



DEVATOP CENTRE FOR
AFRICA DEVELOPMENT



POLICY BRIEF

ON

CHILD DOMESTIC WORK (CDW)

IN

LAGOS STATE

Introduction

In Lagos state, child domestic work, a grave kind of child labour occurs frequently. Many children in Lagos are employed as domestic helpers in a variety of homes, making child labour very common in the state. It involves children undergoing long working hours, poor pay, emotional and physical abuse, sexual abuse and denial of education. Furthermore, the existing legal provisions on child domestic employment/exploitation are not sufficiently enforced by the government due to gaps in the existing legal frameworks, which results in a lack of accountability and protection for the child victim of domestic work.

Effects of CDW on the Victims

- Child domestic work hinders children's physical and mental development, educational opportunities, and prospects.
- It exposes them to physical and emotional violence, leading to long-term trauma and health issues.
- It perpetuates poverty cycles and reinforces gender inequalities.

Key Challenges/Gaps observed:

- **Ineffective implementation of legal provisions on CDW:** Weak implementation of existing laws by stakeholders contributes to the persistence of child domestic work.
- **Enforcement challenges:** The enforcement of all the existing legal provisions on CDW is often weak, leaving children vulnerable.

- **Poverty:** Economic factors force families to engage their children in domestic work for financial survival.
- **Funding:** Inadequate financing mechanisms to effectively implement the legal provisions on child domestic work in Lagos state were not provided in the both Lagos State Child Rights Law and the National Child Rights Act.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation framework:** Lack of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the implementation of the legal provisions against child domestic work is not in place.
- **Age ambiguity/inconsistency:** The definition of "hazardous work" for children in domestic work varies, creating loopholes for exploitation.
- **Lack of awareness:** Many households and employers remain unaware of legal protections for children.
- **Institutional capacity:** The government ministries, departments, agencies and institutions saddled with the implementation of the legal provisions on CDW lacks adequate capacity and knowledge of the legal provisions to ensure effective implementation of the law.



Policy Recommendations:

- **Adoption of Nigerian Children's Trust Fund Act in Lagos state:** The Lagos state government should review the implementations of the provisions of the Nigerian Children Trust Fund Act and enact a state version that should focus on ensuring effective implementations of existing legal frameworks on child domestic work in Lagos state with the state trust fund law providing adequate resources for the effective implementation of existing legal frameworks that protects children from child domestic work in Lagos state.
- **Child Victims Trust Fund:** The Lagos state Domestic Sexual Violence Response Agency/Team (DSVRT) under the State Ministry of Justice should review the Lagos state Child Right Law to provide for Child Victims Trust Fund and incorporate the provisions of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Thereafter advocate for it's passage by the state assembly and the governor's assent.
- The National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) should operationalize the Victims of Trafficking Trust Fund as provided in NAPTIP establishment Act. The funds should be adequately utilized to effectively address CDW and exploitation in Lagos and other states.
- **Strengthen Enforcement of Legal framework provisions on CDW in Lagos state:** Enhance and enforce legislations specifically addressing child
 - domestic work, ensuring strict penalties for violations. The Lagos State Security Trust Fund should include NAPTIP, DSVRT, and the implementation Committee charged with the implementation of the Lagos State Child Rights Law in the list of organizations to support by the Lagos State Security Trust funds.
 1. Increase inspections and crackdowns on illegal recruitment and employment of child domestic workers.
 2. Hold traffickers and employers accountable through strong legal provisions and enforcement mechanisms.
 3. Provision of adequate funds for the DSVRT AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEES established by the law to effectively ensure the implementation of the existing legal frameworks that protect children from child domestic work in Lagos state.
 - **Improve Awareness and Education:** The Domestic Sexual Violence Response Agency/Team, the state ministry of women affairs, Civil Society Organizations, the media, and the government should increase public awareness campaigns to educate communities, employers, and families about the detrimental effects of child domestic work through:
 1. improve public awareness campaigns to educate communities about the harms of child domestic work and encourage alternative childcare options.

2. Train law enforcement officials, social workers, and community leaders to identify and report child labor cases.
3. Economic Support: Develop and implement programs to alleviate poverty, providing financial support to families to reduce reliance on child labor.
4. Accessible Education: Establish and promote accessible education opportunities for all children, ensuring that child domestic workers have the chance to attend school.

- **Provide Support and Rehabilitation:** The government of Lagos state should ensure improved effective and efficient safe shelters and support services for rescued children to access education, healthcare, and psychosocial support. Facilitate family reunification or alternative care arrangements whenever possible.
- **Invest in Social Protection:** There is the need for Lagos state government to strengthen social safety nets for vulnerable families to reduce dependence on child labour for income generation and promote access to quality education and skills training for children and their families to break the cycle of poverty.
- **Interstate and Regional Collaboration:** The Lagos state government should work with other states and regional counterparts to address cross-border trafficking and improve data sharing on child domestic labour cases.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The Lagos state government should encourage collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations, communities, and international bodies to address child domestic work collectively.
- **Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms:** The Domestic Sexual Violence Response Agency/Team (DSVRT) and Implementation Committee should ensure robust mechanisms for monitoring and reporting child domestic work cases, involving relevant authorities, NGOs, and community members.

Conclusion

Addressing child domestic work in Lagos, Nigeria, requires a multi-faceted approach that combines legal reforms, awareness campaigns, economic support, and education initiatives. By implementing these policy recommendations, the government can contribute to the protection of children's rights and the overall well-being of society.

