**Human Rights**

The term “human rights” was mentioned seven times in the UN's founding Charter, making the promotion and protection of human rights a key purpose and guiding principle of the Organization.

In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights lay down the principles that brought human rights into the realm of international law. Since then, the Organization has diligently protected human rights through legal instruments and on-the-ground activities.

**Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**

Headquartered in Geneva, with many regional offices, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has lead responsibility in the UN system for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The office supports the human rights components of peacekeeping missions in several countries, and in addition to its regional offices, has HR Centres, Country/Stand-alone Offices and Human Rights Advisors all over the world.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights regularly comments on situations in the world relating to human rights issues, and has the authority to investigate situations and publish reports on them.

**Human Rights Council**

The Human Rights Council, which was established in 2006, meets in Geneva. It replaced the 60-year-old UN Commission on Human Rights as the key independent UN intergovernmental body responsible for human rights.

**Human Rights Treaty Bodies**

The human rights treaty bodies are committees of independent experts that monitor implementation of the core international human rights treaties. Each State party to a treaty has an obligation to take steps to ensure that everyone in the State can enjoy the rights set out in the treaty.

The treaty bodies are composed of independent experts of recognized competence in human rights, who are nominated and elected for fixed renewable terms of four years by State parties.

With the potential to challenge structural disadvantage and some of the enduring social processes that lead to child labour, social protection interventions could be transformative in tackling this persistent form of economic exploitation. Analysing a range of empirical studies that demonstrate some of the mixed results that can flow from diverse forms of social protection interventions, this article reaches a number of key conclusions that will be of interest to policy makers and academic scholars.

First, the analysis demonstrates that the types of interventions that have resulted in the most positive outcomes, namely cash transfers accompanied by supply-side interventions that extend access to socio-economic rights, are most closely aligned with and reinforce a ‘human rights-based’ approach. This type of intervention combines income support in the form of a cash transfer, with broader socio-economic rights, in particular the right to education. It nests the child and family within a holistic framework of socio-economic rights and engages the role of the State as duty holder to provide those rights. When aligned with a ‘human rights-based’ approach, social protection interventions in the form of cash transfers can address the root causes and structural issues underpinning the poverty that leads to child labour and could form the basis for a potentially transformative range of interventions in this field.

Second, the social protection interventions that appear to have produced equivocal and, in some instances, negative outcomes in the context of child labour include public employment schemes and microfinance income-generation projects. This analysis argues that these types of social protection interventions align more closely with the ‘safety-net and market-centred’ model that is linked with the WB’s practice in this area. These types of interventions are grounded in enabling access to labour market participation and/or entrepreneurial income-generation activities. In line with this approach, the obligation to work is deepened and widened for all family members, regardless of the burden of social reproduction work. These types of interventions are often temporary and ameliorative in nature. The empirical evidence demonstrates that the temporary nature of these types of interventions may play a role in creating incentives for families to increase reliance on child labour.

A third key finding from the conceptual and empirical analysis illustrates that the gendered burden of social reproduction work is a structural issue that cuts across all of the different social protection interventions and plays a crucial role in their varying outcomes in this context. Social reproduction work is distinctly gendered, with the link between women and children creating both opportunities and challenges for both in navigating their socially ascribed roles. For example, where cash transfers reinforce the maternal role, these measures have acted to consolidate rather than challenge gender-based stereotypes and the gendered burden of care.