pornography**, the **use of children for criminal activities** including the **sale** and **distribution of narcotics** and the **involvement of children in harmful or hazardous work**.

Children are considered to be exploited whenever a profit is made from their vulnerability and lack of power, whenever children are abused to somebody else's benefit and whenever they start working despite being too young or for long hours. Exploitation also occurs when children work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions, when they are underpaid or when they are coerced into forced labour, debt bondage or slavery.

Child work vs. Child exploitation

In its fight against child exploitation, **Terre des Hommes makes a distinction between child work and child labour**, and gives top priority to eradicating the latter. Child work refers to **the participation of children in an economic activity which is not detrimental to their health and mental and physical development**. It is light work for a limited amount of hours, according to their age and abilities, that doesn't interfere with a child's education or leisure activities. This work, when it teaches

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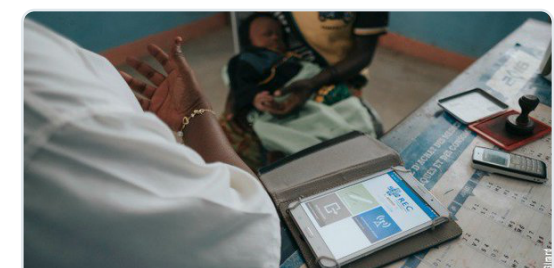


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children skills, techniques and important social values, can even be seen as beneficial for the child's development. In contrast, **child labour refers to all kinds of labour which jeopardise a child's physical, mental, educational or social development.** Hazardous child labour is prohibited for all children, in line with Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour.

[Terre des Hommes' position on child labour](#)

Read the [Child Labour Report 2017](#) on the effects of climate change on child labour

Terre des Hommes stops child exploitation

Together with our partners **we actively fight child exploitation on different levels:** working directly with the children affected, their families and communities, training experts and officials and **advocating** for children's rights policies.

Facts

“**168 million children are affected by child labour** and more than half of them, **85 million**, are doing **hazardous work. 1 to 2 million** children are forced into **sexual exploitation** and pornography per year and thus exposed to serious trauma, to diseases, alcohol and drugs.”

Highlight action

Sweetie

“My name is Sweetie, I am 10 years old. Every day I have to sit in front of the computer and talk to men. Just like tens of thousands of other kids.”

A hidden and largely unknown form of child exploitation is spreading like a plague: **webcam child sex tourism.** Men from wealthy countries pay children in poor countries to perform sexual acts in front of a webcam.

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Sweetie has become world news – the campaign has reached around one billion people worldwide. Webcam Child Sex Tourism is now **on the political agenda**. Several governments have implemented or are preparing more effective measures **to prohibit and punish online child abuse**.

Read more about Sweetie:

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on Webcam Child Sex Tourism
- [Sweetie 2.0, the face of webcam child sex tourism: main achievements](#)
- [2016 report on trends and the changing nature of sexual exploitation online](#)

Facts

“15.5 million children are in domestic work worldwide. (ILO)”

Child domestic work

Thousands of child domestic workers are **hidden within households, working hard and long hours** (often over 16 hours a day), for **little or no pay**, living in **abusive situations**, without regular contact with their family. They **no longer attend school**, missing the opportunity to improve their future prospects through education. Terre des Hommes strives for **the liberation of children from this form of slavery**, provides victims with shelter, and urges governments to introduce laws against this type of abuse.

To read more about our work on protecting children from exploitation and violence check out [our Annual Report 2016-17](#)

